



VANUATU



Statement delivered by

The Honorable Charlot Salwai TABIMASMAS,
Prime Minister of the Republic of Vanuatu

**at the High-Level Segment of the
23rd Conference of the Parties to the
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change**

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Mr. President,
Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates
Ladies and Gentlemen

I bring to you all warm greetings from the people of the Republic of Vanuatu, whom I am privileged to represent at this historic Island COP.

I must start with a heartfelt congratulation to the COP23 Presidency. On behalf of the people of Vanuatu, I express our deepest gratitude to you and Fiji for bringing Pacific Island values, strength and vision to this important forum. I must also express our heartfelt thanks to the Federal Republic of Germany and the UNFCCC Secretariat for your kind hospitality in this beautiful city of Bonn. We call for future Climate Conferences to be hosted by small island developing states.

Mr President, we have travelled a long way to this place to show our resolve and fight against climate change alongside our Island brothers and sisters, as we race ever closer towards a risky future. As SIDS, simultaneously sustained and threatened by the waves and heat of the Pacific Ocean and sun, we are among those nations most exposed to the early impacts of human induced climate change. We are not the contributors but the victims.

As extreme weather events visit our shores with greater frequency and ferocity, and the steady destruction of sea-level rise, coral bleaching and ocean acidification gnaw at the foundations of our economy, land and culture, we are here to remind you of the urgency of this fight.

Category 5 Tropical Cyclones are now a norm in my country causing irrecoverable losses and damages to our economy. —this is a stark reminder of what we will continue to lose in years to come if we fail to take ambitious action today. Within the current convention processes we must see significant action towards implementing Article 8 on Loss & Damage.

Science tells us that we must peak global greenhouse gas emissions and rapidly move towards net-zero emissions if we are to have even a chance at achieving the critical 1.5°C temperature target set down by the Paris Agreement. This is an enormous task, but we need to see more ambition on climate action across the world. I thank individuals, organisations and Governments at all levels—we see

your actions. Thank you for doing your part to raise global ambition on climate action, especially in this critical pre-2020 period.

Mr President, We urge all Parties to work in the Talanoa spirit of solidarity and cooperation moving forward. We believe that rapid implementation of the Paris Agreement is of existential importance. The global response to climate change must put fairness and equity at the heart of its work, and to keep the needs and aspirations of the world's most vulnerable countries in its line of sight.

Vanuatu notes with concern the substantial gap between currently committed mitigation targets and the action needed to limit warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. Although Vanuatu's contributions to global emissions are negligible, we are committed to leading the way to a renewable future. Our Nationally Determined Contribution aspires to achieve 100% renewable energy by 2030. All nations must raise their ambition and implement significant sector-wide emission reductions as a matter of urgency.

Mr President, Vanuatu fully backs your Presidency in your emphasis on achieving an adequate global response to the unavoidable loss and damage caused by climate impacts. COP 23 must make an immediate and strong decision on the Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM) that raises the profile of loss and damage within the convention, with new and additional finance to help developing nations cope with unavoidable economic and non-economic losses of climate change.

Adverse climate impacts are already affecting all of our key sectors, from agriculture, health to tourism, and we need support to implement innovative adaptation initiatives that draw upon and strengthen the traditional knowledge and practices of our people. Bringing oceans into the climate convention is of high importance. In this context, Vanuatu reiterates that the Adaptation Fund shall serve the Paris Agreement.

We insist that climate action needs adequate, reliable, long-term finance support. This is important for nations like mine, which face the unique and unprecedented challenge of lifting our people out of poverty, without relying on fossil fuels, amidst worsening climatic conditions. The targeted 100 billion USD per year of public sector finance must urgently be mobilized for climate adaptation,

mitigation and loss & damage actions, ensuring simplified access for developing country Parties.

Mr President, we wish to see that vulnerability to climate change and natural disasters be considered in the graduation preparation of countries from LDCs; as natural disasters such as tropical cyclone can entirely erase a country's economy in a few hours.

Vanuatu embraces the vision of global climate action that actively promotes human rights, gender equality and sustainable development for all Parties. To borrow a phrase from the Peoples' Climate March: to change everything, we need everyone.

We have been encouraged by the determination shown by so many at this COP, but progress is insufficient without action. Your Excellency, COP President, this is a great opportunity for the Pacific, we, the small island developing states need united leadership now for an ambitious outcome of this Islands COP, we survive or we sink together.

I thank you Mr. President.