



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

### Statement

by

**H.E. David Kabua**

President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands

7 October 2020

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Excellencies

Ladies and Gentlemen

Warm lakwe and Greetings from the Republic of the Marshall Islands!

I am very pleased to join you all today in this important event of the Climate Vulnerable Forum.

The RMI acknowledges the leadership of Bangladesh and Her Excellency Sheikh Hasina, the CVF chair. We stand by you in the CVF Troika and the most vulnerable nations of our Forum in this effort to appeal to all countries for stronger climate commitments during this health and climate crisis this year.

Climate change is the greatest threat to the peace and security of the Marshall Islands. Our livelihoods have already been disrupted by long periods of drought and rising sea levels that inundate our homes, vegetation and water sources. If we continue to allow the global temperatures to rise, our islands will become uninhabitable and we will be forced to relocate. But where would we go?

The Marshall Islands has no higher ground for retreat. We consist of atolls so narrow you can often stand in the lagoon and see the ocean waves crash on the other side. The impacts are already felt today in king tides that bring floods to most of our dry land each year, the growing power of typhoons, and salt water from once clear wells contaminated by the rising ocean. And they are worsening. Not just in our population, but around the world, communities are all facing serious challenges- and it is an essential point of humanity that none of us is spared in our suffering.

Today, we are faced with an unprecedented crisis that is an added challenge. The RMI is fortunate enough to remain COVID free. And we extend our condolences to those affected by this pandemic and offer words of strength and support. RMI is still affected economically and financially by the crisis. I

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see the pandemic as a testament of our ability as humans to adapt and to also give us the opportunity to “build back better”. “Better” though is an empty promise unless we put the fight against climate change within the response and recovery.

As challenging as that is, we cannot delay. To keep the 1.5 degrees goal at the heart of the Paris Agreement alive, and save our futures, every day may well count. The solution is clear: build your new climate ambition, and NDCs, into your response and recovery plans.

Midnight on the 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2020 is our survival deadline. The next international deadline for new national climate commitments in 2025 would be too late.

So we call on the international community to step up and raise their ambitions by submitting newer national contributions or NDCs under the Paris Agreement this year, before the end of 2020.

Do not miss this opportunity to save our future and rebuild a better, greener world for us all.

Kommol Tata

