



TUVALU

Statement
Presented by
PRIME MINISTER

Honourable Enele Sosene Sopoaga

at

The 69th Session of the United Nations General Assembly

UN CLIMATE SUMMIT

23 September 2014

New York

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Secretary General,
Excellencies
Ladies and Gentlemen

It is indeed a great honour and pleasure to participate in this Climate Change Summit, on behalf of the Government and people of Tuvalu. I congratulate you UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for leadership in bringing this Summit together. This is a momentous occasion. It is the largest gathering of heads of State and government to tackle climate change. We cannot miss this opportunity to take decisive action.

As undoubtedly one of the most vulnerable countries to the impacts of climate change, Tuvalu's future is in your hands. The time for denial, for hesitation, for pandering to the interests of the fossil fuel industry is over. We must all act together for the future of humankind.

Everyone must do something. To this end, Tuvalu has announced that it is committed to employing 100% renewable energy for its electricity supply sector by 2020. This commitment, and I use the word commitment intentionally, will not be easy. We live in a harsh, corrosive environment constantly bombarded by salt sea spray, severe weather events and the occasional cyclone. Technology is prone to failure. But we will do our best. Already we are well on the way to achieving this target thanks to the generous support of various donors including the EU, Japan, New Zealand, UAE and IRENA.

I mention the renewable energy target as part of our commitment towards a substantial outcome in Paris 2015. My government firmly believes that Paris 2015 will be an historic moment where we will agree on a new protocol to address climate change. We have learnt from the mistakes made in Copenhagen where we were being encouraged to sign on to a meaningless declaration with shallow promises of finance and half-baked mitigation pledges that weren't worth the paper they were written on.

With respect to the 2015 protocol, there are some key elements which we think will be essential to make the agreement meaningful.

First, we must recognize the vulnerability of countries like Tuvalu. The new protocol must make special provisions for Least Development Countries, Small Island Developing States and countries in Africa that suffer droughts and floods.

The new protocol should have specific provisions for adaptation. These provisions should fully acknowledge the need to provide support to the most vulnerable. Ease of access to funding and technology is critical. We should not be burdened by additional reporting requirements.

Another critical outcome relates to Loss and Damage. We need an international mechanism that is enshrined within the protocol to ensure that the countries affected by human-induced

climate change are properly compensated for the damage they suffer. An effective compensation regime is clearly necessary. We must be careful not to confuse this issue with the disaster risk reduction work under the Hyogo Framework. Hyogo deals with natural disasters. Here we are talking about human-induced climate change.

On mitigation, we firmly believe that the major emitters should take economy-wide emission reduction targets. These targets should be properly enshrined within the agreement. We do not want to see simplistic pledges in a side agreement that has no legal standing. For other countries, that are not major emitters, they too should be encouraged to make commitments to action. That is why Tuvalu is willing to do its share by setting a renewable energy target. But the burden should not rest on those who are least able to afford the change. The major emitters must take the lead.

Within the mitigation agenda, I wish to urge extreme caution with respect to carbon markets. There has been strong pressure in the lead up to this meeting to sign on to support for so-called carbon pricing. We have resisted this pressure. The carbon market is not the cure-all that we are led to believe. In fact, it can be a means to avoid real action. Paper transfers of emission rights often turn out to be emission wrongs. The major polluters are let off the hook as they trade away their emission obligations. This is not the way to properly tackle the problem. The major polluters need to take action within their own country to stop polluting. It's that simple.

The new protocol must have adequate arrangements for the means of implementation. It should provide real commitments to new finance, new technology and new capacity building. Renaming existing funding promises as new commitments will not work and will not create the necessary faith building to guarantee a real response to climate change. Nevertheless, we must not ignore existing funds. In particular, we must ensure that the LDC Fund is properly resourced with finances and the Adaptation Fund is allowed to continue with new innovative sources of funding

So these are the major elements we wish to see in the new protocol. But countries cannot wait until 2020 for these new arrangements to be put in place. We must include arrangements within the protocol for early action, well before 2020.

Secretary-General, it is now time to be serious. It is now time to invest in the future of this planet and to divest ourselves from the need to pollute our atmosphere. At the end of the day, we must recognise that there is a limit to what the world can sustain. We live in the same world, and it does not matter who wins in the negotiations, we must work together to save the world. Let's make the Paris protocol, an agreement that will change our world and save Tuvalu. For if we save Tuvalu, we will save the world

I thank you.

Tuvalu mo te Atua