

**STATEMENT BY
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ROYAL GOVERNMENT OF BHUTAN
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**Mr. President
Excellencies
Distinguished Delegates
Ladies and Gentlemen**

1. As with all sessions of this conference, we meet yet again to not only share our hopes and aspirations for a safer planet but also to advance our collective efforts in the fight against climate change. The warning signs of climate change cannot be ignored. Extreme weather patterns have become the norm. Super storm ‘Sandy’ and typhoon ‘Bopha’ remind us once again that no country - rich and poor, large or small – will be spared from the devastating impacts of climate change.
2. My country, Bhutan, tucked away in the mighty folds of the Himalayas is a victim of climate change. We remain highly vulnerable to its adverse impacts such as - catastrophic glacial lake outburst floods, drying water sources, increasing landslides and flashfloods, freak windstorms, decreasing snowfall and unpredictable rainfall patterns - which not only threaten the livelihood of our people and communities, but also our survival.
3. Due to such threats, we continue to undertake concerted efforts towards addressing climate change. Such efforts form an integral part of a broader policy of environmental conservation, which forms one of the four pillars of our development philosophy of Gross National Happiness. In addition to 72.5% of our land being under forest cover, we have about 50% of our land area as parks and conservation areas. Notwithstanding the imperatives of socio-economic development, we have unilaterally committed to remain carbon neutral for all times.

Mr. President

4. With regard to our adaptation efforts, we successfully completed our first NAPA project to reduce the risk of a catastrophic glacial lake outburst flood from one of the most dangerous glacial lakes called *Thorthormi tsho*. Over the last four years, the outlet of the lake was lowered by 5 meters and an early warning system installed in the valleys downstream. We wish to express our appreciation to all the donors of the LDC Fund and also our partners who have contributed to this project, including the Government of Austria, UNDP, WWF and GEF.
5. Implementing this first adaptation project was extremely difficult given the challenging circumstances under which it had to be implemented. However, we continue to undertake these efforts, involving huge sacrifices, hard work and strong commitment on our part.

6. Yet, such actions buy us only little time. Facts and science clearly indicate that with the current level of ambition and trends in global emissions, we are heading towards a 4 degree warmer world. Such a situation would be catastrophic for the most vulnerable nations like Bhutan. For mountainous areas, the rise in temperature will be several times higher than the global average and with rapidly melting glaciers the consequences are unthinkable.
7. However, science also tells us that a future world that limits temperature rise to a 2 degree or even a 1.5 degree rise is within the realm of possibility. Closing the gap is both economically and technologically feasible. It is only a matter of having the political will.

Mr. President

8. While individual countries can play their part, given the global nature of climate change, the imperative to work collectively in a spirit of partnership and shared responsibility cannot be overemphasized. In this regard, the Doha Conference is a defining moment in our common endeavor and therefore must deliver a comprehensive, balanced and highly ambitious outcome.
9. Doha must ensure that it delivers on the extension of the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol and comparable action from those not party to the Protocol so that we do not miss the near term action required before 2020. At the same time, the Adhoc Working Group on Long term Cooperative Action must be closed here in a meaningful manner that does not leave out unresolved issues. The Durban Platform must start its work immediately on matters of substance in order to avoid delay in the conclusion of a new comprehensive agreement by 2015.
10. While we may have established the Green Climate Fund, there is still the uncertainty of whether real and sufficient funds will flow to finance climate change action. In the immediate future, we also join the other LDCs in calling for the operationalization of support for the NAP process from the LDC Fund in 2013.

Mr. President

11. The IPCC has concluded that "warming of the climate system is unequivocal" and that increase in greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere resulting in rising temperatures and climate change are a result of our actions. The consequences of inaction are grim. Let us seize this opportunity to address this serious global challenge in a meaningful manner for the wellbeing of the present and future generations.
12. Thank you and Tashi Delek.