



**ISESCO speech delivered by**  
**HE Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca**  
**at the 7th Islamic Conference of Environment Ministers**  
**Kingdom of Morocco, October 2017**

Your Royal Highness  
Excellencies, distinguished guests, dear friends,  
Merhba minn Malta !

It is an honour to address this opening session of the 7th Islamic Conference of Environment Ministers.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank his Majesty King Mohammed VI, for giving his high patronage to this prestigious conference.

I am so disappointed that I can not be there with you.

Let me begin by commending the inspirational work of ISESCO, and the dedicated leadership of its Director General, Dr. Abdulaziz Altwaijri.

Let me also commend the ethos of today's conference, which highlights the importance of the United Nations' Agenda 2030, and its seventeen Sustainable Development Goals.

I am convinced that this conference will focus on those goals which directly target the need to promote and prioritise the environmental sustainability of our planet.

The various Sustainable Development Goals, such as Goal Number 13, on addressing climate change, Goal Number 14, on safeguarding life below water, and Goal Number 15, on protecting life on land, give us the framework for a sustainable way forward.

I believe that we must engage, in our conversations, the participation of civil society at every step of the way. This is why the inclusion of our communities of faith is so important.

When we talk about the role of Islam, in facing contemporary environmental and ecological challenges, we are referring to the contributions of some 23 percent of the global population.

Therefore, listening to, and valuing, the voices of the world's Muslim population is of utmost importance, in order to fully implement the United Nations Agenda 2030.

No nation can address the issue of environmental sustainability alone.

I believe that it is the responsibility of all the international community.

The International Community needs to effectively implement strategies of development that can meet the needs of today, while also ensuring the needs of our future generations.

Humanity cannot afford to continue causing damage to the environment by depleting vital resources. In order to effect strategies of sustainable development, we must transcend borders.

For this reason, processes of intercultural connections and interfaith dialogue are crucial for collaboration. It is only in this way that we can ensure the successful implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

I am proud that My Foundation for the Wellbeing of Society, has encouraged and took practical initiatives, to create safe spaces for connection with the diverse faith traditions and communities in the Maltese Islands.

I am convinced that our religious beliefs have a strong influence on the ways that we live together, as a united community of citizens and nations.

Let me therefore reiterate my confidence in the leadership that Islamic states are showing, at this conference and beyond, to be champions for the future, to address the effects of climate change, and to promote sustainable and clean energy.

I augur that this conference will be yet another opportunity to share ideas, to be innovative, and to prioritise investment in ecologically respectful and sustainable approaches. Such a way forward will ensure that the challenges of poverty and exclusion are successfully overcome.

I believe that green economies are crucial for the survival of all humanity.

Green economies can link the Global North and South, in a united front for the necessary awareness, that the sustainability of our planet will ensure the holistic wellbeing of humanity.

Green economies can also create new opportunities for employment, for our young people.

Green economies will directly help in creating prosperity.

I am pleased to note that exciting developments are already underway, in various parts of the world, to promote sustainable solutions.

For example, I must commend Morocco's initiative to create a massive solar power plant, which is helping to reduce the country's carbon emissions.

When we all work together, towards one common goal of shared prosperity and holistic wellbeing, then we can truly unleash the enormous potential of our united family of nations.

Thank you for your attention, and as we say in Malta, "is-sliem ghalikom!"