High Level SDG Action Event
"Climate Change and the Sustainable Development Agenda"
New York, 23 March 2017
Trusteeship Council
CLOSING REMARKS

Excellencies,
Distinguished guests
Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to thank you for your active engagement during this High-Level SDG Action Event on "Climate Change and the Sustainable Development Agenda".

I have been deeply encouraged by the high-levels of interest from Member States and partners in discussing how we can urgently act on climate change and how we can do so in a manner that leverages the mutually-reinforcing opportunities for action under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

I’d like to take the opportunity to warmly congratulate Andorra, Armenia, the Philippines and Tajikistan for announcing, during the course of this event and its preparations, that they have now ratified the Paris Agreement, as well as others who have expressed intent to join the Paris Agreement family.

Throughout the opening segment, high-level panel, , the interactive sessions and the plenary in which over 80 UN member states, speakers emphasized their strong commitment to implementing these two agreements that are so critical for humanity’s future.
Speakers reaffirmed that the great preponderance of scientific evidence points to a changing global climate and that it is taking place with unprecedented speed and scale.

They pointed to the impacts on climate that we are already experiencing – the warming temperatures, the rising sea levels, the growing severity and frequency, storms and flooding, prolonged droughts, the melting of glaciers, the loss of biodiversity, and the ravages of Ocean acidification.

And they emphasized that climate change was not only a threat in itself, but a multiplier of other threats including food insecurity, water shortages, loss of livelihoods, the displacement of populations, and a driver of regional instability.

*Excellencies, distinguished delegates,*

All speakers underlined the need for concerted action and staying true to our course.

Many speakers alluded to the opportunities that will be created for people and for States by unlocking green economic growth.

They underlined that climate action can become a source of wealth creation, highlighting examples of the jobs, businesses and technological advances that have already been generated in the clean and renewable energy market.

They announced a number of important nationally-led and business-led initiatives aimed at catalyzing action to address both climate change and sustainable development.

And they stressed the need for all stakeholders to be meaningfully engaged in collective efforts to address climate change, including
as part of comprehensive efforts to implement both the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement.

The strongest message coming through time and time again from all speakers was on the need to urgently scale-up those efforts and actions.

In this regard we discussed mobilization of financing and investments to implement the Climate and Sustainable Development Agenda, including through the use of innovative financing instruments and leveraging public finance. The need for the United Nations to continue supporting such efforts was also stressed.

We discussed the importance of smart policy and regulatory frameworks to curb greenhouse gas emissions, which can also lead to cross-cutting dividends for other SDGs, including public health, gender equality, and sustainable economic growth.

We reiterated the importance of engaging women as part of efforts to address the climate challenge, and to advance diversified economies.

We also recognized youth as drivers of change and for whom our work must be dedicated.

We emphasized the tremendous potential of innovation and technology to drive cross-cutting efforts on climate and sustainable development.

Our discussions affirmed the unstoppable global momentum already being generated around our world towards renewable energy, including for example through the 70 action alliances mobilized for Paris in 2015.
Throughout the United Nations we encouraged to continue to play its part in driving change.

*Excellencies, distinguished delegates*

In closing, as we conclude this High-Level SDG Action Event, it is crucial that we ensure our discussions now become a basis to take forward ambitious, coherent and integrated action on climate change and sustainable development.

To assist this process, my office will shortly be preparing a summary of this event, which will be circulated to all Member States and placed on my website of my office.

I commit to continue raising awareness throughout the 71st session on the importance of taking action on both climate change and sustainable development in a coordinated and coherent manner. This commitment extends to measures to be addressed during the Ocean Conference to be held at UN Headquarters from 5-9 June this year.

Lastly, allow me to thank all those who worked to make this event possible: Secretary-General Guterres, Executive Secretary Espinosa and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the moderators, panelists and all of the participants, to the staff in my own office and across the Secretariat, and, of course, to the Member States for contributing so actively throughout.

I thank you.