

**Speech by the President of the Republic of Finland,
Mr. Sauli Niinistö, at the World Leaders' Summit in Glasgow on Tuesday, 2 November
2021**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

more than 40 years ago, in 1979, experts from around the world met in Geneva at the first World Climate Conference.

In that conference, climate change was recognized as a serious threat. In 1990, the IPCC published its first assessment report that highlighted the global consequences of climate change.

For decades, science has been sounding the alarm bell. During these decades, we have gained more knowledge. We know the risks.

A lot has been done. The Paris Agreement was a historic milestone, and after that, many countries have set new climate goals. Finland belongs to the most ambitious: we aim to be carbon neutral by 2035.

But we have reached a point where we need to move beyond goals and pledges. Change may seem inconceivable but only until we act. Combatting climate change is one of our weightiest human responsibilities.

Ensuring adequate climate finance is crucial. Finland is doing its part by almost doubling its climate finance to developing countries. By co-chairing the Coalition of Finance Ministers for Climate Action,

we also encourage the integration of climate action into national budgeting. Many truly impactful measures lie in this domain.

As an arctic country, Finland is particularly concerned about the fast-warming Arctic region. Everyone else should be concerned too: if we lose the arctic, we lose the globe. In the Arctic, reducing black carbon and methane emissions is essential.

No emission reduction measures will be enough, if we don't take care of our carbon sinks. As the most forested country in Europe, Finland places great importance to sustainable use of forests. Every year, 150 million trees are planted in Finland. Globally, we need to strengthen efforts to halt forest loss.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The original title of the 1979 World Climate Conference was "A Conference of Experts on Climate and Mankind". Already more than 40 years ago we knew that climate change is the result of the actions of mankind, and that it can determine the future of mankind. Now it is time to deliver on our pledges and shoulder our human responsibilities.