

**Statement by Advisor to the President – Special Representative of the
President of the Republic of Kazakhstan on International Environmental
Cooperation Zulfiya Suleimenova
at the High-level Segment
of the 6th Session of the UN Assembly on the Environment on the topic
"Effective, inclusive and sustainable multilateral action to address climate
change, biodiversity loss and pollution"**

February 29 – March 1, 2024

Venue: UNEP Headquarters, Conference Room 02

The time limit is 3 minutes

**Dear Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,**

It is a great honour for me to represent President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev at this important event, who sends his best wishes for the successful work of the 6th United Nations Environment Assembly.

We have gathered here today in our common spirit to find the solutions to the challenges that the world's environment faces today. Environmental issues and climate change are increasingly shaping the global agenda. It is important to recognise that as we navigate the complexities of the modern world, we should consider how environmental systems hold a profound impact on every facet of human existence – from our physical well-being to the human environment, from our economy to the very fabric of our culture. Thus, prioritizing the sustainable development is critical with taking concrete actions to address the triple planetary crisis in a just and inclusive manner.

The environmental issues are one of the most important ones in President Tokayev's agenda, and Kazakhstan prioritizes taking concerted actions in this regard. This stems from the challenges that we already face. Specifically, in climate change even if the world succeeds to limiting the growth of global temperature within 1,5 degrees, for us that would mean a 2,5 degree increase. We also already observe a decrease of per capita water availability that is linked among others to degradation of glaciers that are key water sources.

Thus, I would like to share how we are taking actions in combating these challenges.

1. We believe that combating climate change requires both taking actions at the national level and promoting joint actions across the countries.

Kazakhstan was the first country in Central Asia to ratify the **Paris Agreement**. We have committed to absolute carbon emissions reduction by 2030 and pledged to achieve **carbon neutrality by 2060**. The national climate goal is codified in our national legislation, and we have also considered the mandatory climate change adaptation measures in the most vulnerable sectors that include water resources, forestry, agriculture and disaster risk reduction. We believe that such approach would allow us to stay on track with national climate vision.

Kazakhstan has also joined the **Global Methane Pledge**. Having reduced flaring (*that is one of the sources of methane emissions*) tenfold (*from 3,1 bn m³ to 0,3 bn m³*) within the last 15 years, we plan to continue and accelerate efforts to further reduce the emissions of this potent greenhouse gas.

But as much as national actions are important, the **regional approaches** are also crucial. With the initiative of President Tokayev, we plan to conduct the Regional Climate Summit in 2026 under the auspices of the UN and international organizations in order to accelerate the joint efforts in climate action and finding concrete solutions.

Gradual, sustainable and socially responsible transition away from using coal would be a big bonus in combating climate change. Hence, to support climate transition in our region we are establishing the Project Office for Central Asia on climate change and green energy, and we invite our partners to support this initiative.

2. Kazakhstan was not spared from the problem of pollution – of air, soil, with plastic. In 2021, we have adopted a new Environmental Code, which considers the adoption of **best available technologies** in the biggest polluting industries and introduction of automated monitoring systems (ASMs). This would allow us to better control the emissions and reduce negative environmental impacts.

We also started the work on transition to new environment quality standards.

3. Biodiversity and ecosystem services are important for sustainable development. That is why we joined 30 by 30 initiative. Today, the share of forests increased to 5%, and the share of protected natural areas grew to almost 11% of the country's territory.

By President Tokayev's initiative we started working on creating the first marine protected area on our portion of the Caspian Sea to protect its ecosystem and the habitat of unique mammal inhabiting it – including the Caspian Seals.

4. One of the sectors most vulnerable to climate change is water. In transboundary basins, the cooperation on integrated management of shared rivers is critical.

This year, Kazakhstan assumed chairmanship in the **International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea** (IFAS), where we plan to further develop constructive approaches and strengthen **cooperation on integrated water resources management, implementation of SDGs**, and ecosystem protection and restoration in the region.

Following the announcement of President of Kazakhstan Tokayev and President of France Macron, we plan to jointly hold One Water Summit in the margins of the 79th General Assembly of the United Nations in September 2024.

This event is aimed at accelerating the actions on addressing water-related challenges and mobilizing stakeholders in this endeavor. We invite partners to join us in this journey.

Ladies and gentlemen!

We have a shared responsibility to preserve our planet and ensure a sustainable future for all. Let's join forces and make our world a better place for everyone!

Let me express my gratitude to the UNEP and the President of UNEA-6 for the successful organization of this Assembly.

I also express my thanks to the Government and people of Kenya for your hospitality.

Thank you for your attention!
