

Fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 15)

Copenhagen, 16/17 December 2009

Statement by His Excellency, Gjogre Ivanov

President of the Republic of Macedonia

Check against delivery!

**Ms. President (Connie Hedegaard),
Mr. Executive Secretary (Yvo de Boer),
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Let me congratulate Denmark for hosting COP15, a follow up of the two-year Bali Action Plan. I also applaud the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) for carrying out this tremendous job. But the process does not end here.

Policy and decision makers are responsible towards the present generation and the ones to come. Let us not forget that the present is something we have borrowed from the future generations.

We are already witnessing the negative effects of the climate change and we must act promptly in order to prevent the process from having negative irreversible impact. This is why we need a legally binding global agreement creating the best possible conditions which will keep global warming below 2 degrees.

In this regard, we strongly support the European Union in its efforts to cut by 20 percent its carbon dioxide emissions by 2020 and its advocacy for global emissions reduction by at least 50 percent by 2050 compared to 1990 levels, as well as aggregate developed countries' emissions reduction of at least 80-95 percent.

Adhering to integrated energy and climate change response policies, Macedonia is determined to increase the share of renewable energies in its overall energy consumption, from the current 15.3 percent up to 21 percent by 2020. I expect this course of action to be performed by other nations as well.

**Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

We are looking forward to collaborate with our European partners to effectively harmonize the identified priorities with the corresponding technical and financial needs and capacities of the countries, both of Macedonia, and of the others.

I believe that we all share the common efforts to integrate carbon emissions reduction measures in the key national policies and documents. We believe in the power of knowledge. Climate change demands environmentally innovative approaches and technologies supportive to economic development and growth. We are fully aware that sustainable development strategies are not abstract concepts or wishful thinking. They are both blueprint and roadmap on how to act responsibly at home and how to share that responsibility with other nations.

This shared vision also depends on developing public awareness and individual understanding of the problem – a crucial step for the improvement of energy consumption and enhancing energy efficiency.

Climate Change is indisputable and its effects are evident not only on the extreme weather patterns, such as more frequent and intensive floods, heat waves and droughts, but also in the ecosystem degradation and impact on livelihoods, thus increasing communities' vulnerability, especially through health risks.

Recognizing the direct linkage between climate change and natural disasters, as indicated by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), we are developing nationally based and internationally merged multi-stakeholder mechanisms for risk reduction and mitigation to limit the impacts of climate related hazards.

With more extreme weather conditions lurking on the horizon, we need coordinated action to cope with the challenges that lie ahead. In this regard, Macedonia accepts with great enthusiasm the HFA priorities as well as responsibilities that come with co-chairing the European Regional Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction, established by the UNISDR and the Council of Europe.

**Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Our efforts and political will go beyond reducing carbon emissions. With developed and, on profound expertise based strategies, we are leading the way in the mitigation process through a nationwide systematic forestation campaign that has, thus far, resulted with 20 million planted trees.

In the next decade, the Macedonian forests will expand by additional 100.000 ha (hectares) of currently arid land. Once they reach the right age, these 100.000 ha (hectares) of forests will annually absorb at least 250.000 tons of CO₂. Imagine what a pan-European or even a worldwide forestation would do to reduce the existing carbon levels in the atmosphere.

By this, we are not advocating for an alternative to a global climate change deal. On the contrary. Both concepts are complementary and are part of the same equation. Therefore, I call upon you to get together in this common endeavor to hand down to our posterity a cleaner and safer Planet Earth.

**Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,**

At the end, in order to practically demonstrate Macedonia's commitment and responsibility concerning this issue, I would like to inform you that immediately after this Conference, for the next year, I intend to initiate high ranking regional meeting. The meeting shall be focused on strengthening of the regional cooperation in this context. I expect that this meeting shall contribute to raising regional awareness and responsibility for the cross-border problems and challenges, with implications that are of our common concern. I expect that it shall provide concrete results in the desired direction.

Thank you.