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STATEMENT

TO THE

**FIRST SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF PARTIES ONE (COP1)
ON THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION FOR CLIMATE CHANGE**

BY

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Madame President, Honourable Ministers, Members of Parliaments, Excellencies, Distinguished guests, NGOs,

It is my great pleasure and honour to warmly congratulate you for your election as president of this First Session of the Conference of the Parties.

I wish to extend my sincere thanks and gratitude through you, to the people and Government of Germany, for the warm hospitality to our delegation, in this historical city of Berlin.

Our appreciation also transcends to the Chairman, Mr Raul Estrada, for his most outstanding endurance and diplomacy that has brought us this far.

Madame President, our common vision - to save the planet for us and future generations - can only be truly realised if we correct the flaws in the Convention and strengthen the commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, whilst improving the standard of living in developing countries.

Climate change and the perpetual emissions of greenhouse gases threatens the very existence of future generations in vulnerable small island states. The world community has recognised this fact based on adequate scientific information.

Madame President, it is ironical, that the dangers being posed by climate change in developing countries, are a result of the historical legacy of industrialisation and the continuing consumption and production patterns that exists today in the developed world.

Twenty five per cent of the world's population live in the developed world, yet are responsible for seventy five percent of global carbon emissions.

The outcome of this conference is therefore of paramount importance to my country ,which consists of many small islands. We stand firm to see that the commitments, and affirmations in the Framework Convention on Climate Change are fulfilled.

The failure by developed countries to meet commitments to stabilize and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, particularly CO₂, methane and other industrial emissions serves to remind us, that only further practical efforts will reverse the injustice done to the global environment. The developed world must take the lead urgently.

We urge the developed countries in the Asia/Pacific region to enhance their commitments in mitigating green house gas emissions, and to maintain the mandatory track set out in the relevant Articles of the Convention.

Any shift in obligations by Annex One parties, will defeat the spirit and the letter of the Convention and the partnership forged in Rio.

Madame President,

This first Conference of the Parties calls for greater political challenges. The Parties must adopt humble measures set out in the Protocol of the Alliance of the Small Island States. If the adequacy of commitments has fallen short, then our duty to the convention, logically is to strengthen the text and provide specific targets and timetables for reducing other greenhouse gases.

Berlin is unified and environmental conscious. A perfect setting for the COP to seriously refocus the original intent - the goals and objectives of the Convention with certainty.

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At the international level, our reaffirmation of the present and future environmental crisis must be complimented with critical, hard-line decisions, perhaps unfavorable to other interests, but significantly vital for a concerted moral effort towards sustainable development and future survival of this planet.

At the regional level, Heads of Governments met at the South Pacific Forum Meeting in Brisbane, Australia last year. They endorsed the communiqué and I quote:

The Forum recognized that existing commitments in the Framework Convention on Climate Change will not meet the ultimate objective of the Convention, and called for an early agreement on a process for negotiating one or more protocols to implement and elaborate the convention so that reductions of Greenhouse gas emissions are achieved.

end of quote.

My government reaffirms this endorsement.

Madame President our region has also embarked on major initiatives through the South Pacific Regional Environmental Program. Because of our low lying atolls and coastal areas, the AOSIS Protocol is a pressing matter. We view it not only for our survival, but in a holistic manner for the existence of many sectors that will be further aggravated by climate change in the earth's atmosphere. WE must avoid the domino theory.

Papua New Guinea is fully committed to taking decisions for action at this conference. On a national level, with the full participation of landowners, the government is managing and conserving the forests which not only host a multitude of living organisms, but provides an effective sink for greenhouse gas emissions of the world.

The National government has also embarked in developing other energy sufficient schemes that may meet the demands of the rural population.

Our sustainable forest policies and customary production patterns prevails in a society undergoing many changes. Like other countries in Asia/Pacific, there is an ever growing demand for rural development and prosperity at the village level.

For sustainable development - it is vital that our partners provide these incentives for our people:

- trade and investments
- capacity building
- technical training and technology transfer - appropriate to suit the unique conditions of our societies.

In Papua New Guinea the people belong to the environment; the sea, mountains, forests, land, rivers, and so on. Communal cooperation is the ruling principle. The demand for development is inevitable, and is ultimately posing some difficulties on the limited resources of the national government.

Madame President, we recognize that climate change is not a novel isolated issue. Domestically, we are threatened by environmental degradation affecting our livestock, agriculture, coasts, sea-level rise, and our wetlands. Climate change is an urgent people-centered problem.

The steps we make at this conference will be measured by the standard of life that future generations will enjoy. In our case, the failure of any progress amounts to **existence versus extinction**. Words must be followed by action.

There are many modest sacrifices that the developed world can do to mitigate these problems. This delegation notes moves by Annex one countries to engage in initiatives, such as joint implementation amongst themselves and in other creative schemes. We are exploring the opportunities that such schemes may benefit all without side-tracking the real issues.

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions is too often perceived to have negative financial impacts by a few countries. In fact, the opposite is perhaps more true to the case as studies indicate. Because of the time limits, I wish to express thanks to UNEP, WMO, the IPCC and UNDP for their work in this area. We also acknowledge the positive contribution and support given by the NGO community, the Media and other organisations.

No political will to act now would mean catastrophes worldwide, devastation and mass loss of lives and Biodiversity. The strengthening of the Climate Change Convention, through the adoption of further measures, such as the AOSIS Protocol, surely offers the best hope in a global response to climate change.

But at first the polluter must pay as we forge the common grounds.

Madame President, the inter-dependence of the global community and our efforts in promoting the new development paradigm of international economic cooperation will bring benefits to all of us.

However the developed world must fully recognize that there exists **common but differentiated responsibilities**. They must also ensure that any measures taken are not at the expense of our development.

Our objective is transparent - adopt the AOSIS protocol and strengthen the targets. The progress made so far at this COP should move us forward to this ultimate goal. This is the very least we can do for our children.

Thank you Madame President.