



GOVERNMENT OF TUVALU

**Tuvalu Statement at the High Level Segment of the COP18/CMP8
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Delivered by
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Excellency Heads of States and Heads of Governments

President of COP18/CMP8

Esteemed Ministers and Head of Delegations

Distinguished Delegates

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is a great honour to once again speak on behalf of the people and government of Tuvalu at this COP18/CMP8. This is my fourth time to address members of the COP and CMP of the UNFCCC. And every time I take the podium, I feel the overwhelming challenge that my beloved country face in making its voice truly heard by countries that care very little about our lives and the existence of our tiny island nation. We came here with great expectations that this COP 18/CMP 8 will reach concrete and

decisive actions considering the gravity and the urgency of our situations in small and low lying island countries like Tuvalu.

Mr President

Before I proceed further, allow me to join previous speakers in extending to your Excellency my sincere congratulation for assuming the presidency. I am sure with your excellent and humble leadership, we will achieve significant outcomes at the end of this conference. I wish to also take this opportunity to extend our profound gratitude and appreciation to the people and government of Qatar for the exceptional logistical arrangements and hospitality accorded to me and my delegation, since our arrival here in Doha. Seeing volunteers outside and inside of this massive building wearing their outfits with letter 'V' is an assuring sign of victory and I hope that Doha COP18/CMP8 will deliver victorious outcomes.

Mr. President

Much has been said about the science of Climate Change. The recent reports by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), International Energy Agency (IEA) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) are further scientific proof that our world is getting warmer and warmer. And all of us know that without any doubt. In Tuvalu, our first hand experience of the climate change and its adverse impacts are indisputable. In the recent past we have experience increasing frequency

and intensity of extreme weather events. Long drought, strong winds and cyclone, high wave overtopping are but some of the real climate change that we encounter in our tiny island country.

Low-lying countries such as Tuvalu are not only vulnerable to these extreme weather event and their devastating consequences, but its very existence is definitely at stake. The sea-level rise is threatening our existence. At 3 meter to 4 meters high, Tuvalu and all the like countries will soon become extinct by the end of the century or much earlier. Therefore, climate change is not only an economic or health concern to us but it is more so a security issue. The security of our people and our nation is in danger and we call upon developed and developing countries especially those that see climate change as not a security issue to please take sound and decisive action now - here in Doha.

Mr President

My delegation came here to Doha with great expectation that, as we close the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol this year, we should be ready to launch the second commitment period as of 1 January 2013 but not later. We therefore expect Annex 1 countries to genuinely make decisive decisions to raise their level of ambitions in order to work towards a one point five degree (1.5°C) temperature limit or lower. The temperature level that is required to save our future generation. This is an urgent call and we must act now before it is too late.

Here in Doha we also expect to put the Bali Action Plan into action. We should conclude our talking and must take concrete action. The Bali Action Plan has been too long in the making. We must fast track its implementation. Let us come up with outcomes that serve the much needed financial support and technical assistance for developing countries and most importantly the vulnerable countries like Tuvalu.

We are gravely concerned about the continued delay in decisive action on climate change. At this meeting we expect to see clear and adequate funding commitments under the Green Climate Fund. Funding should not be held hostage to other negotiations. It was a promise made in Cancun and that promise should be kept. Funding for climate change must be separate to official development assistances.

We also want to see a rapid increase in the mitigation ambition of Annex I Parties. We do not agree with a long drawn out process of developing a long-term work programme on clarifying pledges as suggested by the Umbrella Group. That is a recipe for inaction.

I wish to express my great disappointment at the announcement by certain countries that they will not support a second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol. These countries are stepping backwards in time to an era before 1997 when the Kyoto Protocol came into being. We can't afford to go backwards. For tiny island countries like mine are already feeling the consequences of your decisions.

Mr President

The United Nation Framework Convention on Climate Change is not a convention for only some countries but not others. It must be a convention for all. Time and again we plead to this forum to accept the Republic of China – Taiwan to join and participate in our deliberations. The Republic of China – Taiwan is one of the donor countries that has more people with a much bigger economy than most, if not all, Small Island Developing States (SIDS) who are here as members of the convention. Therefore, Mr President, we would like to once again seek your indulgence in expediting the inclusion and recognition of ROC Taiwan as an active member of this important convention. For like other industrialised countries, ROC is already a donor partner which is already helping out vulnerable countries like Tuvalu in their mitigation and adaptation efforts.

Mr President,

Let me conclude by re-emphasising that Climate Change is the most pressing and challenging problem of our time. Climate change is not a problem for one country, or a group of countries. It is indeed a problem for all countries. So, as leaders of today, we must collectively face this challenge and try to jointly address climate change in the most practical and realistic manner now. Let this Conference in Doha be a memorable one. I ask all those countries who are backtracking, those other countries

who are not willing to accept reality on the ground, to open your eyes and ears more wider so that you can see that the most vulnerable, small and tiny island countries such as Tuvalu are now sinking into the dark ocean.

Tuvalu is sinking. The people are in great danger for our Sovereignty and Nationhood will be lost for ever. My people will soon drown if this Conference is not able to reach impressive conclusions.

Tuvalu mote Atua (Tuvalu for God)

Thank you