22nd Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC in Marrakesh (COP22)

Minister of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment

Republic of Cyprus,

H.E Mr. Nicos Kouyialis

Your Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I would first like to express my appreciation to the Moroccan Government and people of the Kingdom of Morocco for hosting this important event in Marrakesh.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The findings contained in the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change are clear. Global warming is undeniable and it is extremely likely that human influence has been the dominant cause of the observed warming since the mid-20th century.

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

Excellencies,

Cyprus is a Mediterranean island state, located in an area that is already experiencing the first serious effects of climate change. We have been witnessing prolonged periods of drought, increased temperatures, degradation of forests and rare ecosystems. Hence, we are called upon to formulate our national response to climate change.

We have collectively with the EU and its Members States submitted our Intended Nationally Determined Contributions which is a binding target of an at least 40% domestic reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 compared to 1990. We are also collectively providing the adequate means of implementation for mitigation and adaptation action in developing countries, including a particular focus on support to the poorest, most vulnerable and those with the least ability to mobilise other resources.

Dear friends,

COP21, with the Paris Agreement was a historic milestone for enhancing global collective action and accelerating the global transformation to a low carbon and climate resilient society. Now, we have to start the implementation of the Agreement.

Signing and ratifying the Agreement, as important as it is, can only be the first step and will not by itself deliver the transformation that is needed. Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) must be translated into actionable policies and measures in all sectors of the economy. For the decades to come, NDCs will be the cornerstones for national climate policy development and implementation around the world. Early and effective implementation of NDCs is crucial.

The low carbon transition is feasible and affordable, while substantial additional investments, with clean technologies play an important role. All sectors need to

contribute and early action saves costs later. The European Union is on track to achieve an emissions reduction of 24% below 1990 levels by 2020, significantly more than the target of a 20% reduction. Our priority beyond 2020 is to move ahead towards the implementation of our 2030 climate and energy framework which forms the basis of our NDC.

COP 22 in Marrakesh is the next key moment to maintain positive political momentum for the years to come. We should leave Marrakesh with shared understanding of direction of travel of main items of Paris work programme to be ready to complete it by 2018.

Paris truly saw the international community come together after years of intense discussions and join forces in calling for a contemporary, robust and balanced outcome.

Now we have to respect the Agreement and implement it.

Thank you.