

Your excellencies, ladies and gentleman,

Bosnia and Herzegovina delegation has honoured to attend the 5th United Nations Environmental Assembly and thankful to the organizer's hard work to make this event possible. Even though we are in very complex and challenging times, due to the ongoing global pandemic and its effects, I would like to complement the organizers for this years' UNEA theme: "Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals".

Considering this years' UNEA5 theme, allow me to emphasize several points elemental for Bosnia and Herzegovina, its healthier environment and sustainability as the overall objective.

First of all, in terms of biodiversity in Europe, Bosnia and Herzegovina is among the five richest countries. The richness of flora and fauna, in addition to high level of endemism and relict species, ensures its significance not only on the European but on the global level as well.

In an effort to build the capacity to responsibly and effectively intervene in nature protection, while at the same time investing in country's sustainable development, we need to enhance our capacities and resources to effectively manage these activities.

Second, the increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather events in the country and the change in the average climate have caused and will cause rising pressure on the sectors of agriculture, water management, health, forestry and tourism, as well as in the management of water resources and protected areas. Among other, country's priority is a path towards green, sustainable and healthy sectors. Albeit, as we have limited capacities to initiate and steer climate activities thus facing shortcomings for defining and achieving climate objectives and fully implementing related strategies, we need a strong international assistance for capacity building, training, technology transfer, establishment of financial mechanisms to encourage decarbonisation, preparation of necessary research and project documentation, as well as projects' financing. This was confirmed by the revised Nationally Determined Contributions for 2020-2030.

We are positive that with the determination, activism, initiatives, energy and with the assistance of the international community – we can be successful in building a greener and more prosperous future.

Third, in the very beginning of the year, as we often do when the calendar turns, we are looking forward and start planning activities, envisioning how we can make our surrounding healthier, stronger, greener and be successful in achieving sustainability. This year, we can all agree, it is even more important that we implement green, sustainable and strengthened actions for nature conservation, for climate change mitigation, respecting the pivotal role of nature and healthy ecosystems.

Following the abovementioned priorities, I would like to extend our appreciation to the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) for amazing environmental protection efforts in the country, for long-lasting assistance and cooperation with national counterparts on many activities and initiatives successfully implemented to date. From the development of the State of the Environment Report, GEF funded project on enhancement of the air quality and enabling the country to report to three Rio Conventions, development of the reports to Convention on Biological diversity and many others, all to the enlargement and effective management of protected areas in the country.

Allow me to emphasize the importance of UNEP's further involvement with the interventions at the country level, with more projects for nature conservation, air pollution mitigation and especially climate change mitigation. We expect and will provide our strong assistance and readiness to all UNEP's further efforts and interventions.

As the UNEA5 theme calls for strengthened action to protect and restore nature and the nature-based solutions to achieve the SDGs in its three complementary dimensions (social, economic and environmental), with the current international community's involvement, UNEP's assistance and together with the national counterparts, I believe our country will succeed in enhancing nature conservation activities, in achieving Sustainable Development Goals, all with an aim of greener and healthier environment today - the legacy for the future generations.

Thank you and I wish to all of us very productive meeting and work!