

**BELIZE**



**STATEMENT BY HON. ORLANDO HABET**

**MINISTER OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND  
DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE 27TH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO  
THE UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE  
CHANGE (UNFCCC COP 27)**

**AND**

**THE 4<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES SERVING AS  
THE MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE PARIS AGREEMENT (CMA 4)**

**15 NOVEMBER, 2022**

**SHARM EL-SHEIKH, EGYPT**

Mr. President,

Your Excellency, Minister Sameh Shokry,

Allow me to convey greetings on behalf of Prime Minister Hon. John Briceno and the Government and People of Belize. I also extend my delegation's appreciation to the Government of Egypt for being such gracious hosts.

I arrived at Sharm El-Sheikh with a heavy heart after witnessing the devastation caused by Hurricane Lisa in Belize, leaving our old capital devastated. Initial assessments reveal an approximate USD 100 million in physical and social damages, with a total of 500 homes lost or extensively damaged. Five thousand (5,000) persons were in shelters and had to be housed, and fed. To begin addressing this, there is an urgent need for USD 11 million in immediate humanitarian relief. Losses of this singular event are estimated at about 10% of our national budget, not accounting for ripple effects, including social and health impacts. Unfortunately, such catastrophe is just a testament to the impacts of the climate emergency which, regrettably, is a forerunner of a new hostile global climate regime of our own making.

Mr. President, this COP is an implementation COP. We need action. Where are those actions? How many COPs have we been arguing for urgent climate actions, and how many more do we need to have? How many lives do we need to sacrifice to solve the biggest crisis we face in our civilization?

Additionally, Belize joins other nations in expressing its profound sympathies to the people of Cuba, Puerto Rico, Canada, Nicaragua, El Salvador and the United States

of America who have been devastated by the passage of hurricanes Julia, Ian and Fiona, which were described as some of the strongest Atlantic hurricanes in modern record. Lives were lost and livelihoods upended. Hurricane Fiona caused flooding, destruction of residential housing and infrastructural damage all across Belize due to heavy torrential rains and strong winds.

Small Island Developing States, such as Belize, continue to be severely impacted by climate change across all sectors. SIDS continue to face natural, health related, social and economic shocks that are beyond domestic control. The growing vulnerability of SIDS is a direct consequence of being in climate sensitive zones and are especially prone to the destructive impacts of climate change with damage costing approximately 12.6 billion US dollars per annum. Losses due to natural hazards exceed an average of USD 46 million per year in Belize.

Even in the face of these challenges, Belize continues to implement targeted actions to mitigate and to help our people to adapt to the impacts of climate change. Belize's updated NDC shows a 5% increase in overall commitment.

UNFCCC synthesis reports on NDCs show that even if all unconditional and conditional Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) the combined pledges of 193 parties of the Paris Agreement would put the world on track for achieving 2.5 degrees Celsius of warming by the end of the century. Such a scenario will inevitably lead to overshoot of the 1.5<sup>0</sup>C goal, resulting in irreversible impacts on SIDS. This would necessitate making drastic and unprecedented emission cuts across all sectors in this decade if we are to slow down climate impacts, thus giving humanity the best chance to survive. We need stronger commitments and actions from the G20 and other large polluters. We need to keep 1.5 alive!

Mr. President, urgent actions need to be implemented for the reduction of emissions from critical sectors such as energy, transport, forest, waste and agriculture. Belize continues to prioritize its critical forests resource with effective policies, strategies, and meaningful actions resulting in a national forest cover of over 60%. As we endeavor to build on our current efforts, market based approaches become increasingly important if we are to achieve the further emission cuts committed to in our NDC. For this to work, there is need for clearly defined rules, and targeted reduction in overall emissions, together with adequate arrangements to track progress, transparency, and streamline adequate finance to high forest low deforestation nations like Belize.

As climate change mitigation falls short, discussion on averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change becomes urgent. An agreement to provide loss and damage finance, apart from adaptation finance, must be made at this COP. This can be achieved through the establishment of a dedicated facility for financing loss and damage. The facility can be established as a pillar of the overall UNFCCC financial mechanism and should be able to facilitate the coordination, mobilization and channeling of new, additional, adequate and predictable L&D finance for SIDS, LDCs and other developing countries.

In his speech a few days ago, President Biden spoke of “climate justice” and reiterated that No one should be left behind. Mr. President, Taiwan as the world’s 21st-largest economy, should be afforded the opportunity to share its technologies, resources, and expertise with the world in addressing climate change. Therefore, the

Government of Belize supports Taiwan and calls for its professional, pragmatic, and constructive participation in the UNFCCC.

Mr. President, progress has been slow over the years. But at COP 27 we have a make-or-break opportunity to get on track. Climate action and the provision of support to those in need must be given top priority. The world is depending on us, and we cannot let them down. Please be assured of Belize's support for a successful Climate Change Conference here in Egypt.

In President Biden's Words" Let us write a better story for the world"!