



STATEMENT BY

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**Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen**

It is a great honor to be here today in the beautiful city of Madrid. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Government of Chile for its successful Presidency and the Government of Spain for hosting this globally important conference in Madrid despite the very limited time they had for preparations.

SACEP is an Intergovernmental organization (IGO) established in 1982 by the governments of South Asia namely: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, and has a strong mandate to coordinate and support its member countries at policy, planning, capacity development,

coordination and awareness raising about environment and climate change issues in South Asia. Throughout its journey of more than 37 years of existence SACEP served as an ideal platform bringing together all the eight member states in to a common place where discussions were held and decision were made to tackle environmental challenges of South Asia region.

Mr. President,

South Asia is a home to over one fifth of the world's population and also is a region that experience the highest economic growth rates in the world. However, at the same time, the region is facing daunting climate-related challenges, causing huge economic, social, and environmental damage to South Asian countries, compromising their growth potential and poverty reduction efforts.

The **Global Climate Risk index 2019** report was so alarming. According to this report, among the countries most affected in 2017, Sri Lanka was placed in the second place and Nepal was ranked the world's fourth, while Bangladesh was ranked ninth.

Mr. President!

All South Asian countries are party to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Implementation of the agreement is largely anchored in the Nationally Determined Contributions which provide an overarching national framework and political mandate for climate action. All countries have submitted their first NDCs and are now working on its implementation. In this connection, SACEP with support from Asian Development Bank (ADB) organized a regional workshop to analyze and support the implementation of the NDCs by its

member countries. The workshop showed that South Asian countries making significant progress in implementing their ambitious NDCs. However, full implementation of the NDCs and the development of integrated, comprehensive, long-term, low-emission development plans and strategies requires further bold and innovative steps from the countries as well as from the developed country partners to assist the South Asian countries in implementing their NDCs. Improved access to climate fund is needed to implement the NDCs. All SACEP member countries emphasized on the need for Increased financial as well as technical support for adaptation vis-à-vis the ongoing and highly concentration on mitigation finance. At the same time, capacity building is an essential driver to boost NDCs implementation. Capacity building serves to bolster countries' ambition to meet their potential when talking about the specific components of adaptation and mitigation. As UN Climate Change Executive Secretary Patricia Espinosa noted "there can be no collective climate ambition – true participation by all nations – unless we first build capacity of developing countries." Therefore, enhanced international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity-building to support enhanced climate actions and boost the implementation of NDCs is a necessary.

As a pioneer Regional organization, SACEP is working with its member countries on a number of fronts to advance the implementation of their NDCs such as:

- Exchange of best practices and views related to NDC implementation planning, including linkages to SDG processes,
- Joint capacity building programs
- Identifying concrete opportunities for action in translating NDCs into actionable projects,

- Leveraging financial flows, including private-sector engagement, in the context of NDC implementation.

And we will remain committed to continue to work with our member countries who remain steadfast on their obligations under the Paris Agreement.

Thank you