



Climate Vulnerable Leaders' Event "Midnight Survival Deadline for the Climate"

Statement

by

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Excellencies, Your Excellency Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Chair of the Climate Vulnerable Forum, Honorable Heads of State and Government of the CVF, Honorable Ministers, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I'm delighted to be joining you today.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina: You have been a longstanding champion of climate action, and the cause of the most vulnerable, and I congratulate you on continuing this journey in presiding this Forum once again

Just before I joined your 2011 Dhaka CVF meeting, I had travelled to another CVF member, Kiribati, where I had an extremely eye-opening experience. At the time, the islands are experiencing very high tides, and because we were so close to sea level, we were provided with life vest as a precaution overnight. I will never forget it.

The decade since this time, a lot has changed.

In 2015, we saw the world, truly, come together to create a single "peace pact with the planet". The Paris climate change Agreement, gives a world leaders direction and clarity. It gives them specific, measurable goals, their own Nationally Determined Contributions. And this is with a clear roadmap to achieve these.

We now need to redouble our thought before we pass the point of no return.

The evidence for this is clear.

- According to NASA¹, 2010 to 2019 was the hottest decade every on record;
- According to UN Environment Program (UNEP), the current climate target based on the 2015 Paris climate change Agreement, NDCs would lead to global warming of about three degrees Celsius.

Allow me to be very blunt: Dhaka, and many more cities like it, across the CVF countries and around the world, may simply cease to exist in a 3-degree world.

¹ <https://www.noaa.gov/news/2019-was-2nd-hottest-year-on-record-for-earth-say-noaa-nasa>

Even during a pandemic, the vulnerable continue to face the same challenges, they have always had. On the frontline, the fact that they shoulder the heaviest costs when they have done the least to cause the climate emergency is a stain on our collective morals.

We owe it to those who are already suffering to show progress, and to do it with urgency.

We know the massive impacts of the surpassing 1.5 degrees of warming versus only two degrees, increase the incidence of drought forest fires, floods and storms. If sea levels were to rise by just one meter, 17% of Bangladesh would be underwater by 2050.

So, we have to keep striving for 1.5. UNEP indicates that global emissions, need to be cut by 7.6%, each year between now and 2030 to keep the 1.5 within reach. Action cannot wait.

We cannot possibly “build back better” without doing more on climate.

2020 is the year for action.

Action is happening. China's new ambition for revise the Paris, NDC to peak emissions before 2013 shows extra ordinary leadership. Progress is on the way in the European Union for a stronger NDC.

Today's launch of this CVF “**Midnight Survival Initiative for the Climate**” is critical. Materializing new and more ambitious NDCs this year is indeed a matter of the survival for the most vulnerable.

I urge all leaders and all nations to heed the call for delivering new and more ambitious Paris NDCs in 2020. If the poor and the most vulnerable are acting, so can any nation.

As the chair of the board of the Global Center on Adaptation (GCA), and the managing partner for CVF, I want to also emphasize that revising NDCs is also an opportunity to accelerate adaptation action.

Climate change doesn't wait. We must have focus on helping affected communities right now.

We all need to become more resilient to prepare and respond to the disruptive effects of climate change. To learn how to protect lives and livelihoods. Using tactical and positive solutions to create and maintain a sustainable existence.

That is the purpose of the Global Center on Adaptation.

The 25 January 2021 climate adaptation summit, hosted by the Netherlands, and supported by GCA, will also be a critical moment to launch a decade of transformation that action to help society prepare and adjust to the changes ahead.

Let us work together to find solutions, so we can all thrive in our changing world.

Thank you.