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National Statement by Prime Minister Kaja Kallas, Estonia

November 1, 2021, Glasgow, COP26

Distinguished Heads of Government

Dear colleagues

We share a deep concern for our people who struggle with the combined effects of climate change, COVID19, economic difficulties, and in far too many cases – real threat to life. Yet, I believe, we are hopeful. I am very proud that the European Union has adopted an **ambitious climate law** and is determined to make the **green transition** sustainable and just. The EU has proven that this can be accomplished without sacrificing economic growth.

You can afford it because you are rich, some say. We say: we will help you. Also Estonia has this year allocated 1.5 million euros to international climate change collaboration, in addition to our development co-operation funds.

But sometimes **political will** must come before money. There have been many calls for action in different walks of life, **from abandoning coal to increasing biodiversity**. Some might say that these are only words. But those words have led to action in-between COPs.

However, we understand that not all calls for action are easy to join for each country. We all have our own economic models and specific challenges. Estonia had a very difficult starting position, being almost completely dependent on energy from our national fossil fuel - oil shale. But **we have already reduced our emissions around 70%**.

Green transition is a reality in Estonia. We aim to stop production of electricity from oil shale by 2035 and phase out oil shale based energy entirely by 2040.

We have been helped by the **collective political will of the EU**, its carbon market, and its support schemes. But the change is driven and implemented by the Estonian people, their openness to reforms, their digital skills and a vision for the future. As I am proud of the EU efforts, I am also proud of Estonia, our people, and companies.

I mentioned **digital skills**. We believe that digital solutions have a big role to play in achieving energy efficiency, waste reduction as well as any other green goal. We want to share our ideas with other countries at this conference and from here on.

Data is an important building block in our joint efforts to fight climate change. For this reason, **Estonia has launched in the UNEP framework a new global cooperation called “Data for the Environment Alliance” or DEAL in short.** I take this opportunity to invite all parties to join this initiative to improve data management capacities across the globe.

I would like to sincerely thank the UK and the UN for organizing this conference in these challenging circumstances. To our negotiators, I wish constructive spirit. Let the history remember COP26 for its results!