

In representation of H.E. Ibrahim Mohamed Solih, Hon. President of the Maldives,

Thank you Madam Prime Minister,

It is a great privilege to be here with you and to speak up on something that is very important for the Maldives and Small Island States. I don't think I need to repeat what is going on in the Maldives. The issue is very, very serious. Our coral reefs are dying, we are running out of water, our islands are getting flooded. Our income, our food, and our survival are dependent on these vulnerabilities. I do not think we, Small Island States as vulnerable countries, cannot wait any longer in the world to make a decision on 1.5 on climate adaptation, finance, and on loss and damage. These are the three things the Maldives and other Small Islands States and vulnerable countries are pushing for. We have been attending COPs for many years but time is running now.

We all have seen what the IPCC report says and we cannot wait any longer. We have a country and people whom we need to be accountable to, we need to be able to tell the people "this is what we are doing" as the world to agree on climate change. Access to funds is an important issue for countries like the Maldives. We wait over three-four years for our projects to get approved. This is something that we have discussed, we have raised our voice in many forums and I think a successful outcome in COP26 would be for countries like the Maldives and other vulnerable countries to have easy access to finance that is pledged and promised to us many, many times.

The Maldives and vulnerable countries have done nothing to contribute to the climate crisis, but I don't think we should have a free pass. We are doing what we can in the Maldives, we have pledged to reach net zero by 2030, we are phasing out single use plastics, we are protecting our reefs, we have a target to protect at least 20% of our oceans by 2030. If the Maldives can do it I think the rest of the world can do it as well.

Madam Prime Minister, I thank you for your continued leadership that you have shown in this topic. We really sincerely hope to see a successful outcome in COP26.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity. I wish all of us good luck in these next couple of days.

Thank you.