**STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. DEMETRIS ELIADES,**

**MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, NATURAL RESOURCES**

**AND ENVIRONMENT**

**OF THE REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS**

**FOR THE 16th SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES**

**(CANCUN, 29 November to 10 December 2010)**

**HIGH LEVEL SEGMENT ON 8 to 10 December 2010**

**Mr. (Madam) President, distinguished delegates,**

Allow me first to express my appreciation to the Government and people of Mexico for hosting this important conference in Cancun, and to the Convention's Secretariat for their excellent organisation.

The impacts of the climate change and of the extreme weather conditions are well known to all of us. They also have direct repercussions on issues of international security and relations.

Cyprus, as a Mediterranean island, is already experiencing the negative effects of climate change. We have been witnessing prolonged periods of drought, increased temperatures, degradation of forests and rare ecosystems.

Our environmental policy is obstructed by the military occupation of part of our territory by Turkey. Even so, we fully comply with the commitments of the International Community in order to protect the climate and the future of our planet. We fully endorse and adopt the policies of the European Union.

Our response to the challenge must be immediate, effective and with the unconditional commitment and participation of all countries, both in the adaptation and mitigation through the reduction of emissions, as well as in setting up the necessary mechanisms for funding and the transfer of technology.

Developed countries have overexploited natural resources and therefore have the obligation to heavily invest in the mitigation and the reversal of the destruction of the natural environment. They must also be ready to share technology and knowledge with emerging and developing countries that will have to face an overwhelming burden in order to achieve the required results. However, our contribution cannot and should not be unconditional; It presupposes a clear commitment and active participation of all countries in achieving our common objective of containment of global warming up to 2 degrees Celsius.

The new arrangement must cover all Bali building blocks, the principles of the Convention, while at the same time the essential elements of the Kyoto Protocol should be taken forward.

**Mr. (Madam) President, distinguished delegates,**

Delayed action is not an option. We have to take steps now and this should be translated into a universal legally binding agreement, here, in Cancun or as soon as possible.

Our targets on climate change are entirely complementary to our overall efforts for an environmental and sustainable economic development. Preventing climate change, provides a real opportunity for comprehensive and joint efforts, not only in the area of environmental protection, but also in our other major challenges of achieving security of energy supply and tackling economic recession.

The future is in our hands.

Thank you Mr. President.