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The Address of the President of Latvia at the COP 24

Your Excellency President Duda,

Ladies and gentlemen,

The historical breakthrough of the Paris Agreement is an outstanding achievement for multilateralism. At the same time, it is the starting point, not the end of the process.

Currently global warming is far from staying within the 2-degree, let alone the 1.5-degree, objective!

The effects of climate change are becoming increasingly evident and more severe. This summer we again experienced record-breaking heat all around the world. The recent IPCC Special Report clearly demonstrates the risks that further global warming poses to both human societies and the ecosystem as a whole.

This September United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres stated: “Climate change is the defining issue of our time – and we are at a defining moment”. We truly are! The world is counting on us to make the Paris Agreement a reality!

Here, in Katowice, we must ensure that the world is firmly on the path towards what was agreed to 3 years ago in Paris. We have to design a long-term climate change governance regime. It must encourage everyone to do more, as foreseen by the ambition cycle of the Paris Agreement.

Let me underline the issue of transparency. It is critical for building trust among stakeholders.

To achieve this we must agree on a robust transparency framework - a framework that will build trust and send a strong signal to the private sector to advance innovation and investment in the green economy.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Latvia is committed to greenhouse gas emission reduction and strengthening its climate change resilience. We are building policies to achieve the targets for 2030 and beyond.

Of course, it is not easy. It requires many changes in sectoral policies, and above all, in peoples' mindsets. But we have no other choice than to move forward.

Let us all respect and not re-interpret the Paris Agreement. Let's make the long-term goals of the Paris Agreement a reality both here in COP 24 negotiations and back at home – in our daily activities and decisions!