



## OFFICIAL STATEMENT FROM PRESIDENT & CHAIR

### 2nd International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies

*(for GGGI website and Korean media)*

Today, September 7, 2021, marks the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Day of Clean Air for blue skies as designated by the United Nations General Assembly. This day reminds us of the need to act now to reduce air pollution and take a stand for the fundamental right to clean air for ourselves and for future generations.

Last year, as the President of the Assembly and the Chair of the Council of the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI), I had the pleasure of delivering the opening remarks at GGGI's "Blue Skies and Net Zero 2050 Campaign Round Table", which examined the inextricable linkages between air quality, health, and climate and how we can all work together to improve the air we breathe.

Now, one year later, the impacts of air pollution still threaten our health and livelihoods. With the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing climate crisis, it's imperative that we prioritize the return of clean air and blue skies.

This year's International Day of Clean Air for blue skies has the theme of "Healthy Air, Healthy Planet", emphasizing the effects of air pollution on our environment and health. Recent studies have reinforced this urgency to solve the air pollution crisis by demonstrating that 15% of COVID-19 deaths globally may be linked to chronic exposure to air pollution, and even just a small increase of long-term air pollution exposure is linked with an increase in the COVID-19 death rate. Air pollution has also been shown to have detrimental impacts on climate change, biodiversity, ecosystems, and even our quality of life.

This should be a wake-up call for all of us to realize that air quality, our health, and the environment are inextricably linked, and we must work together toward urgent and decisive collective actions.

Therefore, it is my pleasure to join the call for action from the United Nations and support the International Day of Clean Air for blue skies—to urge governments, the private sector, civil society, and all individuals to make meaningful changes to lower air pollution and transform our communities. Let us together bring back clean air and blue skies!

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