

**POLISH STATEMENT**  
**ON THE OCCASION OF THE COP6**  
**OF THE CARPATHIAN CONVENTION**  
**25 November 2020**

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Friends

Unfortunately, we were not able to gather today in Rzeszów – the heart of a beautiful Podkarpackie Region. We hope, that a short movie you have seen during the first session of our meeting, gave you a brief insight into this region and allowed you to feel Carpathian atmosphere for a moment.

Last months we've worked very hard towards preparations of COP6. Due to Covid 19 we had to change our plans, and instead of physical meetings in Vienna, Budapest or other sites, we had to sit in front of our computers at home and had several meetings only in virtual format. It was a serious challenge for all of us, for all Parties and stakeholders, but also for the Secretariat, which organized our work in a completely different way. But we managed to overcome those difficulties and reached a consensus on organisation of virtual COP, as far as we know – the first online COP in history.

During efficient Hungarian presidency, the Parties managed to agree virtually on the content of several important documents, including the International Action Plan on Conservation of Large Carnivores and Ensuring Ecological Connectivity, the Joint Strategic Action Plan 2021-2026 for the Implementation

of the Protocol on Sustainable Transport and the Long-term Vision 2030 towards combating climate change in the Carpathians and corresponding Implementation Framework 2030. The Parties prepared a set of comprehensive decisions, which COP is about to adopt in an hour. Those decisions will direct and strengthen our activities on the implementation of the Convention in next three years. Let me now highlight a few of them.

Efficient implementation of the Convention can only be done with an active involvement of local communities and authorities at regional and local levels. This is why Poland welcomes adoption of the decision COP6/2 encouraging Parties to promote and support implementation of the Carpathian Convention across the sectors at the regional and local level and inviting regional and local authorities and relevant stakeholders to actively engage in and contribute to the process of implementation of the Convention. In Poland we have already established cooperation system via the Carpathian Convention Steering Committee, which connects entities involved in the Carpathian issues at national, regional and local level.

We have good cooperation mainly with the Podkarpackie Region and we are grateful to Mr Ortyl, Marshal of Podkarpackie Voivodship for his personal involvement into activities on sustainable development in the Carpathians, as well as promotion of Carpathian issues at the EU level, including organisation of 2<sup>nd</sup> Carpathian Days of Good Neighbourhood – Meeting of the Carpathian Regions and kind offer to arrange another such a meeting in 2021, possibly in

conjunction with the Carpathian Ministerial Conference in Poland. During our presidency in the Carpathian Convention we will strive to enhance this kind of cooperation and involve all relevant stakeholders into it.

We would also like to strengthen cooperation with the EU and its institutions, with aim to have the European Commission as a 8<sup>th</sup> Party to the Convention. We will strive to implementation of the Road Map for the EU accession to the Carpathian Convention.

We also welcome cooperation with UNEP, which supports the Carpathian activities and supports the Secretariat, located in its premises in Vienna, as well as cooperation with other conventions and international bodies, including the Convention on Biological Diversity. We believe, that the Carpathian Convention can successfully play a role of regional mechanism supporting the implementation of the upcoming Post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. It can also be an instrument of raising awareness of the importance of mountain biodiversity.

We wanted also to underline a role of scientific community. Without collaboration with Eurac Research and Science for the Carpathians, it is hard to imagine progress in solving Carpathian challenges.

We welcome decisions on all specific thematic areas of the Convention. There is a need to keep balance between individual sectors and put more efforts towards broader inclusion of those which are a bit behind the others.

Last, but not least, we appreciate kind offer of Serbia to host COP7 in 2023 and wish them to hold it in more convenient and safe surroundings.

Thank you very much