

Remarks by

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Chairperson of the Executive Board

Global observation of the “International Day of Zero Waste”

28 March 2024

Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,
Dear friends,

I would like to begin by thanking Her Excellency Madam Gülnur AYBET, Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of Türkiye to UNESCO for her kind invitation to attend and address this event.

The *International Day of Zero Waste*, celebrated annually on 30 March, is a critical initiative to remind us all of our duties as customers and consumers. We must all consider the origins and impacts of the goods and products we purchase. **We must reuse and recycle what we can, when we can.**

While being conscious of this attitude on a daily basis may require extra efforts for those of our generation, we should at least make sure it become instinctive for our children. This is why school curricula must be adapted to integrate these notions.

It is clear that our current culture of consumption is unsustainable, we must change our habits and to do so we should find viable solutions thinking out of the box. Politicians should support this endeavor as we must massively invest in modern waste management systems and policies that encourage people to re-use and recycle everything.

The role of women is particularly important as they could play a “powerful role in influencing sustainable consumption decisions”. As recognized in the UN resolution, women “take the lead in promoting environmental protection and conservation”.

Reaching zero-waste societies is not an impossible goal but requires consciousness of the issue at stake and actions at all levels from us all.

Thank you.