Nineteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 19) and the Ninth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP 9) Warsaw, Poland

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Statement by

H.E. Ms. Nino Sharashidze

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Georgia

Mr. Chairman,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

It is a great honor and pleasure for me to be here. On behalf of the Government of Georgia, I would like to thank the government of Poland and people of Poland for hosting the Nineteenth Conference of the Parties of UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Georgia is a small country; yet, it has shown itself to be committed to taking positive steps towards global efforts against climate change. It is the outline of our common future, a future that we share, no matter from which part of the world and which walk of life we come. It is up to each and every one of us how we address the challenges, deal with needs and embrace opportunities. It depends on us how we do it individually and as a part of the international community.

Georgia is extremely vulnerable to climate change. Disasters caused by natural hazards are characterized by high extensiveness, frequency and risk level. Floods, flash floods, landslides, mudflows, snow avalanches, heavy rains, storm winds, droughts, etc. substantially affect the national economy.

Hence, adaptation to the adverse impacts of climate change is a priority for the Government of Georgia.

Due to economic collapse in the past, Georgia's GHG emissions have decreased from 50 to 13 million tons of CO2eq. However, with future economic growth emissions will increase. Georgia is determined to grow its economy through the low-emission path. As such, we have started working on a Low Emission Development Strategy, and the identification of Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions.

The second development with the potential to become a success story is the Covenant of Mayors. In Georgia, so far municipalities of seven cities have signed the Covenant of Mayors and took the responsibility to reduce GHG emissions by 20% by 2020. These seven cities, being the largest cities of our country, represent half of our total population.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

There is a lot of ongoing discussions on the transformational impact, environmental integrity, the role of cities, the need to link adaptation and mitigation, disaster risk reduction - we need to translate them into actions, we need to make them happen.

Let me conclude by expressing my hope that this conference will foster closer relationships and stronger cooperation amongst the government, business, academia and civil society with a renewed and strengthened commitment to combat climate change.

Let me assure you that Georgia will be a reliable partner in jointly addressing the global challenges and creating preconditions for climate friendly and sustainable development.

Thank you for your kind attention!