

STATEMENT
by Mr.Rashid MEREDOV,
Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers,
Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan
at the High-Level Segment of the
70th session of the United Nations
Economic Commission for Europe
on “Digital and Green Transformations
for Sustainable Development in the Region
of the Economic Commission
for Europe”
(Geneva, April 18, 2023)

Dear Madam Chair,
Distinguished Heads and members of the
delegations,
Ladies and gentlemen,

At the outset let me express my gratitude to the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, Ms. Olga Algayerova, and the Chairperson of the Commission, Ambassador Ms. Desirée Schweitzer for the invitation to take part in the 70th anniversary session of the Commission.

We note the relevance of the issues to be considered during the current meeting on digital and green transformation for sustainable development.

Dear participants,

The modern world seeking new forms and ways of development that would be more sustainable and eco-friendly.

At the same time, the process of globalization has accelerated interstate interaction in all aspects of the life of society, which today cannot be imagined without digital transformation, which carries both additional incentives for development and the emergence of new threats to international security.

It is important to realize that digital and green transformation is a complex interconnected system that involves the development of new environmentally friendly methods and innovations based on the use of data and digital technologies.

In the UNECE region, we see a growing interest in such transformations, which ultimately aim to move towards a “circular economy” model.

Speaking about the national priorities of Turkmenistan, it must be emphasized that our country proceeds from the fact that the measures taken by countries for the widespread introduction of digital technologies should consider not only the regional and global “green agenda, but also place emphasis on the most relevant areas, to example of accelerated urbanization and the social factor.

Promotion of the “green economy”, the use of new eoc friendly technologies and the development of innovative solutions in the sphere of nature protection is a priority direction of the state policy of Turkmenistan.

Among these priorities, we single out the implementation of national programs and international obligations of Turkmenistan **for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular, in its climate component.**

It should be noted that the second Voluntary National Review of Turkmenistan on the implementation of the SDGs, which the country will present in July this year on the sidelines of the High-Level Political Forum of ECOSOC, in addition to the already recommended Goals, includes extensive information in the field of introducing “green” technologies and measures to combat climate change.

At the same time, our country strictly follows the provisions of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and its obligations under the Paris Agreement.

In 2019, the new National Strategy of Turkmenistan on Climate Change was approved. The document includes an extended list of adaptation measures for almost the entire system of economic activity.

In recent years, the carbon intensity of production made in Turkmenistan has been steadily declining. According to expert estimates until 2030 within the framework of the Third National Communication of Turkmenistan economic growth will be accompanied by a decrease in the share of energy consumption per unit of GDP.

Adaptation measures to restore forests and improve land use are widely implemented in the country. As part of the nationwide “Green belt” program, extensive forest belts have been created around cities using progressive water-saving irrigation methods. In this regard, we express our sincere gratitude to the UNECE Executive Secretary for appreciating activities in this direction and awarding **a certificate to the city of Ashgabat for its assistance and contribution to the UNECE initiative “Challenge: Trees in the cities”**.

In the National climate change strategy of our country, **development of measures to reduce methane emissions from the production, transportation and distribution of natural gas** defined as the mitigation directives.

We plan to achieve zero growth in greenhouse gas emissions in the midterm starting from 2030, and in the long term, a significant annual reduction in emissions.

These efforts and practical steps of Turkmenistan are carried out in close cooperation with the UN and its agencies, the regional commissions and partner states.

Among the most important tasks, we single out the development of hydrogen energy. **The roadmap of Turkmenistan for the development of international cooperation in the field of hydrogen energy for 2022-2023** provides for a number of comprehensive measures and practical steps to attract foreign investment in this process. They will be aimed at creating and developing infrastructure for the production, storage and transportation of this type of energy.

Dear participants,

Digital technologies and green initiatives could and should be combined to reinforce each other for sustainable development.

A successful example of such coherence for the entire UNECE region could be the Arkadag smart city built in Turkmenistan. The city has implemented the concept of “smart city” and the approach to ensure zero harm to the environment at all stages - from the stage of production of construction materials to the stage of operation of facilities.

Modern and advanced technologies such as “smart home”, “smart traffic”, water and energy saving, energy efficiency, eco-transport, intelligent systems equipped with sensors that are runs when identifying emergency situations and accidents to inform appropriate services.

Conditions and services will be available to all the population, primarily to people with disabilities.

We believe that this city has become the example of implementation of the “New Urban Agenda”, approved at the Habibat-3 conference.

At the same time, in order to share the best practices of cities in achieving sustainable development, *we propose to consider the possibility of creating a Network of Sustainable Cities within the framework of our Commission.*

Dear participants,

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that Turkmenistan is ready for the most active and constructive participation in multilateral cooperation on all topical issues on the global agenda, in promoting effective digital and green solutions at all levels to ensure that no one left behind.

I Thank you.