

25th meeting of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

ADDRESS BY

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Republic of Mauritius

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Madam President,

Excellencies

I bring you the warm greetings from the people of the Republic of Mauritius.

Allow me, at the very outset to congratulate Her Excellency Ms. Carolina Schmidt, the Minister of Environment of Chile, for her election as President of the COP25. I wish to take this opportunity to place on record our heartfelt thanks to the Kingdom of Spain for hosting this august event in this cultural rich and historic city of Madrid.

Madam President,

The Republic of Mauritius wishes to associate itself with the statements delivered by the distinguished representative of the State of Palestine on behalf of the '*Group 77 and China*', by the distinguished representative of the Arab Republic of Egypt on behalf of the '*Africa Group*' and by the distinguished representative of the Republic of Belize on behalf of the '*Alliance of Small Island States*'.

Madam President, in 2015, we unanimously agreed to adopt the Paris Agreement. We were convinced that collective effort would bring down the global greenhouse gas emissions to save our planet. The peoples around the world pin much hope on the Paris Agreement as a way out of the existential threats facing the most vulnerable countries.

The science is clear and compelling. The world is already heading on a pathway of 3 degree Celsius global temperature rise, with disastrous

consequences for millions of vulnerable people around the globe and more particularly the SIDS and Africa.

The *United in Science Report* published this year, highlights that the average global temperature for the 2015-2019 period is on track to be the warmest of any equivalent period on record. As was the case in previous years, this year, we have witnessed extreme climatic conditions in every corner of the planet. One concrete example is category 5 Hurricane Dorian which caused tremendous havoc in the Small Island State of Bahamas and which is still haunting our memories.

The impacts of climate change on our populations are gaining severity year by year. The public outcry is re-sounding even more heavily and the younger generations are feeling betrayed and pessimistic about their future. We might be on the verge of failing to meet the promises of the Paris Agreement and lose the trust of our people, if we do not act quickly and effectively.

As decision makers, we can either make history as instigators of the survival of humanity from the dreadful impacts of climate change or go down in history as the instigators of the doom of humanity. We are at a cross road. The decisions we take now, will determine the future of our people and planet earth.

Madam President,

The Republic of Mauritius is in the midst of the Indian Ocean. We are increasingly witnessing the devastating effect of climate change. We are

regularly being quoted among the most vulnerable countries on the planet. The 2019 World Risk Report had ranks Mauritius as the 47th country with the highest disaster risk in a list of 180 countries.

We are enduring harsh extreme weather events such as flash floods every year which are impacting severely on the economy as well as the ecosystem and livelihoods. We are living with the looming threats of a Category-5 cyclone which may hit our island anytime during summer period. Our infrastructure is not designed for category-5 cyclones and we may lose years of hard won development in a matter of hours.

We are also witnessing an accelerating beach erosion of nearly 20 meter over the past 10 years which is due to sea level rise of the order of 5.6 mm per year. Although flash flood events are on the rise, long-term trend analysis reveals that precipitation has reduced by 8% over the last 50 years. This has impacted our agricultural production with an estimated 30% decline. Mauritius is further being projected to becoming a water-stressed country by 2025, according to the '*SIDS in Numbers*' Report.

Madam President,

The recent episodes of extreme climatic events have forced the Government to urgently mobilise considerable financial resources to support our citizens. It has been estimated that close to 2% of our GDP is being invested every year on environment and climate change issues. To further strengthen our resilience and emission reduction efforts, we have also set up a financial portfolio of USD 57 million to tackle flood management, coastal protection and disaster risk reduction and

management concerns. This provision is far from being adequate since our estimated requirement for the implementation of measures as spelt out in our NDC is of the order of USD 5.5 billion, of which USD 4 billion is required for adaptation purposes.

Madam President, there is an urgent need for the International community to step up efforts in terms of climate finance, technology transfer and capacity of SIDS and mainland Africa.

Madam President,

Despite the odds, I am inclined to believe that we can still make things happen. To succeed, we need to dare, to be more proactive. We need to uphold the scaling up of actions to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. To achieve this goal, we need to *inter alia* :-

- (i) achieve the USD 100 billion mobilization target by developed countries and set up appropriate predictable and accessible financial support structure to assist developing countries to achieve their adaptation and mitigation objectives;
- (ii) finalise the review of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage which is so significant for the most vulnerable developing countries such as the SIDS and Africa; and
- (iii) find consensus over the Article 6 for a transparent carbon market mechanism structure.

I wish to apprise the Conference that the Republic of Mauritius has embarked on a number of initiatives to move towards the implementation of its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC). We are developing an adaptation programme with the assistance of the French government in sectors of land drainage, coastal protection, and monitoring of climate parameters. Furthermore, we have initiated the preparation of our National Adaptation Plan which will include sectors such as coastal zone infrastructure, agriculture and fisheries.

A new Doppler radar has been set up to enhance the forecasting of our weather system and a state-of-the-art Refuge Centre has been constructed to improve the climate resilience of coastal communities. We are also promoting a *ridge to reef* approach to improve the management and protection of our coastal zones.

As far as mitigation is concerned, we are working on our *Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions* which would culminate in the formulation of a *National Climate Change Mitigation Strategy and Action Plan*. We are focussing on the renewable energy, waste management and agriculture sectors.

Mauritius is also updating its *Nationally Determined Contributions* with the assistance of the *Agence Francaise de Developpement*. We seize this opportunity to thank our bilateral partners for the support extended to Mauritius so far. We rely on them to make Mauritius a safe and resilience place to live.

Madam President,

In conclusion, we need to act promptly and effectively, and put our differences aside for the common good at national and international level. We need to stay united and in solidarity with the weakest ones, that is, the most vulnerable countries. We know our targets and we know how to get there. However, the support of the International Community is of critical importance to the sustainability of our planet and the survival of the human race. Madam President, time is of essence. Time is for rhetorics but actions, bold actions. This is not an option, but a matter of necessity. I thank you all for your attention.

K. R.