



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

Statement by
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Warm greetings to colleagues in the CVF, in particular the inspiring CVF presidency of Bangladesh, represented by Her Excellency, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

The pandemic has imposed physical restrictions on what we can do. But our resolve to act with greater urgency will not be restrained by the novel coronavirus.

The Philippines chaired the CVF presidency from 2015 to 2016.

The Philippines fought hard to help establish the 1.5 degrees Celsius temperature in Article 2 of the Paris Agreement. Today, what was once considered a romantic but doomed target is now the global benchmark for ambition.

Colleagues, we are in ONE BIG FIGHT. Nations hardest hit, least responsible and equipped, and worst affected by climate change and the pandemic, are working day and night to deliver new climate ambition this year with no excuses.

As we had pledged before, we remain unequivocally committed to delivering our enhanced NDC before 2020 ends. But we certainly cannot do it all on our own.

Philippine President Rodrigo Roa Duterte framed the challenge today in stark terms:

"The same urgency needed to fight COVID-19 is needed to address the climate crisis. This is a global challenge that has worsened existing inequalities and vulnerabilities from within and between nations..."

"The Philippines joined the Paris Agreement to fight climate change. We call on all parties, especially those who have not made good [on] their commitment to fight climate change, to honor the same."

We thank President Xi Jinping for demonstrating to the world what global leadership looks like when he delivered China's climate pledge at the UN General Assembly last month.

But what about developed nations? Europe, for one, must take the lead of it's own MEPs who voted last September to reduce Europe's emissions by 60% in 2030 compared to 1990 levels. Anything less is shameful.

Now is not the time to cower behind excuses. Cowardice today will only ensure that youth will remember who the pariahs in the international community were during the time of their greatest need.

The Midnight hour on 31st of December is upon us. It will determine the future of generations to come. It will enshrine the kind of future leaders today choose for midnight's children.

It is time we act together -- with courage, honor, and a far higher sense of justice and hope.