Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is important to take steps towards climate neutrality, a fair and prosperous society with a modern, resource-efficient and circular economy. Green recovery from the COVID-19 crisis provides an opportunity to build a more resilient and sustainable future.

Latvia joined with voluntary commitments within the BIG-E and the BACA initiatives under the Environment for Europe process already in 2016. Today we have fulfilled all of them. We believe that these measures have contributed to the progress towards resource-efficient and circular economy.

When discussing about transition towards more circular economy in the ECE region, we must acknowledge that there is no single solution fit for all. Therefore, mutual peer learning and exchange of experience are important tools to facilitate the shift to a more circular economy in the region.

I would like to share some of our experience.

In 2019 the OECD Environmental Performance Review for Latvia was published. The assessment and recommendations from this review have contributed to our climate and environment priorities.

Tackling climate change is a key priority for Latvia. We have set a 2050 climate neutrality target and together with the EU we have submitted more ambitious greenhouse gas emission reduction target for 2030.
Since 2020 Latvia has a national Action Plan for Transition Towards Circular Economy for the time period till 2027\(^1\). The Action Plan sets measures for transition from waste management to resource management, improvement of resource productivity, framework for promotion of secondary use.

One of economic instruments used for environmental purposes is the green public procurement. This legally binding instrument was introduced in 2017 and updated last autumn.

In 2020 green public procurements comprised 29% of total public procurements in Latvia. Today we apply mandatory requirements for 7 groups of products and services, including food and catering services. In addition, there are 15 voluntary groups, including construction and transport.

We continue to take further steps at national level, as well as within the EU framework.

Currently a new Environmental Policy Strategy for the next 7 years is under development. It will further help in our efforts towards climate neutrality and climate resilience, circular economy, as well as preservation and restoration of ecosystems and biodiversity.

It is essential to bring everyone on board in order to succeed in the transition towards circular economy and sustainable resource management. Therefore, participatory approach and strengthening of public participation in the decision-making process is vitally important. Digital technologies provide new opportunities there.

I believe that with our efforts at national level and exchange of experience and transfer of know-how will help reach the goals both in the ECE region and globally.

Thank you!

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\(^1\) [https://likumi.lv/ta/id/317168-par-ricibas-planu-parejai-uz-aprites-ekonomiku-20202027-gadam](https://likumi.lv/ta/id/317168-par-ricibas-planu-parejai-uz-aprites-ekonomiku-20202027-gadam) (Latvian only)