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**Address by Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina
H.E. Željko Komšić**

**at the 15th Conference of the Signatory States to the UN Framework
Convention on Climate Change**

Copenhagen, December 7-18, 2009

Esteemed Chairman,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great honor and pleasure as the Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina to participate at one of the largest UN conferences ever held other outside of New York and Geneva, the aim of which is to reach an ambitious and globally binding agreement. I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to our hosts in Copenhagen for organizing such an important event and to affirm strong support of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the process of negotiation on defining a new climate framework for the period beyond 2012. We believe that nature and effects of climate change call for a comprehensive international response, based on principles of UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) that enables sustainable economic development of society in accordance with guidelines set forth in Bali Action Plan 2007.

Mr. Chairman,

Combating effects of climate change is one of the biggest challenges mankind faces. At this point, the unpleasant truth about man's influence on global warming is undisputable. Unfortunately, it is not only the environment that is endangered; climate change can cause economic and social problems, posing threat to security and stability of the country. Furthermore, no one can deny the fact that it is mostly poor and underdeveloped countries that are threatened by effects of global warming. However, we are all facing the same threat since climate change knows no boundaries or level of development, which implies that it is our common, yet differentiated responsibility. Governments of developed and underdeveloped countries, business and nongovernmental sector, citizens - they all have their unique role which entails full commitment, an innovative approach and efficient action.

Mr. Chairman,

Within the framework of today's debate, please allow me to briefly inform you about activities which are being undertaken in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

As a signatory state of the UN Framework Conference on Climate Change and Kyoto Protocol, Bosnia and Herzegovina is fully aware of commitments regarding climate protection and enormous challenges we are all facing at local, state, regional as well as international level.

Bearing in mind that European integration is one of the key priority goals of foreign policy of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and that we have signed the Stabilization and Association Agreement with the European Union, the special attention is paid to harmonization of the state response with EU policy pertaining to development of the future post-Kyoto structure.

In this respect, Bosnia and Herzegovina supports the goal of the European Union to reduce the level of greenhouse gas emission by 20 percent by the 2020, considering the course of negotiations at the international level. As a developing country and signatory state of the Stabilization and Association Agreement with the EU, our country will endeavor to give its contribution to the aforementioned goal by implementing adaptation and mitigation measures.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is completing the process of establishing mechanisms necessary for the implementation of Initial National Communication (INC) and Designated National Authority (DNA) - flexible mechanisms.

In addition, in the spirit of sustainable development, the issue of climate change, as a top priority issue has been included in the National Environment Action Plan, National Medium -Term Development Strategy, Poverty Reduction Strategy as well as other relevant documents adopted and implemented by Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Although as a non-Annex I Party to Kyoto Protocol Bosnia and Herzegovina is not obliged to reduce greenhouse gas emission, it must focus on future activities aiming at reduction of Greenhouse gases.

In cooperation with Delegation of European Commission, we launched a project to establish Designated National Authority in Bosnia and Herzegovina titled "Assessment of Institutional and Legal Readiness for Implementation of Measures Eligible under Kyoto Protocol in BiH". The aim of the project is to develop institutional framework for national strategy for clean development mechanisms (CDM) as well as to raise society awareness of the issues regarding climate change and Kyoto mechanisms.

Supported by Global Environment Facility (GEF) and UNDP, Bosnia and Herzegovina launched and implemented an initiative to prepare the first National Report on Greenhouse Gas Emission in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Furthermore, Bosnia and Herzegovina is part of the project "Cool Earth Partnership" launched for the period of 10 years, which will help countries to reduce greenhouse gas emission within the framework of sustainable development.

I would like to highlight the necessity of establishing a regional approach in order to solve the issue of climate change, which would be to the benefit of Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as other small countries.

As part of Southeast Europe region which attaches great importance to climate change, Bosnia and Herzegovina fully supports the so-called Belgrade Initiative to improve regional cooperation in the area of climate change adopted in 2007 at the UNECE Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe". As a member of this initiative, Bosnia and Herzegovina has actively participated in development of sub regional Climate Change Framework Action Plan recently adopted at Ministerial Conference in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mr. Chairman,

Bosnia and Herzegovina is still undergoing the process of developing its capacities and state environmental legislation. I would like to use this opportunity to emphasize that, along with the aforementioned strategic documents and mechanisms, Bosnia and Herzegovina will soon ratify remaining UNECE conventions- Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context; Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents.

Just like other countries in SEE, Bosnia and Herzegovina experienced numerous problems in its past. In order to make further progress we need adequate assistance with an aim of ensuring an effective fulfillment of obligations and tasks and the reduction of negative effects of climate change. In this respect it should be mentioned that any concrete financial support provided to developing countries and countries with transitional economy, in particular in the area of capacity building, as well as support provided in the area of clean technology transfer, would be of utmost importance for our countries.

For decades, modern humankind has been living beyond possibilities of our planet. Therefore, it is necessary to make additional efforts and create favorable conditions for improvement of green recovery and strengthening of national capacities in the context of adaptation and mitigation of consequences of climate change, thus contributing to eradication of poverty and acquiring access to sustainable energy resources. To that end, it is necessary to strengthen international institutions and mechanisms for green technology development and transfer.

Finally, let us all recall the following facts: in 2003 the first alarming examples of climate change included: 44,000 death cases caused by heart strokes, sea level has risen during the last three years and according to relevant research it could rise for half a meter in the next 25 years, and humankind has beyond doubt become the most endangered species in the world.

Emphasizing the importance of environment protection and climate change, as part of comprehensive sustainable development, Bosnia and Herzegovina, despite the global crisis and all challenges it is facing, remains fully committed to active cooperation with all partners, and will certainly continue doing so.

It is our duty to preserve the environment for future generations. Therefore, I would like to call once again for concrete actions in order to formulate a unanimous response to the biggest challenge of the 21st century.

Let us all try to preserve what we have, since we do not own the Earth. We are merely its guardians and protectors.

Thank you for your attention.