

## SUMMIT OUTCOME PRESENTATION

HE Hilda Heine

President of the Marshall Islands

EMBARGO 21:00 MHT

22 November 2018

*Excellencies*, ladies and gentlemen – *lakwe*, greetings:

I am pleased to announce to you the output of the work of the Virtual Summit following high level preparations and consultations led by the Summit Sherpas.

It is my honor to share our leaders' contribution with you now – our documents will then be uploaded on the Summit and Climate Vulnerable Forum's websites for you to access and share.

First, we would like to acknowledge the work of the All-Women Summit Champions who have helped promote our Summit.

They have highlighted the special interests and role that women have taken in helping to advance climate action. Much remains to be done to mainstream gender considerations throughout climate action. We remain hopeful for progress on that priority.

I am especially thankful to Christiana Figueres and to Rachel Kyte who have co-chaired this Group. The work of these individual climate heroines already provides immense inspiration for women and girls around the world. May they all share the same courage, to each come forward with the contribution of their own dreams and imagination.

The Summit Outcome Document highlights that this day's Summit was called for by the meeting of our Ministers and High Level Representatives at Marrakech in November 2016. Our Summit was timed to take into

account of how critical the United Nations Climate Change Conference next month in Poland is for the interests of the most vulnerable.

We look to the Katowice and the incoming Polish COP24 Presidency to help all countries unite to deliver on the mandate given by the 2015 Paris Climate Summit. That is: to address the shortfall in action needed to meet the aims of the Paris Agreement.

Over the last year, the Talanoa Dialogue has been a principal focus of the UN climate talks, as the mechanism to inform governments on the progress towards, and further actions needed to close, the shortfall in climate ambition. Talanoa is a Pacific term for interactions that seek to bring people together, to build trust and to advance knowledge through empathy and understanding.

The aim is to work towards decision making for a greater good. Story-telling is a key feature of Talanoa. Stories help us connect to each other, and sometimes help us give shape to feelings that are not possible to surface in technical reports alone. The Talanoa Dialogue is about story-telling with a purpose. And that purpose is to inform countries on ways that they can raise climate ambition to fulfil the purpose of the Paris Agreement.

The UN has hosted Talanoa talks among governments throughout this year and many governments have shared their stories. At this Summit, the stories of our leaders were heard.

I would like to take this opportunity to share a Talanoa story, that I draw from a national climate hero of ours, the late Tony DeBrum.

Extensive nuclear testing took place in the Marshall Islands at Bikini and Enewetak for over a decade. Radiation sickness, miscarriages, early death and cancers devastated countless families who had to abandon their homes. Large quantities of radioactive waste remain and continue to wash into the Ocean. This includes from the Runit Dome, or “Tomb”, as well as other sites.

The rising tides that threaten to expose and disperse nuclear waste on our shores are not only a risk for the Marshall Islands, but a risk to all of us connected by the Ocean. They will wash the nuclear legacy we face also to your shores, and even onto your plates.

Like this, so many of the consequences of climate change are transnational in nature.

Today is historic because, for the first time, we have convened World Leaders for an entirely online Summit of governments led by vulnerable nations. We are showing that more can be done with tools and means on hand than we might think. We are demonstrating that we can succeed in breaking from the past to face a new future.

The reality of our “new normal” is etched in the lethal storms, floods, wildfires, and drought that no longer surprise us even as they worsen; More often, more severe, and more widespread than ever before.

Nobody is safe.

With the October IPCC report, science confirmed that going beyond 1.5 degrees Celsius of warming would cause the seas to rise above the highest point of our island nation.

It confirmed that our survival –our existence– is truly at stake.

On the other hand, thanks also to the IPCC report, we now know it’s technically feasible to limit warming to 1.5 degrees. What is more: doing so will deliver a host of social and economic benefits, and help us to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

It can be done. Human ingenuity has no limits. Rapid transitions are possible and have happened when we unite. But keeping warming below 1.5C will not be possible if we wait. Governments supporting the Paris Agreement have the chance to come with new ambition in 2020.

If we fail to seize this moment, 1.5 will become impossible to achieve. Delay will seal our fate. Decisions that affect our survival are being taken now.

All countries and non-state actors must work to create a global-rising – together. In this sense, I have some hope: as those standing on the climate frontline, we can be reassured that we do not stand alone.

The Climate Vulnerable Forum leaders recognize all those observer states and non-state partners who have joined us for today's Summit and for your commitments to help us to persevere.

As leaders, we are determined to act as a driving force for a new era of global solidarity to unite strengths and cultivate collective worldwide action. Looking forward now, it is time to move from words to action.

That is why today we have adopted what we are calling the “*Jumemmej*” Declaration. *Jumemmej* is a Marshallese concept referring to voyagers who must stay awake and remain vigilant at all times during long voyages across the Ocean, who would risk their lives, if not also their families', to ensure safety of all on the voyaging canoe. It signifies a special kind of permanent vigilance required to get us safely to the other side.

We have to act on today's reality, shift into a new gear to see us through, and bring the Paris Agreement to life. The Summit's *Jumemmej* Declaration calls for the UN Climate Conference at Katowice, COP24, to take clear action in response to the IPCC Special Report on 1.5°C, and the the Talanoa Dialogue, by sending a strong signal that all countries need to raise ambition in 2020. We need that to survive and thrive.

We underpin this call with our commitment, as the CVF Leaders, to update and strengthen our own national efforts, or NDCs, as soon as possible before 2020. Today, the Republic of the Marshall Islands has done exactly that, communicating a new and enhanced NDC to the UNFCCC. And as the CVF, we look towards the UN Secretary General's 2019 Climate Summit to help ensure a concerted worldwide effort for raised ambition in 2020.

The Summit Outcome additionally calls for the delivery of enhanced international finance and other support to help developing countries realize their ambitions in climate action.

So many new climate efforts could be triggered through assistance to countries that are held back by poverty, limited resources, or technical capacities.

From the Summit Outcome Document, I would like to highlight that as CVF Leaders, we:

- Lent our support to the 5-point 2016 Marrakech CVF Vision and its detailed provisions. May we indeed emerge as wealthy nations, exceeding our development targets, while limiting warming to below 1.5 degrees, striving for 100% renewable energy, and achieving maximal resilience for our people.
- We also supported the work of our Finance Ministers under the Vulnerable Twenty Group of Ministers of Finance. Their focus on tackling economic risks while seeking opportunities from climate action will underpin the transformation of our economies. The V20's engagement with the G20 will help shape global cooperation to keep us safe.
- We called for special efforts by the United Nations system to promote greater awareness and action to fight climate vulnerabilities. To that end, we also called for the designation of an international day for climate vulnerability, starting in 2019.
- We endorse the strengthening of the institutional basis, independence and membership of the Forum working with interested countries and partners.
- We are taking note of the rich discussions on thematic panels happening today and look forward to working with the participating entities to advance the items addressed.

- We will keep an active eye on the implementation of our Summit's outcome and we plan to reconvene, once more online, at least every five years.

In closing this segment, I would like to extend my appreciation to all States, members and observers, and all international partners who joined us for the preparation of this Summit. I also want to acknowledge all those who have joined our deliberations online today.

Finally, we invite all nations, and all non-state actors, to rise with us and join our Jumemmej Declaration.

We need the world to be on watch with us – we need to see each other through the storm together.

So join with us.

Thank you–Kommol Tata.