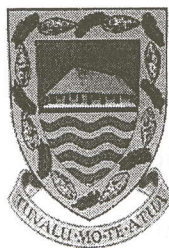


Fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 14) and the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (COP/MOP 4)

Poznan, 11 December 2008

Statement at the high-level segment by Apisai Ielemia

Prime Minister of Tuvalu



TUVALU STATEMENT

AT THE HIGH LEVEL SEGMENT OF THE COP14 OF THE UNFCCC AND CMP4 OF THE KYOTO PROTOCOL

DELIVERED

BY

**HIS EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE APISAI IELEMLIA
PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

POZNAN, POLAND

THURSDAY 11 NOVEMBER 2008

His Excellency The President of the Republic of Poland
His Excellency the President of COP14
Distinguished Government Leaders and Ministers
His Excellency the Secretary General of the United Nations
The Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC Secretariat,
Ladies and Gentlement,

Every year it becomes more and more evident that climate change is upon us. We, the Pacific island peoples, have consistently over the years been expressing our concerns over the threats posed by climate change. And we have called for increased adaptation and mitigation efforts, including global reductions to greenhouse gas emissions. Recent scientific evidence on ice sheet melting and ocean acidification suggests that we must act more rapidly before it is too late for countries like Tuvalu. Our future is in your hands.

The next twelve months will be crucial in establishing a new climate change regime.

I would like to highlight 5 key issues that we believe are necessary to tackle climate change. It is critical that we have your support in ensuring that together we effectively address the threats posed by climate change.

On the issue of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, we believe that there needs to be a more comprehensive approach by all major emitting countries. For those large emitting developing countries we acknowledge the need for development but we need assurance that development does not cause other countries, like our own, to suffer. We cannot sink while others rise. Given our extreme vulnerability as a small low-lying atoll country, we must not sink from the problems caused by the big and industrialised countries.

First, we believe that the Kyoto Protocol should be strengthened. This can only be done by the industrialised countries, known as Annex I, taking deep emission reductions during the next commitment period. The architecture of the Kyoto Protocol must remain.

Second, we must use the commitments made in the Kyoto Protocol to contribute towards funding adaptation. We must use a share of the proceeds from the allocation of emission targets in Annex

I Parties to provide a new revenue stream for adaptation. This is critical. For extremely vulnerable countries like Tuvalu, we need a guaranteed and substantial sources of income for adaptation. Handouts from aid budgets will not be sufficient.

The Adaptation Fund, in this regard, is the 'survival fund' for Tuvalu and many. But I have to say that I am deeply worried by the way negotiations on the Adaptation Fund are progressing at this meeting. SIDS like Tuvalu need direct access and expeditious disbursement of funding for real adaptation, URGENTLY, because we are suffering already from effects of climate change. How else and what else can we say it more clearly!

It seems, however, that some key industrialised countries are trying to make the Adaptation Fund inaccessible to the most in need. I am compelled to say that we are deeply disappointed with the manner some of our partners are burying us in red tape. This is totally unacceptable. The most vulnerable countries to the impacts of climate change must be able to access this fund without delay. We do not want the Adaptation Fund to turn into all the other funds administered by the Global Environment Facility, where the only countries that can properly access the funds are the one that can afford consultants and UN agencies to write lengthy and endless project proposals and work their way through metres of red tape and survive lengthy delays.

Mr President my third proposal, is that we must negotiate a new international legal instrument to ensure that developed countries who are not parties to the Kyoto Protocol take deep emission reduction targets. In particular, we are looking to the United States to step out of the dark ages of inaction and become a leading light on climate change. I certainly hope that President-elect Barak Obama, will lead his country into a new enlightened period of global responsibility and stewardship.

We are seeking substantial emission reduction targets from the United States. It must provide a comparable effort with Kyoto Protocol Parties. The United States has a lot of catching up to do.

Therefore we must create a process to allow major emitting, developing countries to take targets to reduce their emissions well below their current emission trajectories. We need a global

response to climate change and we need all major greenhouse gas emitters in the world to contribute to a global response.

Fourth, we need a new arrangement for least developed countries and small island developing States to pursue a low carbon future. We need strong international assistance to allow us to develop and deploy renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies so that we are guaranteed energy security. We cannot afford to be held hostage to continual leaps in the price of imported fuels.

Fifth, we seek a new arrangement for adaptation under the new legal agreement we will agree upon in Copenhagen. This new agreement on adaptation should provide new finance over and above any new arrangements developed under the Kyoto Protocol. We envisage that the United States and major developing countries will contribute to this arrangement. Within this new arrangement on adaptation we are seeking a new international regime on insurance to ensure that the countries that are the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change are able to recover from these impacts.

Finally Mr President, I feel it is necessary to say something about our human rights. It is our belief that Tuvalu, as a nation, has a right to exist forever. It is our basic human right. We are not contemplating migration. We are a proud nation of people with a unique culture which cannot be relocated somewhere else. We want to survive as a people and as a nation. We will survive. It is our fundamental right.

Tuvalu mo te Atua. Thank you.