NATIONAL STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY MR. SÉBASTIEN PILLAY - VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SEYCHELLES

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ANTALYA, REPUBLIC OF TÜRKİYE

Mr. President, Excellencies, Heads of State and Government,
Distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour to address this Summit on behalf of the Republic of Seychelles, a Small Island Developing State in the western Indian Ocean.

COP31 comes at a defining moment for international climate cooperation. Guided by the ambition of moving from dialogue to consensus, and from consensus to action, this Summit must demonstrate that our collective commitments can translate into tangible results for people and communities, particularly those most vulnerable to climate change.

For Seychelles, climate action is not simply an environmental priority; it is fundamental to our national security, economic stability, sustainable development and very survival.

Mr. President,

Between 18 and 21 October this year, Seychelles was severely affected by Tropical Storm "Agueda". Our Department of Risk and Disaster Management has provided a preliminary estimate of approximately **USD --- million in loss and damage**.

For a small island nation, this is a substantial economic and developmental burden. It demonstrates the disproportionate costs that vulnerable countries continue to bear from climate-related disasters, despite contributing very little to global greenhouse gas emissions.

Seychelles therefore calls for the urgent strengthening of the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage, with simplified, predictable and timely access to adequate resources. Climate recovery must not come at the expense of our development or push vulnerable nations further into unsustainable debt.

Mr. President,

Seychelles wishes to emphasise five interconnected priorities.

First, adaptation and resilience must be at the centre of climate action. We need increased support to implement National Adaptation Plans, protect our coastlines, secure water supplies, strengthen disaster preparedness and safeguard our marine ecosystems. The Global Goal on Adaptation must translate into measurable action, backed by finance, technology and capacity-building.

Second, climate finance must be accessible, predictable and equitable. COP31, as an implementation COP, must accelerate delivery of the New Collective Quantified Goal on Climate Finance, particularly through grant-based and concessional financing for SIDS. Commitments must translate into resources reaching vulnerable countries at the scale and speed required.

Third, vulnerability must be recognised beyond traditional income classifications. Seychelles has been at the forefront of advocating for the **Multidimensional Vulnerability Index (MVI)**. We urge development partners and international financial institutions to integrate the MVI into financing and eligibility decisions, recognising the structural vulnerabilities and disproportionate climate risks facing Small Island Developing States.

Fourth, we must preserve the 1.5°C temperature goal. We are deeply concerned by the prospect of temporarily overshooting this critical threshold. The Second Global Stocktake, which begins at COP31, must provide a clear direction for stronger ambition, accelerated emissions reductions and limiting both the magnitude and duration of any overshoot. Climate science must remain the foundation of our decisions and international cooperation. Seychelles is equally committed to expanding renewable energy and energy efficiency, reducing our dependence on imported fossil fuels.

Fifth, our ocean must be central to global climate action. Protecting coral reefs, marine biodiversity and blue-carbon ecosystems is essential to our resilience, livelihoods and blue economy. We must also empower our young people and local communities as active partners in delivering climate solutions.

Mr. President,

The credibility of the Paris Agreement will ultimately be measured not by the commitments we make, but by their implementation and the support delivered to those most in need.

Seychelles calls for a renewed spirit of international solidarity, stronger multilateral cooperation and a climate response grounded in science, equity and climate justice.

The **USD --- million** in preliminary loss and damage from Tropical Storm Agueda is a stark reminder that the cost of climate inaction is already being paid by vulnerable nations.

Let COP31 in Antalya be remembered as a turning point from promises to delivery, from commitments to implementation, and from vulnerability to resilience.

For Seychelles and all Small Island Developing States, our future depends on the decisions we take today.

I thank you.