

**Message by the Minister of Energy, Commerce and Industry of the  
Republic of Cyprus, Ms Natasa Pilides, for the UN's High-Level  
Dialogue on Energy**

There is no denying that climate change is a real and worrying threat to humanity. Its effects are much more adverse and are expanding much more quickly, than originally anticipated.

This means that our response also needs to be much more effective and well coordinated, and must be applied much more quickly than we originally thought.

The Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East region has been classified in recent studies as a global “climate hot spot”. All the more reason why countries in our region in particular, must work together to introduce and implement tangible measures with clear short term, medium term and long term results.

This High-Level Dialogue on Energy, convened during the 76<sup>th</sup> session of the UN General Assembly, comes at a crucial time. In the battle against climate change, it is imperative that we stand united in promoting joint projects, taking advantage of synergies, exchanging know-how and best practices.

It is within this framework that the Republic of Cyprus has proposed, and has been working hard to make a reality, the Cyprus Climate Change Initiative for the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East. Our aim is to forge a true partnership with neighbouring countries, in order to develop a comprehensive Action Plan addressing and mitigating the impact of climate change in the region, in accordance with the Paris Agreement.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2022, Cyprus will be taking on the Presidency of the Cairo-based East Mediterranean Gas Forum. This newly established,

international organisation has already proven it can effectively foster governmental and industry collaboration. Cyprus stands ready, during our Presidency, to discuss and promote policies and actions that will help make the East Med region a frontrunner in the transition towards greener energy.

Cyprus is fully committed to realising our Paris Agreement and EU Green Deal goals. We are working on revamping our energy and business sectors to facilitate transition to a greener, circular economy and resource-efficient growth. In the next few years, we have a unique opportunity to link commerce and industry with green growth, green energy and a circular way of thinking and working.

Our plans to open the electricity market, connect it to mainland Europe with an electricity cable, introduce large energy storage systems and increase renewables in our energy mix, will reduce emissions and prices. Coupled with incentives to renovate our building stock, save energy and adopt a circular model, we can increase Cypriot businesses' competitiveness and export capacity.

There is no denying that a lot needs to be done if we are to achieve our 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and net zero emissions by 2050. Procrastination and lack of action are no longer viable options. By working together, we can be the agents of positive change, greening and brightening the future for us and for generations to come.

Thank you.