



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

Statement

by

His Excellency Abdulla Shahid
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Maldives

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Her Excellency Sheikh Hasina, Honourable Prime Minister of Bangladesh and Chair of the Climate Vulnerable Forum,
Distinguished Heads of State and Government,
His Excellency Former President and Speaker of the Maldives Parliament, Mohamed Nasheed, the CVF Thematic Ambassador,
His Excellency Antonio Guterres, Secretary General of the United Nations
Ministers, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih, and the people of the Maldives, I congratulate you, Honourable Prime Minister, for assuming the role of the Chair of the Climate Vulnerable Forum. I also wish to extend greetings and sincere good wishes to you and the people of Bangladesh. Your vast experience and exemplary leadership of Bangladesh on climate related issues would be invaluable in advancing the work of this important Forum.

Let me also take this opportunity to congratulate Former President of Maldives, and current Speaker of the Maldives Parliament, His Excellency Mohamed Nasheed for being appointed as the Climate Vulnerable Forum Thematic Ambassador for Ambition. The Government of Maldives is delighted and proud to see such an eminent personality from the Maldives being appointed to this high post. We have no doubt that, given his leadership on climate change issues globally, he would be able to bring much needed impetus to the work of this Forum.

Excellencies,

"Emphasised that action is required by all countries" and we expressed "our determination, as vulnerable States, to demonstrate leadership on climate change". This was the message echoed by the world's most vulnerable countries at the first Climate Vulnerable Forum in Male', from where I join you all today. Eleven years later, we renew our call for scaled up ambition to tackle climate change by submitting stronger and more enhanced NDCs, and reducing emissions to keep the global temperature increase within 1.5 degrees. The outcome of this timely and important event must be bolder, and more ambitious climate action.

Excellencies,

We welcomed the Decade of Action after much anticipation, having made advancements in achieving SDGs and progress in fulfilling our commitments in the Paris Agreement. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has halted all the progress, magnified vulnerabilities, and crippled our economies. This has affected our ability to tackle the climate emergency. The road ahead is long and difficult.

Although much of the world still treats climate change as a distant concern, the Maldives has continuously emphasized its immediate existential threat – to us, other small island states and coastal communities. Our highest land elevation is 1.2 meters and 98 per cent of our national territory consists of the ocean. Sea-level rise, unpredictable weather and other environmental phenomena caused by human activity will seal our country's fate to that of the history books. This, Excellencies, is our lived reality. This is not acceptable.

At the national level, we are doing all we can. We have also partnered with like-minded countries, as well as private sector and non-governmental organizations that share our goals and concerns.

Excellencies,

Despite our sincere efforts, or forceful moral example, we simply cannot do this alone. Climate change does not recognise borders and does not discriminate. As we look forward to COP 26 in Glasgow next year, we must continue to walk the talk. We, in the CVF, continue to stand out due to our willingness to match our words with meaningful action, despite our many limitations. The time to do better has long passed and the time for more ambitious action is right now.

However, this ambition can only be realised with access to adequate, predictable and sustainable finance. The share of this finance is far too less for the most vulnerable communities to climate change. This needs to change for the better.

Despite our differences, our shared responsibility to the future generations in ensuring they inherit a habitable planet must endure. I am confident that the CVF will play an important role in ensuring that our hopes and dreams for a better world are realised. Our blueprint for survival and building back better is investing in a greener, bluer and cleaner economy.

Before I conclude, I would like to echo the words of President Solih in his statement at the Secretary-General's Climate Action Summit in 2019: "We are asking you to do better. To do more."

Thank you.