

**Speech of the Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia,  
H.E. Ms Nino Tandilashvili at the sixth GEF Assembly**

Da Nang, Viet Nam

16:00, 27 June, 2018

Mr. Chairman,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,

I am extremely honored to be here today at the 6<sup>th</sup> GEF Assembly. Let me use this opportunity and on behalf of the Georgian delegation express the appreciation to the Global Environment Facility for organizing this meeting, significant work that have already been carried out by this organization, and its efforts in environmental protection around the world. I would also like to join my colleagues in extending the gratitude to the Government of Viet Nam for hosting us and giving the opportunity to work in such a pleasant atmosphere.

As we all are aware, the GEF serves as a financing mechanism for several multilateral environmental agreements and plays a significant role in the implementation of the global environmental conventions. The GEF, with identification of the countries' needs and focusing on choosing the right influencing model, helps the countries in the application of the provisions of the environmental conventions at the national levels.

Today many countries are facing climate change risks, aggravated by human activities at local level. No justification is needed that change of countries' approaches to the environment in a manner to reduce or eliminate the negative impacts on the environment is of outmost importance. Therefore, we appreciate the funding system of the GEF that gives the opportunity to the countries to plan their national environmental portfolios well in advance.

Furthermore, I would like to emphasize the importance of the GEF Small Grant Programme, which is a successful mechanism for generating global environmental and sustainable development benefits through community based actions and remains highly responsive to local and national needs and priorities. The GEF SGP has being successfully implemented in Georgia and with its support we have significantly succeeded in addressing the major environmental issues in the regions.

Distinguished delegates,

A very ambitious agenda is in front of us – implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. Georgia, along with some other countries, submitted its first Voluntary National Report on implementation of SDGs that was agreed upon during the Sustainable Development Summit in 2015. My Government has offered high-level political support to incorporating SDGs into national priorities. We have already nationalized all 17 Goals, 98 Targets and 204 Indicators. The process is ongoing. Our priority is to create the system, which will be flexible enough to integrate economic, social, and environmental dimensions of development, in the implementation of which all we are the stakeholders - the Government, civil society and each citizen, international organizations, financial institutions, business sector and academia.

Let me conclude by saying that we, representatives of the member countries have witnessed to what extend the support provided by the GEF has significantly assisted us in meeting of our obligations under the environmental conventions and we strongly believe that the GEF support will contribute us in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda on sustainable development as well.

Thank you for your attention