

Address by

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President of the
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Mr. President,
Fellow leaders,
Distinguished delegates,

I come here today to make a simple plea to seal the deal that will save my country, my people and our cultural heritage. The survival of my country and many others is now in peril after we have lived sustainably on our islands for thousands of years.

We are not certain if our biggest threat is from ocean acidification that will erode our islands from underneath, **OR** from sea-level rise that could submerge our islands under the sea, **OR** from changes in weather and typhoon intensity that could make inhabiting our islands impossible. But we know that our continued peaceful existence is totally at risk. We know that the enemy that gives rise to these threats is climate change. And we know that to survive, we must act now.

Therefore, I'm calling on you, my fellow leaders, to give island nations like mine a chance of surviving, to prevent catastrophic impacts on this planet, and to give us all a chance to say that when the opportunity presented itself, we made the right choice at the right time.

I ask for your help in doing these three things to save my country. **First**, I ask that we act now to significantly reduce carbon dioxide emissions, which can remain in the atmosphere and continue to cause warming for over 1000 years.

Second, scientists have warned that if the climate system passes tipping points for irreversible changes, it could simply go beyond our control. Catastrophic impacts could result no matter how much we reduce carbon dioxide in the decades ahead.

So we need to forestall these worst-case scenarios until we are able to make significant progress on the carbon dioxide priority. To do this, we must address the non-CO2 warming agents while we also address carbon to prevent the climate system from spinning far out of our control.

Third, even if we succeed at stabilizing emissions and atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases—by then we will have entered well into the danger zone. Therefore, let us effectively reduce concentrations of warming agents directly from the atmosphere.

Then we can implement carbon-negative strategies, to return the high concentrations of greenhouse gases back to pre industrial levels.

Equally important, we need a financial mechanism that is based on the principle of new, additional, and predictable source of funding for the most vulnerable states, especially the small island developing states and the least developing countries.

I ask for your help to save my people. I ask for your help to save the people of small island countries like mine. I ask for your help so that together we can save this planet for our future generations.

My fellow leaders,

We are not here by accident; we are here for a purpose. Climate change is our compelling issue. This is our defining moment. Let us seal the deal to save humanity.

Thank you.