

**STATEMENT**  
**Mr Kurmanbek Dyikanbaev**  
**68<sup>TH</sup> United Nations Civil Society Conference**

Dear conference participants,

Allow me to read a letter with greetings from the President of the Kyrgyz Republic Sooronbay Sharipovich Jeenbekov.

“Bishkek 26 August, 2019

Dear participants of the conference!

It is my great pleasure to greet you at the 68th United Nations Civil Society Conference. This time you will concentrate your efforts on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goal 11 “Sustainable Cities and Communities.”

For the Kyrgyz Republic, where people live in the cities as well as in the mountainous areas, the issue we consider today is of a key importance. I believe that the concerns of the mountain communities, the most vulnerable to the modern challenges like climate change and migration, must be highlighted in the final document of the Conference and remain in the focus of the United Nations Sustainable Development Agenda 2030.

Official delegation and experts from the Kyrgyz Republic with their partners from Utah, as well as other delegations, are intended to contribute to the work of the conference.

I wish you success in achieving the ambitious goals of the Conference which will lead to significant changes in everyday life of the mountain communities globally and in the Kyrgyz Republic.

With best wishes,

Sooronbai Zheenbekov”

I would like also to express my thanks to the organizers of this conference for the kind invitation to speak at this important United Nations forum, especially Utah Valley University (UVU), a partner of the Kyrgyz Republic. UVU has participated in joint advocacy for the UN agenda of sustainable mountain development (SMD) since 2006. At the beginning of August this year, myself and others in Kyrgyzstan hosted a UVU delegation. This conference is taking place in the mountainous state of Utah, one of the successful models of SMD. Therefore, it can demonstrate that mountain communities must be in the focus of attention of the UN and especially its 2030 Agenda of Sustainable Development.

For Kyrgyzstan, as a country with over 90 per cent of its territory covered by mountains, the implementation of the sustainable development of cities and towns, particularly in mountain regions, is one of our main economic priorities. Kyrgyzstan pays special attention to this issue in part because it was one of the countries that initiated the celebration of the International Year of Mountains in 2002 which was declared during the 53-rd session of the UN General Assembly.

The President of Kyrgyzstan declared 2018 as «Year of development of regions». It was done by taking into account that the development of regions have to provide the necessary impetus for the development of economy of our mountainous country. As a continuation of that policy, this year was declared as the «Year of development and digitization of the regions». We are confident that digitization of all public activities and services will not only allow us to reduce corruption, but also to stimulate business activities and increase confidence among the populace to state institutions, and as a result, our economy will accelerate its development.

Thank you very much for your attention.