



## Republic of Nauru

Prepared Statement by  
H.E. the Hon. Marcus Stephen, M.P.  
President & Head of State  
of the Republic of Nauru

at the

United Nations Climate Change Conference'

Joint High-level segment of the Conference of the Parties (COP) and  
Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the  
Kyoto Protocol (CMP)

Copenhagen, Denmark  
16 December 2009

Thank you, Prime Minister Rasmussen.

On behalf of the Republic of Nauru, I would like to congratulate you on your assumption of the Presidency and to extend my warm thanks for your hospitality. The people of my island are depending on your leadership to guide us to a fair, ambitious, and legally binding outcome.

Mr. President,

These negotiations have become extremely contentious and we have failed to resolve many fundamental issues. It is clear that not all of us appreciate the gravity of the problem we face. I am under intense political pressure to abandon my principles, and instead, accept the inadequate proposals on offer. I would like to respond.

We have been asked to be practical.

The science tells us that we must limit the rise in global temperature to well below 1.5° Celsius to preserve the chance of avoiding the worst impacts of climate change. To accept anything less would mean the destruction of our marine ecosystems, shortages of food and water, and the relocation of our communities. Please tell me -- how is this practical?

We have been asked to be realistic.

We are experiencing the *very real* impacts of climate change and paying a *very real* price. The World Bank estimates that it will cost up to \$100 billion per year for adaptation in developing countries. Yet here in Copenhagen, we have been offered only ten. Please tell me -- how is this realistic?

We have been asked to compromise.

The Republic of Nauru is a single island -- just 21 square kilometers in size. How much of our island should we compromise? We are trapped, with the Pacific Ocean surrounding us on all sides. Sea levels are rising and we have nowhere else to go.

There is one thing I cannot compromise, and that is my commitment to my people.

Mr. President,

We must be practical and realistic. **We must follow the science.** More than half the Parties agree that temperature rise must stay well below 1.5°. It is well past time that everyone recognizes this as the majority position.

And we must respond to critical issues that are beyond the scope of the Convention, such as the security implications of climate change. We must urgently look to fill the gaps in the UN system to address these and other threats.

We face a serious problem. What we need now are serious solutions. The Alliance of Small Island States has tabled a proposal for a two-track, legally binding outcome that is based on the latest scientific evidence and attempts to bridge the divide between Parties. A legally binding agreement is an essential component of a robust framework of global environmental governance.

We have made constructive contributions to this process. But in the end, we emit very little and yet we suffer the consequences. The large emitting countries must take responsibility for their pollution.

The time for games and political brinkmanship has long since passed. So let us not accept half-hearted pledges and half-measures, and start discussing real proposals.

Mr. President,

**There can be no political agreement when there is no political will.**

Thank you.