

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Tesfai Ghebreselassie Sebhatu Minister of
Land, Water and Environment UNFCCC – COP 29 (11-22 Nov
2024 Baku, Azerbaijan)**



Honorable Chairperson

Excellences Heads of Delegation

Distinguished Participants,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Allow me first to express my deep appreciation on behalf of the Eritrean delegation to the people and government of the Republic of Azerbaijan for the warm hospitality they accorded us and for availing this setting to host COP 29.

I would like to seize this opportunity also to congratulate the government of the Azeri Republic on their election to assume the Presidency of COP – 29.

Honorable Chairperson,

Many decades have passed since the international community of nations has put the life threatening triple planetary crises at the top of its agenda.

In search for effective solutions to these crises, it has been imperative to hold regular and extraordinary summits and meetings that involve heads of state and government, ministers, environmental scientists, negotiation experts, influential

social activists and world celebrities as well as business and technology innovators.

Subsequent to these events, numerous documents have been produced on solution-recommendations as well as resolutions aiming at promoting cooperation for coordinated efforts to save our planet.



To that effect, calls and pledges were made to raise ambition on climate actions, foster research and development, cooperate in transfer of science and technology, as well as to mobilize finance to assist disadvantaged countries in their effort to cope with impacts of climate change and overall environmental challenges.

Nevertheless, so far the steps taken to slash emissions at their main sources remain below what is required to meet the objectives of the Paris Agreement; and much below what science recommends. Similarly, mobilization of climate finance is still critical. The terms and conditions to access to whatever is said to have been made available are not easy for the needy. Particularly, finance badly needed for adaptation has not been heeded to properly.

Now again we have gathered for UNFCCC – COP 29 in Baku, with fresh memories of the climate catastrophes that recently ravaged lives and livelihoods of tens of thousands of people in many parts of the world. Record breaking GHGs concentration in the atmosphere and global high average temperature were also noted during this outgoing year.

It is also worrying to learn that global climate action plan for 2025-2030, which will be an aggregate of NDCs to be submitted by all parties, is anticipated to be more likely below the required target.

All these are a bad omen to reckon with what to expect in the near future.

Under such daunting conditions, billions of people already impacted and rendered helpless by the ever worsening global climate crises are left with no option but to hope against hopes. It is time to act in unison to bring this abominable situation to a quick termination.

Honorable Mr. Chairperson

As if these unsettling challenges were not enough, humanity's conscience and the very relevance of international law as well as the UN as a supreme global body and the principles it stands for have been put to test by ongoing conflicts that cause deaths and sufferings of tens of thousands of innocent people in different corners of the world.

For the sake of humanity, peace and world security, these callous acts must immediately stop with just and fair redress to those denied the right to live in peace and freedom.

To come back to the main agenda put on the floor for COP 29 to deliver on, let me say the obvious, unless it will be considered being repetitive of me. Up to now the people most impacted by climate change are those who have least contributed to its advent. But it is becoming all-embracing.

In order to prevent global climate crisis from reaching a tipping point hard to heal from, every party need to play their respective role, however big or small. First and foremost, the great GHG emitter countries have morale responsibility to reduce their emission to net-zero.

Further delay and or failure in realizing this long overdue target is tantamount to prescribing self-extinction. And that is something none of us wants and intends to happen.

With clear understanding of this, my country Eritrea, within its limited resources and capacity, has been engaged forcefully in tackling the ominous impacts of climate change through nature-based generational programmes that focus on enhancing climate-resilience of our communities and restoration of our degraded ecosystems, including:

- soil and water conservation,
- forestation and re-forestation,
- establishment of terrestrial and marine protected areas,
- promotion of crop and livestock varieties that can resist draught, diseases and pests,
- advancement of bio-fertilizers application and banning use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides,
- improving capacity in waste management,
- introduction of solar energy applications and improving efficiency of energy appliances etc.

As paradigm shift in the way people connect themselves with and perceive nature is critical in the fight against climate change; Eritrea is giving special attention to environmental education and public awareness. This will enable our citizens internalize the graveness of climate change impacts and the indisputably fundamental need to live in harmony with nature.

We are also working on finalizing our NDC, to be submitted early next year.

Mr. Chairperson;

At this point in time, recovery of lost trust in international climate negotiations and agreements is critical to the success of the global fight against climate change and overall environmental crises.

My delegation, therefore calls on all parties to uphold the fundamental tenets of the convention and undertake their respective responsibilities thereof.

Politicization of climate change and backsliding from commitments has to stop. It must be borne in mind also, that **raising new issues now** and then at every COP, however good the intent behind them, could be a hindrance to deliver on the major defining issues.

COP 29 should focus on the major outstanding issues. The main GHGs emitter country parties have to take the lead in implementing necessary measures towards a transparent and quantified green-house-gas emission reduction and finance raising targets that could be defining in securing a safe way out of the crisis for our planet.

In concluding my statement, I express Eritrean delegation's best wishes for UNFCCC-COP 29 in Baku to come out with deliberations that will impart it historical relevance in the whole global climate negotiation processes.

I thank you all for your attention.

November 19, 2024