



Republic of Fiji

HIGH LEVEL SEGMENT

COP17 UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON CLIMATE CHANGE

**STATEMENT BY H.E. MR SAMUELA SAUMATUA, MINISTER FOR LOCAL
GOVERNMENT, URBAN DEVELOPMENT, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI**

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Madam President,

On behalf of the President and Prime Minister of the Republic of Fiji, I wish to express our most sincere gratitude to you and the Government of the Republic of South Africa for the warm hospitality extended to our delegation at this conference. We stand firmly with you in the cause of achieving a successful outcome here in Durban. The Fiji Government aligns itself with the statements delivered by the President of Nauru on behalf of the Pacific SIDS and by the Foreign Affairs Minister of Grenada on behalf of AOSIS.

Madam President,

COP17 provides us with another opportunity to make far reaching pivotal decisions in the history of climate change negotiations. While every COP is an opportunity to make steady progress Durban presents us with a unique chance to renew faith in the multilateral process. This will provide hope to the peoples and nations affected most by the adverse impacts of climate change.

The decisions we make at this session will decide our future. The physical existence of some of our countries is at stake. Time is not on our side.

The recent report released by the International Energy Agency reveals an alarming finding that we are at an edge of no return for staying under 2 degrees temperature rise. For small island states, like Fiji this is unacceptable. Our situation is dire. We should not allow it to worsen. We know the problems. In Fiji we are facing them everyday. We all know the solutions, yet they are not entirely in our hands. To ensure our survival, we need to work together within our respective capacities.

We therefore call on all Parties to take responsibility for their actions.

We must demonstrate political courage to deliver on the solutions.

1. Long term global goal

To be absolutely clear, the review of the long-term global goal is not a substitute for increasing mitigation ambition immediately.

2. Kyoto Protocol

We need certainty that there will be a second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol. This has to be accompanied by enhanced rules to strengthen environmental integrity. This course is crucial to save our planet. We cannot afford to have a gap in the rules regime that governs our efforts to address climate change.

3. Cancun Agreement

We also call for the urgent and sustainable capitalisation of the Green Climate Fund. We must adopt the report of the Transitional Committee and its governing instrument so that it is operational by 2012. We must work together to identify and mobilise long-term sources of climate finance to complement what is already available via fast track finance. Moreover, we need to have in place a

mechanism to address loss and damage caused to vulnerable countries as a result of the adverse impacts of climate change.

For REDD Plus, we need to move swiftly to implement what had been agreed up to Cancun. We call for the establishment of a market-based mechanism as soon as possible.

Madam President,

As we stand on the eve of the Rio+20 conference in Brazil next year, I call to mind the ethical and moral commitment we made 20 years ago to protect the environment. We pledged then to engage in development practices that would not jeopardise the needs of future generations.

It is apparent that more needs to be done to achieve that objective.

We have the opportunity here in Durban to make ambitious commitments that will avert the dangers of run-away climate change.

I urge us to take this opportunity to make the right decisions now. Some of us in this room can ill afford to let it slip. So let's stop talking. Let's decide and deliver.

I thank you.