

**Keynote Speech of H.E Saad Hariri  
President of the Lebanese Council of Ministers  
COP15 – United Nations Climate Change Conference  
Copenhagen-Denmark  
December 2009**

I am honored to be here today to address such a distinguished audience, and to be part of this important gathering attempting to halt the negative impact of climate change on our world.

We stand here today, not as heads of individual states, but as members of one family tackling a danger that threatens equally our future generations.

The importance accorded to COP15 and the significant turnout of decision makers from around the world clearly demonstrates the priority we all attach to this fundamental issue. *The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Fourth Assessment (IPCCFA)* Report indicates that the impact of climate change on our planet, people and nature is far more severe than anticipated.

The evidence is clear; we now need to act.

Those of you who know Lebanon know that it is a small mountainous green country on the shores of the Eastern Mediterranean. Our topography and our climate stand out in our region and have made Lebanon, for centuries, a prime destination. Today, the key fabric of Lebanon's geography is threatened by climate change.

Lebanon's greenhouse gas emissions are insignificant on a global level. Nevertheless, the impact of global climate change on Lebanon is tremendous. A recent study indicates that different regions in Lebanon will experience a 2 to 5 degrees rise in temperature by the end of the century. This will, in turn, exacerbate the already existing water demand pressure.

Accordingly, the agriculture sector will be affected. Our Bekaa Valley, a rich fertile region in East Lebanon, which once fed the entire Roman Empire, now home to some of Lebanon's most vulnerable population will be significantly endangered by climate change. The ancient Phoenician seaport town of Byblos, the oldest city in the world and classified as a UNESCO heritage site, will be inundated when the Mediterranean sea level rises as a result of climate change. Even the famous cedars of Lebanon, that helped build the Temple of Solomon, are endangered by climate change.

For all these reasons, we are fully engaged in the global battle against climate change. Accordingly, in a voluntary effort to curb global greenhouse gas emissions, we will take nationally appropriate mitigation actions, and we voluntarily commit to increase our renewable energy mix to 12% by 2020. In this regard, we seek the support of developed countries to implement a number of well-thought mitigation and adaptation projects.



Ladies and Gentlemen,

Combating climate change is a shared responsibility that rests on all our shoulders. It is more important to find a common solution, that effectively reduces the impact of climate change on our world, than to debate the relative responsibility of each of us. That said, I wish to underscore the principle of “common but differentiated responsibilities” to which we remain firmly committed. Furthermore, we urge developed countries to join efforts to combat climate change and to assist developing countries to adapt to its impact.

Allow me to conclude by stressing that the negative impact of climate change on our world is irrefutable. While it may not be in our hands to eliminate it totally, it is within our reach to try to mitigate it. Indeed, if we are not able to leave future generations the same world we inherited ourselves, it is our duty towards them to leave them one that is least damaged. I know I am not alone to feel this way, and the presence and commitment of so many present here, this month, cannot but inspire hope. I sincerely look forward to a strong agreement being reached to reverse the drastic impact of climate change and save our planet.

Thank you.