

SPEECH BY THE HON
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MINISTER OF MALTA AT THE
UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK
CONVENTION ON CLIMATE
CHANGE, COPENHAGEN –
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Mister President/Madame
President,
Distinguished colleagues,

We have come to the beautiful city
of Copenhagen to address the
challenge posed by climate change
– a challenge among the most
urgent and important to have ever

faced humanity. It is now up to us leaders, to embrace the extensive work done over the past two years. We must rise to the occasion and manifest our clear intention to take on this challenge in a serious manner. Malta, together with its EU partners, has put forward significant quantifiable commitments. I now call upon you, our negotiating partners, at this crucial juncture, to engage more forcefully to reach a meaningful outcome. Colleagues, our mandate for achieving a comprehensive, effective and fair climate change regime has never been stronger.

In 1988 Malta launched an initiative for a United Nations Resolution on the "Conservation of Climate as part of the Common Heritage of Mankind". Malta is proud that despite its size and limitations, this initiative resulted in the adoption of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. In the words UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon spoke during the High-Level Event on Climate Change, in September 2007:

"The subject, proposed by the island nation of Malta, remains as evocative today as it did then"

Much has happened since those early days. But the fundamental challenge remains unchanged, and has become even more pressing climate change, and what we do about it, will define us, our era, and ultimately the global legacy we leave for future generations.'

Today, Malta remains as committed as ever to this cause. Malta has proposed an amendment to Annex I to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change with a view to adding the name of Malta. Malta's objective to put itself on the same legal footing as the other Member States of the European Union that are included in Annex I to the

Convention is aimed exclusively at ensuring credibility and transparency in our actions.

Malta has adopted a “National Strategy for Policy and Abatement Measures Relating to the Reduction of Greenhouse Gases” containing mitigation measures aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions and including the implementation of renewable energy sources, electricity efficiency and conservation.

Over the past years Malta has started exploring economically viable options to maximise its use of renewable energy sources. We

have implemented numerous domestic and industrial schemes aimed at incentivising the use of renewable energy as well as the promotion of energy efficiency.

Mr President/Madame President,

As a small island state situated in the Mediterranean Basin, Malta faces the prospect of severe impacts as a result of the adverse effects of climate change.

Malta is likely to have to cope with grave problems including, in particular, water scarcity arising from diminished rainfall, but also other effects such as extreme

weather conditions and rising sea water levels.

Malta is currently formulating an Adaptation Strategy focusing on areas expected to be affected by climate change, including water and flooding, health and socio-economic policy, biodiversity and agriculture.

Malta therefore shares the concerns of other vulnerable small island states and stresses the importance of achieving an ambitious agreement within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Mr President/Madame President,

Climate change is a global strategic issue, affecting our physical, geographical and economic security. Its effects are felt most by the poorer and more vulnerable people and nations who are least able to cope. Climate change is a threat multiplier which exacerbates existing trends and tensions. It threatens to overburden fragile states and regions, fuelling instability and increasing the potential for migration. Malta therefore recognises the need to provide the least developed countries, in particular vulnerable African countries, with adequate

and effective capacity building and financing.

Mr. President/Madame President,

We are here to take an important step towards tackling this global issue, and must *all* contribute in a fair and equitable manner to this concerted effort:

Developed countries should undertake to adopt emission reductions consistent with the recommendations of science, and to provide financial and technological support for action by developing countries to curb the growth in *their* emissions in the decades beyond.

Increased and predictable funding, in the short and long-term, for adaptation to climate change should also form an integral part of this global climate change agreement.

Developing countries, for their part, should embrace the opportunity to integrate resource efficiency in their pursuit of prosperity and sustainable development.

In conclusion Mr
President/Madame President,

The battle against climate change is one of common concern for all mankind and success may only be

achieved through common action.
We must reach an agreement which
expresses our serious commitment
to avoiding dangerous climate
change and reflects our
responsibilities towards the most
vulnerable and to future
generations.

Colleagues, the time to act is now!
... Malta is prepared and committed
to do so.