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Discours de Mr Samuel Cogolati, Président de la délégation belge à l'UIP

Madame President,

Dear colleagues, dear friends,

The fight against **Covid-19** and the military **aggression by Russia of Ukraine** is of course attracting all our attention.

Yet, the climate crisis also requires **urgent action** from all our parliaments around the world. For many, the climate emergency is already **a matter of life or death**, as homes and futures are on the line.

Just a week ago, the **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change** again released a very painful report showing the terrible effects of climate change.

As we speak, Earth's poles are undergoing **extreme heat**. *Antarctica is now more than 40 degrees Celsius warmer than average!*

Let us face the facts: we have not done enough to meet the Paris Climate Agreement **1.5°C warming limit!** If we want to meet that cap, we only have 8 years to act.

We know which **legislative reforms we need in order** to achieve big cut of carbon emissions in *this* decade. We simply need the political will to make it happen.

I would like to outline at least 3 instruments which can make a positive change:

- **Stop subsidizing fossil fuel pollution and addiction !** The same goes for biofuels which destroy our forests. Let us get rid of dirty industries. And with the billions we save, let us invest in wind, solar and energy efficiency.

- In terms of governance, for the first time in history, my assembly will not only control the financial budgets of the executive in monetary terms only. The government of Belgium now also has the duty to submit **carbon budgets**, with clear CO2 cuts for every Ministry of Agriculture, Defence, Economy and so on!

- Last but not least, it's time for criminal law to urgently come to the rescue. We must protect nature and future generations in much stronger, more enforceable ways... Not just with nice words, but real judicial action. Because without water, without forests, without clean air, we cannot survive on Earth. I am very proud to say that the Belgian parliament has committed to recognize a **new crime of ecocide**, both in our Criminal Code, but also at the international level;

Ladies and gentlemen,

I entered politics with one leitmotiv – the strong belief that we need to do everything faster and bolder to save our planet.

Whatever your political party or country, we, as parliamentarians, have no choice but **to act in line with science**.

In every single parliament of the world, this is the moment to rise up, think big and unite – to protect the most vulnerable ones, including future generations!

Thank you.