

**Statement delivered by
His Excellency the Honourable Baron Divavesi Waqa M.P.
President and Head of State of the Republic of Nauru
at the High-level segment of COP23
15th November, Bonn, Germany**

The Honourable Frank Bainimarama, Prime Minister of Fiji and President of COP23
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates

Guten Tag,

Allow me to begin congratulating my Pacific brother, Prime Minister Bainimarama, for assuming the Presidency of COP23. Let me assure you of my delegation's full support as you lead us through these critical climate talks.

Let me also convey appreciation to the Government of Germany for its support in convening COP23 in this historical city of Bonn.

Mr. President,

This is the fourth year in a row that I have attended the Conference of Parties. I am not sure there are many other Heads of State that could say the same. I share this because it highlights just how seriously my government takes the issue of climate change. That is also why Nauru was among the first countries in the world to ratify the Paris Agreement, and it is why we have made implementation of our NDCs our top priority.

Developing countries demonstrated tremendous leadership and ambition in their contributions, and it is now time for developed countries to live up to their side of the bargain. This must begin with more ambitious commitments to reduce their emissions, and in this regard I would like to recognize our neighbor to the south - New Zealand - whose newly elected Prime Minister the Honorable Jacinda Adern, promising to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050.

In addition, we must see greater attention given to the means of implementation, starting with the expanded use of direct access modalities for financial support. Nauru is ready to lead the renewable energy revolution, but we, like most developing countries cannot do it alone.

Lack of ambition is not the problem. Political will is not the problem. Lack of resources is the problem.

Regrettably, my government also feels obliged to attend this conference at the highest levels to remind the world of the threat we face. While the Paris Agreement was a historic diplomatic achievement, we must remember that we are not on track to achieve its central goal of stopping warming below 1.5 degrees. Far from it.

Failure would be devastating for small islands, though we should not pretend that any additional warming is safe. And this year of record breaking hurricanes and forest fires has made it clear that no country is immune. In this regard, we reiterate our call for scaled up financing for both the Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism as well as for the implementation of action to implement Loss and Damage at the regional and national levels.

Mr. President

We face some daunting challenges over the next century: providing food and freshwater for 9 billion people, protecting millions displaced by storms and ecosystem collapse, and avoiding a proliferation of failed states in the process.

These are challenges that do not respect political borders drawn on a map. They are too big for any one nation to manage alone, and therefore will require unprecedented level of international cooperation – something we just don't seem very good at these days.

Indeed, climate change will be the defining security challenge of the century, and we are simply not prepared for life on a hotter planet. For this reason, Nauru supports the proposal by the Pacific SIDS to appoint a UN Special Representative on Climate and Security, whose work must begin with an assessment of the United Nation's capacity to respond to climate emergencies.

Moreover, we should remember that climate change is not happening in isolation. It is hitting us at a time when the rules of the global economy have already left us more vulnerable to these shocks. Saddled with debt and highly dependent on the most basic goods, we are trapped with few options to escape. It is these twin failures in economic and environmental governance that have created such a dangerous and irreversible situations for many countries – including my own.

Mr. President,

While we work to avert the worst impacts of climate change here in Bonn, we must also be fighting for a fair and more just world in all fora, even those in which the smallest among us might not be represented. That would demonstrate real leadership.

Vielen dank!

