



Statement

by

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for Europe

At the

21st Ministerial Conference of the Central Asia Regional
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time)

Online

Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,
Dear colleagues,

It is my honor to be present at the 21st Ministerial Conference of the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) Program.

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges to our generation and it can't be tackled without **collective response**. It is our task to shape this response at all levels – **global, regional, and national**.

This is why the topic of the Conference, “*Revitalizing Regional Cooperation for a Green, Sustainable, and Inclusive Recovery*”, is extremely timely and fully aligns with UNECE work over the past months.

First, just a few weeks ago the **9th Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference was held in Nicosia, Cyprus**, with representation from **52 countries of the pan-European and Mediterranean region**.

The Nicosia Ministerial Declaration states that “the task of finding successful solutions to the [...] challenges on biodiversity, climate change and overall pollution, **calls for a joint and coordinated response that can only be achieved through close international cooperation** [...]”.

Secondly, the **war in Ukraine** has exacerbated the already complex connectivity challenges for Central Asia. Nevertheless, as I am just back from

COP27, we must not let these developments distract our attention from the climate crisis. **Achieving carbon neutrality** will require two key ingredients. First, a holistic approach to the energy system and also, an “all low- and zero-carbon technology” strategy. I am convinced that we have the technology and the capability to address this challenge if we **come together and strengthen regional cooperation**.

Thirdly, last week’s SPECA Forum allowed for in-depth discussions about greener and safer futures, which is fully articulated with the theme of our Commission session in April next year: **Digital and green transformations for sustainable development in the ECE region**.

The three processes I mentioned (Environment for Europe, COP27 and the SPECA Forum) signal the same direction: we **must come together now** to take bold and ambitious climate action to save our planet and our lives. As the United Nations Secretary-General said on Sunday, “*together, let’s not relent in the fight for climate justice and climate ambition*”.

Finally, let me thank the Asian Development Bank for the invitation to address the Conference. I wish it successful outcomes. We need them.

Thank you!
