



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

Statement

by

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7 October 2020

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am delighted to see the start of the 'Countdown to Midnight' campaign – encouraging countries to submit updated NDCs, under the Paris Agreement, by the end of this year.

I am delighted the Maldives will submit its NDC this year. And so many other CVF members will also submit theirs.

We can't let this crucial climate deadline slip, because the world is burning.

The largest ice shelf in the Arctic has collapsed.

A third of Bangladesh is under water.

There were so many hurricanes in the Atlantic this year they ran out of names in the alphabet.

I want to be clear, we in the CVF have not caused this problem.

We heard from Oxfam last month that the top 1% of the world's income earners have produced twice as much carbon emissions as the bottom 50% in the past couple of decades.

This means the rich have burned up most of the remaining 1.5C carbon budget.

We in the CVF, who are mostly poorer countries, have done our bit to help simply by remaining poor.

But this cannot go on.

Bangladesh, Kenya, all the CVF countries who are now LDCs rightly aim to achieve middle income status quickly, within the next couple of decades.

If this development is done in a high-carbon way it is game over for the climate.

There will be no ice left in the Arctic at all, and my own country, the Maldives, will disappear.

We have to figure out a way through this conundrum, and to do that I'm appealing to CVF member countries to work with me, and a team of world-class energy experts, to draw up what the Bangladesh government has called "Climate Prosperity Plans."

These plans will aim to deliver the economic growth and prosperity that CVF countries rightfully demand, to eliminate poverty entirely and allow today's LDCs to reach middle income status by 2035-40.

In summary, we don't want eco-austerity, we want eco-prosperity.

If we can get this effort underway quickly enough these Climate Prosperity Plans can feed into the NDC process.

I expect the commitments to be conditional, however, on the raising of sufficient finance and technology transfer. I'm not talking about aid, but even private sector capital needs credit guarantees and other support.

And our technology has to keep on improving:

Where are the carbon-neutral aircraft?

In the Maldives we still burn diesel in all our boats between islands. How can we replace it?

Can we get hydrogen from solar PV on a large enough scale? And so on.

All these tech developments need to include CVF countries so we also propose setting up technology hubs, based in CVF countries.

These hubs will be centres of excellence in technology that can then be utilized by all.

We want each of these hubs to deliver tech that can reduce emissions by gigatonnes, and to do so in a decade.

We in the CVF may be climate vulnerable but we are not victims. We are leaders.

As Ambition Ambassador it is my job for the CVF to take our high ambition plans - our "climate prosperity plans" - to form the nucleus of a high ambition coalition that also includes the biggest and most powerful nations.

This is a new paradigm for climate. Instead of "I won't, because you won't", we have "I will, because you will".

Instead of the blame game, we have the aim game.

Let's aim for high ambition, zero carbon, get back to 1.5 degrees and save the climate.

Thank you.