

## **Estonia's High-Level Segment at UNEA 6**

### **Statement by H.E. Ms. Katrin Saarsalu-Layachi, Ambassador for Climate and Energy Policy, Republic of Estonia**

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First, I would like to express our deepest appreciation to all those who were involved in the preparation of the UNEA-6.

The gravity of the accelerating, deepening and mutually reinforcing triple planetary crisis poses an existential threat and aggravates existing security concerns. We firmly believe that this crisis must be addressed in a comprehensive and integrated way through shared global efforts.

In Estonia, we are committed! Our goals for greener and cleaner future are crucial and ambitious. The guiding principle of the recently established Ministry of Climate is that economy needs to stay within the boundaries of nature and a smaller environmental footprint is a competitive advantage.

We are in the process of developing our first national climate law by 2025 that will set legally binding emission reduction targets for all sectors and support achieving the climate neutrality by 2050 at the latest.

Green economy can only be achieved if powered by other green solutions and technologies. By 2030, Estonia aims to generate at least as much renewable energy as it consumes annually. We also need to increase improved grid capacities and storage solutions, there are already companies who are providing these solutions in Estonia and beyond.

These are not just benchmarks but promises to future generations.

Environmental awareness plays an important role in solving environmental crises. Estonia has been supporting a global movement

that has been raising awareness of the importance of waste management and removing waste from the environment. Today, I would like to invite you all to save the date of 20 September as an official United Nations World Cleanup Day. This day represents an enormous appreciation of 73 million people from 191 countries across the world who have joined forces for a common goal in cleaning up litter and mismanaged waste. I encourage all countries to consider expressing the interest in hosting the UN calendar World Cleanup Day on 20 September 2024.

Armed conflicts are adding an extra layer to the triple planetary crises. Estonia expresses its strong concern over the severity of harm caused to climate and the environment by the ongoing armed conflicts. In particular, we would like to draw attention to the enormous environmental impact of Russia's illegal, unjustified and unprovoked war of aggression against Ukraine. We emphasise the importance of responsibility for deliberate ecocide committed during this war and seek to ensure the application of the "aggressor pays" principle to environmental damage.

High ambition and significant milestones are achievable if we act together – so, let's do it for the environment!

Thank you!