

Statement by the Head of Delegation of the Republic of Mauritius

at the High Level Segment of the UNFCCC COP17/CMP7

Durban, South Africa 8 December 2011

Mr. Vice President

Excellencies

Distinguished Delegates

Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Mauritius, I would like to express our sincere thanks to the Government of South Africa for its warm hospitality, excellent arrangements and initiatives taken for achieving a positive outcome in Durban.

At the very outset, I would like to express our full support to the statements made on behalf of AOSIS, the African group and the Group of 77 and China.

Mr. Vice President, I will focus my intervention on three issues:

First, on the urgency to address climate change. Science is now unequivocal on the assessments that impacts of climate change are likely to worsen over the coming decades. Mauritius like other SIDS is already facing the devastating effects of extreme weather events. We are already experiencing a decrease of about 8% in our annual rainfall, an increase in air temperature by 1 degree Celsius, coral beaching and an accelerating sea level rise at the rate of 3.8 mm per year observed over the last five years. Our livelihoods and survival is at stake.

It would be irresponsible for us to further delay long overdue responses. Constructive efforts are required by all parties to achieve the overall objective of limiting global warming to well below 1.5 degrees above pre-industrial levels and atmospheric GHG concentration well below 350 ppm.

Second, on Mitigation, **Mr. Vice President**, a second commitment period by developed countries party to the Kyoto Protocol is a must and not an option. Ambitions must be scaled up by developed countries to deliver emission reductions

consistent with science and historical responsibility. A real demonstration of leadership from developed countries, solidarity with the most vulnerable ones and a sense of compromise from all parties are more than ever required at this juncture.

Mr. Vice President,

In response to this challenge, the Government of Mauritius has made sustainable development our long term strategy for Mauritius. The “Maurice Ile Durable initiative (MID)” and the “Maurice Ile Durable Fund” to the tune Rs 1.3 billion bears testimony to our Prime Minister’s vision for making Mauritius a greener and climate resilient island. A number of activities aiming at greening of our economy have been undertaken with our limited means. Mauritius has set a target of achieving 35 % of renewable energy production by the year 2025. We are also focusing on energy efficiency. Necessary legislations have recently been enacted to that effect. A series of projects pertaining to mitigation of climate change are also being undertaken. These include, the replacement of street lightning and incandescent bulbs with energy saving lamps, provision of monetary incentives to household for use of solar water heaters, setting up of hydro units and new wind parks.

To further pave our way towards sustainable development, a consolidated Policy, a 10-year Strategy and an Action Plan covering the 5Es, namely, Energy, Environment, Education, Employment and Equity is being formulated.

Moreover, we have embarked on an ECO-Village programme aiming at revitalizing villages, sustaining the livelihoods of the communities and protecting the ecological integrity of environmentally sensitive areas.

We are also well on our way with the implementation of our National Programme on Sustainable Consumption and Production. This is one of the key responses to prevent global warming and promoting sustainable development. This programme is presently ^{being reviewed} to give additional impetus.

Third is the urgent need for finance to adapt to impacts of climate change. As fast start finance pledge in Copenhagen has failed to materialise, the operationalisation and capitalization of the Green Climate Fund cannot be further delayed. **Mr Vice President,** the cost for adapting to impacts of climate change is

escalating rapidly. Climate change is threatening our hard-won development gains. Mauritius needs technical and financial support of international community and development partners to pursue our adaptation programme.

In spite of our limited means, we are coming up with a number of measures aiming at reinforcing our water and food securities and environmental integrity.

Allow me to mention a few of the key measures:

(i) a Food Security Fund, to the tune of 1 billion rupees, has been set up to increase the resilience of Mauritius towards food self-sufficiency.

(ii) An integrated water resources plan for harnessing additional water resources. Construction of additional storage dams is underway.

(iii) an Integrated Coastal Zone Management and Environmentally Sensitive areas Management frameworks have been finalized and are being implemented. Coastal rehabilitation works at some 20 sites have been identified and works are underway at a few critical ones at considerable costs.

(iv) As part of the Africa Adaptation Programme supported by the Government of Japan, mainstreaming of climate change adaptation into core development policies, strategies and plans for the Republic of Mauritius is underway. Key sectors include disaster risk reduction and management, environment, water, agriculture, fisheries, tourism and education amongst others.

Mr Vice President,

In conclusion, we would like to reassure you of our determination to work with all parties for an outcome worthy of this testing and defining moment for the sake of our children and future generations.

I thank you, **Mr. Vice President.**