



STATEMENT BY H.E RATU INOKE KUBUABOLA,
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OF FIJI

HIGH LEVEL SEGMENT OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON CLIMATE CHANGE
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Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, I wish to congratulate you, Mr President, on your election and to express our full confidence in your steering us through the deliberations of COP18/CMP 8. Let me also thank the Government and the people of Qatar for the warm hospitality extended to me and my delegation. I wish to acknowledge the tireless efforts of your predecessor, Her Excellency Maite Nkoana-Mashabane.

Mr. President,

We live in a time of unprecedented scales of natural disaster. Reports of extreme weather events and widespread devastation in almost all parts of the world cover our news media daily. We are experiencing natural disasters with more increased frequency and higher intensity that effectively dispel the notion about some of these weather events occurring only once every hundred years.

We need to acknowledge the true scale of the problem in order to provide adequate responses. The current emissions trajectory and the science paint a very bleak future, especially for small island developing States like Fiji. Our response must be guided by the principle that collaboration and the will to work together can produce swift and positive results.

On the Kyoto Protocol, we all know that without a second commitment period, the world will not have any other international mechanism that can address carbon emissions in a legally binding manner. For all its criticisms, the KP is all we have and until we replace it with something better, Parties cannot afford to abandon the Protocol or render it ineffective. There must be a credible second commitment period if we are to have a chance of a meaningful legal agreement applicable to all under the Durban Platform.

Our response must involve a change in rhetoric and the action that follows it. We cannot continue to simply talk about raising mitigation ambition. The discussion needs to shift to

an emergency mobilization of resources that result in profound changes in global investment patterns. This is an emergency and requires emergency response.

Like many SIDS, Fiji's capacity to respond to climate change is often constrained by economic, financial and technological resources. On one front, the Fijian Government is contributing to the relocation of communities who are affected by slow onset events such as sea level rise. On another front, our country is still rebuilding and recovering from severe flooding that devastated its towns, communities and infrastructure at the beginning of this year. These are realities that inform our call for an international mechanism to address loss and damage arising from the adverse impacts of climate change. For how can we develop sustainably and experience economic prosperity if all our resources are continually redirected to rebuild our nation after each natural disaster?

We must broaden the range of actors to involve all stakeholders in civil society, the private sector, and the relevant Government agencies that lead the implementation. No matter how old or young, rich or poor, regardless of race, gender or creed, all cross sections of society have a key role to play in combating climate change. Fiji is doing its part in this regard. The implementation of its national climate change policy and the convening of a national climate change summit last month are recent examples. Moreover, there has to be engagement at the highest political levels because that is required to take the types of action necessary to truly respond to the crisis.

Mr. President,

Time is not on our side. We need to increase ambition in every track of these negotiations or some nations will not make it to the end of the century. Let me be very clear. We are calling for high ambition not simply to save the negotiating process. This is a call for our survival. The fate of entire nations is at stake. Let us act now, decide now, and deliver here in Doha ambitious outcomes.

I thank you.
