

## **Climate-Change Speech – UN – September 22 2009**

Distinguished Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The need for ambitious action to control climate change is becoming more urgent than ever. From the increase in global temperatures to the melting of the ice cap, and from record losses of summer sea ice to the gradual desertification of specific regions, we are seeing a growing catalogue of climate impacts.

Being an island in the Mediterranean, Cyprus, is located in an area which is also experiencing the first serious effects of climate change. We have been witnessing prolonged periods of drought, increased temperatures, degradation of forests and rare ecosystems. In addition, our national environmental policy is restrained by the Turkish military occupation of part of our territory.

In the European Union, we consider the road to Copenhagen this coming December one of the most important that the international community has traveled for many years. It goes without saying how important it is to reach an ambitious and comprehensive global agreement in Copenhagen. The EU has committed to far-reaching emission targets and has put in place concrete measures necessary to deliver on them. Cyprus not only follows the said commitments of the EU, but also

participates in the joint efforts to protect the climate of our planet and secure the future of our peoples.

The stakes could not have been higher. We are facing an opportunity we cannot afford to miss. Our response in tackling climate change must be immediate and effective, with the clear commitment and participation of all countries, developing and developed. It is also imperative that financial, technological and capacity building support needs to be scaled up to help countries cope with the challenges that these measures create.

Our targets on climate change are fully compatible to our efforts to tackle the current financial crisis. We can, and must, address the economic crisis and the climate crisis together by investing in energy efficient and low carbon economy. By doing so, we are supporting economic growth and creating green jobs in the near term. In the meantime, we lay the basis for a more sustainable economy and security of energy supply in the future.

Thank you