

Excellencies,

Dear friends,

As world leaders and policy makers, we need to keep asking ourselves a fundamental question.

How significant is our contribution to slowing down climate change?

Coming from one of the smaller nations and an Island State, we have recognized that implementing change, however small or minute our contribution, is crucial for succeeding in the goal of addressing climate change.

A reduction in the concentration of carbon in our atmosphere, and the lowering of global temperatures require two things:

1. **Commitment; and**
2. **Ambition.**

Our presence at COP year after year is a manifestation of our commitment to the Paris principles, as well as our resolve to keep the 1.5 degree target alive.

## **Now we must move beyond !**

Statements of goodwill are indeed important, however it is concrete action that will deliver results.

Our actions – or inaction - will define our relationship with our planet.

At this moment, this relationship is fragile. So much so, I dare say, that this climate crisis is a threat to our global security.

Countries all over the world are being battered by climatic extremes.

from rising sea levels, to devastating storms.

from drought, to floods.

from excessive heat, to water scarcity.

It is also no secret that smaller states, especially islands like Malta, and vulnerable countries, are paying the higher price; even though they are the ones that have least contributed to the release of carbon through the combustion of fossil fuels over the years.

Going forward, the future that we want to create should be based on the equality of nations, without distinction.

If we want to aim for success in mitigating climate change, we must recognize the differentiated impact it has, especially upon the most vulnerable.

Having said all this however, it is also true that our size **can** be used to our advantage. For us, this is an existential threat and our industry has to be innovative in the way it prepares itself for the years ahead.

We do not have the scale, nor perhaps the capacity to develop new technologies to make a difference globally. However, we are probably best placed to serve as a testbed for them.

As part of the ambitious Green House Gas emission reduction programme – the EU’s Fit for 55 package, Malta, my country, is willing to do its part. We are confident that the actions we are implementing as part of our low carbon development strategy will lead us to climate neutrality by 2050.

**Resolve, climate discipline and sound fiscal and monetary policies coupled with investments in digitalization, robust**

**energy policies, electrification and renewables, will get us where we need to be.**

Simultaneously, we also recognize that we need to help others, and we are doing this through action in the following ways :

Firstly, by supporting countries experiencing climate-related disasters. By way of example, last week the Maltese Government sent substantial medical assistance to Pakistan following the devastating floods.

Secondly, through assistance for others in their paths towards decarbonisation.

Last year, in Glasgow, I had announced the Island for Islands initiative expressing Malta's willingness to provide assistance to small island developing states, with whom we share common climate predicaments.

Through this initiative, utilising our expertise in water management, we are providing technical assistance to islands like us – for enhanced resource use, greater return on investments, and more resilience to climate induced scarcities.

This year, my government has also focused on a structured stakeholder dialogue with the private sector, and this has generated a crucial momentum to drive the green and just transition.

And our efforts will continue !

Discussing our experiences, the lessons learnt, and the options for a decarbonised economy are central to this initiative, and we wish to share further with Small Island Developing States.

To enhance capacity building, we shall be providing scholarships to students coming from other islands to undertake climate related studies at the University of Malta.

Moreover, I am proud to announce that as we already did last year, Malta will be **doubling** its contribution to the International Climate Fund. Through contributions to this fund, further work will be actioned around the world.

Finally, I would like to underline a point about our ocean and cryosphere. Sea level rises caused by climate change should not affect any rights which islands and coastal nations currently have over their land and maritime jurisdiction.

Dear friends,

Allow me to reiterate the appeal conveyed by many colleagues, leaders, changemakers, and youths.

Let us lead our generation's revolution like our forefathers did theirs.

The Green Revolution will lead to shared benefits. Affordable clean energy, healthy air, and enough food for all.

**Let us be ambitious !!**

**Let us be committed !!**

**And let us deliver !!**

**For all people!!**

**For our future !!**