



**PRIME MINISTER
DR THE HON KEITH ROWLEY**

**NATIONAL STATEMENT OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
WORLD LEADERS' SUMMIT AT COP 26**

Mr. President,

Your Excellencies

Heads of Government,

We gather today at a pivotal point in the history of humanity, in a further attempt to deepen commitment and determination to mitigate the effects of climate change.

The August 2021 report of the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change has presented a sobering outlook, and brought into focus the severe shortfall in closing the emissions gap. Any temperature increase beyond the 1.5 degrees Celsius level will

have long-term and permanent consequences, particularly for small countries and economies such as Trinidad and Tobago. The only solution therefore, is to increase collective ambition.

According to the World Energy Outlook, in order for the world to shift from our current unsustainable path, we need to: focus on driving renewable and sustainable electrification, improving efficiency, reducing methane emissions and turbo charging innovation. We also need to implement strategies to unlock capital flows in support of energy transitions and ensure reliability and affordability.

Mr. President, while mitigation ambition is driven by the 1.5 degrees Celsius goal, the global goal on adaptation has failed to achieve a commensurate level of attention and action. At COP26, we must ensure that we have an outcome that helps to raise adaptation, ambition and *action*. Establishing a specific work

programme after COP26, to define the details for the global goal on adaptation, will be key.

Trinidad and Tobago is a small island developing state already experiencing the effects of climate change. Loss and damage are already clear in the aggressive erosion of our coastline and the bleaching of our coral reefs. Tackling loss and damage must remain a critical and core issue of any global climate action framework.

We are increasingly concerned about our ability to address this issue given the well-known difficulty in accessing financing for such projects. We need funds like the Green Climate Fund to establish specific streams for loss and damage finance to ensure that this is prioritized in the same way as mitigation and adaptation. Further, there must be equitable balance between public finance for mitigation and adaptation.

COP26 will be a critical point at which we can assess whether our climate finance flows are headed in the right direction. In this regard, the US announcement that it would double its climate finance support, is particularly inspiring. This is the type of bold action all donor countries need to consider in the weeks ahead. The mobilization of private finance will also be critical for securing the urgently needed investment, particularly for the transformation of our energy sectors.

Mr. President, we must complete the work to implement the Enhanced Transparency Framework. Even as a small country with limited resources, we will make every effort to report to the required standard, with some assistance, of course. We expect others to do the same. This is the deal we made in Paris. We cannot go back on it now.

Mr. President,

As an economy largely based on oil and gas and petrochemicals, we in Trinidad and Tobago recognize our responsibility in transitioning, over reasonable and manageable time, to net zero. We have set very ambitious targets aimed at diversifying our economy. We have embarked upon ambitious plans to reduce emissions and build climate resilience, but we will need help. These measures include the following:

- We are in the process of establishing the largest utility-scale solar renewable energy project in the Caribbean with a capacity of 112 megawatts, accounting for 10% of our power needs, and we plan to increase this complement to 30% by 2030;
- We have developed an e-mobility policy and we are already implementing measures to phase-in electric vehicles.

- We recognize the need to address the socio-economic issues associated with the energy transition and have developed a Just Transition of the Workforce Policy aimed at reskilling, retooling and developing new capacity for a low-carbon economy;
- We are pursuing measures to facilitate investment in green hydrogen to provide green feedstock to our vibrant petrochemical industry.
- We intend to explore the use of industry-generated CO₂ in possible carbon sequestration projects.

Mr. President, COP26 has created great expectations and heightened hopes for climate ambition for Trinidad and Tobago. This ambition includes reducing greenhouse gas emissions and providing much needed climate finance to enable vulnerable

countries to adapt to climate impacts, and assist in transforming their economies to more sustainable, low-carbon paths.

Beyond the rhetoric and pledges, every country needs to be serious about urgent action in *this* decade. Trinidad and Tobago is committed to working with all countries in the multilateral framework to ensure a safe and secure world for those yet to be born. It is my sincere hope that we will all be able to look back at COP 26, and the commitments and progress made here in Glasgow, as key steps towards a healthier salvageable planet Earth.

Let's work for survival, of ours and all species.

Let's not choose extinction!

Mr President, I thank you.