

Statement by Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Belarus to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland Maxim Yermalovich at the session of the 26th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

Your Excellences, ladies and gentlemen!

The Republic of Belarus, along with other countries, is implementing international initiatives to combat climate change.

Recently, Belarus committed itself to make a new, nationally determined contribution to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. By 2030, the country will reduce emissions by 35 percent, procuring domestic financial resources for this purpose. Attracting additional external funding will increase the ambition of our contribution and lay the foundation for the country's further achievement of carbon neutrality in a time frame comparable to goals declared by the world's leading industrial countries.

Despite the fact that Belarus' share in global greenhouse gas emissions is less than 0.2 percent, we are responsible for the commitments we made.

No coal is extracted or used in the country. The main share of the energy sources in Belarus is natural gas.

In 2022, with the commissioning of the Belarusian nuclear power plant with the state investments worth more than 10 billion US dollars, greenhouse gas emissions will be reduced by 8 percent and gas consumption will decline.

The share of renewable energy in the total energy balance is already more than 9 percent. Belarus has practical experience in implementing de-risking projects in green energy area attracting private investors.

Along with the development of low-carbon energy, the country has been rehabilitating drained peatlands. One rehabilitated hectare prevents the emission of 11 tonnes of CO₂. Currently, there are 1.5 million hectares of drained peatlands in Belarus. Therefore, to accelerate the process of their swamping, it is necessary to join efforts and raise financing for these projects in the framework of all-European environmental programmes.

Belarus has enormous regional carbon absorption potential thanks to our forests, which cover 40 percent of the country's territory and absorb a third of all CO₂ emissions. Taking care of forests is not only a state policy but also a long-established tradition of the Belarusians. Every year, our residents plant a million trees with their own hands.

We welcome the intentions of the signatories to the COP26 Joint Declaration on Forests and Land Use and share the principles laid down therein, designed to halt the loss of forests in the world.

Distinguished delegates!

In our world, the environmental well-being and health of every human being should become a top priority of modern international policy. And to address these challenges, countries must work together to combat climate change by bridging the existing political and economic divides.

Thank you for your attention!