

**Statement of the Head of the Albanian Delegation**  
**Mrs. Ornela ÇUÇI**  
**Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Tourism and Environment**

Since the first steps of democracy in Albania, in the moments of political and social change, our country has taken pro-environmental decisions. The ESPOO Convention was the first international convention ratified in 1991

Year after year, along with the growth of democracy, and the difficulties of a new system, Albania has been capable of traversing the right path of making the country's Environmental legislation compliant with European and international legislation. Albania has joined the global front on tackling environmental challenges by ratifying a number of conventions by different Albanian governments, thus giving an undisputed vote for environmental conservation.

Albania has given everything it can but in reality, nothing is easy, despite the strong will to follow in the footsteps of the best players in the field of the Environment. Implementation is the most difficult, complicated and costly phase.

Over the years, but especially in recent ones, concrete investments have been made in the field of the environment, and we have worked hard to implement our objectives in the field just as we have ratified multiple conventions. We have achieved a lot, but we have to achieve even more. However, we cannot make it alone! Because dear colleagues, Albania is a small country, but with major environmental problems carried over by the communist period. Albania is a developing country that aims to run, but its pace is not sufficiently supported financially.

We have an expression in our country. "The brave with many friends". The Albanian Government lacks neither the courage nor the will for a sustainable development of the environment, but like the expression I cited, we need the help of our friends, connections, countries and international bodies to add pace and rhythm to the work we've already done and plan on doing. We need concrete projects, with more support in the field, in order to give results even though for the sake of truth, environmental recuperation takes time to be visible.

I strongly reemphasize the support of the Albanian government in all international conventions or international environmental initiatives. Albania's black & red vote will always be in favor of the Environment. But on the other hand, we must not hesitate in asking for your full and concrete support through all possible projects because together with you, we can continue to bring Albania's contribution to the table for global environmental challenges.