

Intervention by the President of the Republic Mr Nicos Anastasiades at the COP27, in Sharm el Sheikh

As the world's attention is squarely focused on our deliberations here in Sharm el Sheikh, given the gravity of the decisions to be reached for the future of our planet, I take the opportunity to express my deepest appreciation to the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt for hosting and steering the work of COP27.

This is an implementation Summit and an African COP concentrating on the climate-related challenges of this continent.

I am delighted that this COP is hosted by our strategic partner, Egypt and I would like to assure H.E the President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, my dear friend Abdel Fatah al Sisi, of my Delegation's full support in this noble endeavor.

Numerous scientific reports, including the latest IPCC report, send out the clear and stark message that only the most drastic cuts in carbon emissions would help prevent an environmental disaster from rising temperature.

We must rise to these challenges, acting collectively, decisively and with greater urgency and ambition so can we avoid the worst consequences of a rapidly warming planet.

Cyprus is a Mediterranean island state, located in a region that is already experiencing the impact of climate change. Prolonged periods of drought, increased temperatures, have been threatening our forests and ecosystems, affecting people and livelihoods, demanding an urgent national response.

We started the implementation of our National Adaptation Strategy back in 2017 and are currently in the process of updating this Strategy with the aim to advance from the current modalities of incremental adjustment to a planned and systematic approach that can better address the multiple, complex and interlinked climate change risks and impacts.

Notwithstanding the size of our country and our small carbon footprint, we are committed in contributing to carbon emissions reduction.

We have, collectively within the EU framework and with the other Members States, submitted a significantly enhanced Nationally Determined Contribution in 2020, with a commitment of reducing net greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030 compared to levels in 1990.

The EU and its Member States remain steadfast in their commitment to net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, through a legally binding climate law.

Both ambition and implementation are essential, in this critical decade, to ensure the credibility of the Paris Agreement and reach the goal of climate neutrality in a sustainable way.

At national level we revisited and revised our national policies to make them fit for purpose, to achieve the more ambitious targets for 2030 and started implementation of our long-term strategy towards climate neutrality by 2050.

We look forward to the adoption of a comprehensive Sharm el-Sheikh outcome, which will ensure an ambitious global response to climate change.

Building on the Glasgow Climate Pact, we welcome the establishment of a Mitigation Work Programme that aims at enhancing accountability and encouraging ambition and implementation.

We will engage, within the EU framework, in the two-year Glasgow-Sharm-el-Sheikh work Programme on the Global Goal on Adaptation, to enhance adaptive capacity and resilience and reduce vulnerabilities in order to protect people, livelihoods and ecosystems.

In recognition of the significant impact of climate change specifically on our region, necessitating collaborative action for addressing its negative consequences, we launched the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East Climate Change Initiative in 2018.

The Initiative led to the development of a Regional action plan consisting of regionally appropriate policies and measures, based on the scientific findings of our region's top scientists brought together by the Initiative, to develop solutions to our shared problems that will be practical, achievable and have enduring benefits for our citizens.

We now call upon the Heads of State of the region to participate in a Summit tomorrow, where a political Declaration will be adopted, expressing support to the Initiative and willingness to utilize policies and measures included in the Action Plan.

I would like to end by acknowledging also the role of youth: young people's voices have been instrumental in galvanizing action for a more ambitious climate agenda. We are hearing these voices, this clear message demanding action so as to be able to look to the future with optimism.

Let us respond, let us all walk the road towards climate neutrality, towards a future of green, sustainable, resilient economies and societies.