



HIGH LEVEL STATEMENT

TO THE

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DELIVERED BY

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IN THE

MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND JOB CREATION,

JAMAICA



President, Excellencies, Distinguished delegates

On behalf of the Government and People of Jamaica I take this opportunity to thank the Government and People of the Republic of Poland for the warm welcome and hospitality the delegation of Jamaica has experienced since we arrived in this beautiful city of Katowice.

Let me also thank the Presidencies of the COP 23 and 24 and the UNFCCC Secretariat for the excellent organization of the work throughout the two weeks, the result of which we are certain will be a strong Implementation Framework for the operationalization of the Paris Agreement.

In this regard, Jamaica associates fully with statements made by the Alliance of Small Island States and the Group of 77 & China, throughout this conference. Jamaica welcomes the IPCC special report on warming of 1.5°C which has been described as a game changer and can be considered the most important report to have emerged from the IPCC process since its inception in the late 1980's.

Mr Chair, for us in Jamaica and the entire Caribbean Region, it would be hard to imagine what life would be like in a world with 2 or 3-degree increase, or worse. The reality is that a temperature rise of 1°C has already had an adverse impact on our people, and our economies, and the natural resources which sustain them both.

In that light, Jamaica is striving to step up our own ambition consistent with the long-term temperature goal of the Paris Agreement, and is working with the NDC Partnership towards an enhanced Nationally Determined Contributions under the Paris Agreement by 2020 as the primary tool for delivering mitigation

ambition. Importantly, we are committed to pursuing greater ambition despite contributing less than 0.05% to the global emissions.

Mr Chair, at the recently concluded G20 Leaders Summit, the Most Honorable Andrew Holness, Prime Minister of Jamaica reminded us that Small Island Developing States do not have the luxury of engaging in a philosophical debate on Climate Change.

We are on the front lines.

Every year without fail, one or more of the islands in the Caribbean Region is hit by a severe weather event. In recent times, these events are of greater frequency and intensity and are significantly depleting national economies.

It is in this context that all Parties at this 24th Session of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations must join hands with the Small Island Developing States and support the strengthening of a global system that further secures a commitment to the 1.5 °C target, and the commitment to finance its achievement.

Mr Chair, the Prime Minister of Jamaica recently accepted the UN Secretary General's invitation to provide political leadership and Co-Chair with French President Macron, the UN Climate Change Financing Initiative in support of implementing the objectives of the Climate Summit in 2019

We are heartened by the signal of increased financial commitment that have been announced by many Parties at this conference, during the past days and

expect that other Parties will come forward with timely pledges so that we can deliver on the longstanding commitment to mobilize the agreed US\$100 billion per annum by 2020.

Mr Chair, Jamaica holds itself out as a small island developing state that has embraced fiscal responsibility and energy diversity.

Our government believes in progression towards a low carbon future. In 2016, the largest wind energy facility in the English-speaking Caribbean, Wigton Windfarm Limited, completed its Phase III by installing twenty-four megawatts (24MW) of wind energy. This brought the wind farm's total capacity to 62.7 MW after previously installing 20.7 megawatts in 2004 and eighteen megawatts (18MW) in 2010. This is currently a government owned facility.

In addition to the commitment of the Government of Jamaica, the private sector is also "crowded" in as a significant partner into our goal for greater ambition.

There are several privately owned hydro power plants across the island which total more than twenty megawatts (20MW). Also, one company has launched commercial operations installing Jamaica's first utility-scale grid-connected solar PV plant in 2016. The solar plant comprises of twenty megawatts (20MW) of installed capacity with the ability to power more than 20,000 households over the next 20 years. This was no simple feat with more than ninety-one thousand two hundred (91,200) panels connected.

To extend further Mr Chair, in that same year, another company developed the largest private-sector renewable energy project in Jamaica installing 36.6MW of electricity to the national grid. This is equivalent to providing power for twenty-five thousand (25,000) customers, while reducing greenhouse gas emissions by approximately sixty-six thousand (66,000) tons of CO₂ equivalent per year.

Mr Chair, Jamaica aims to reach fifty per cent (50%) renewable energy by 2030 which would reduce our need to import fossil fuels as we pay close attention to matters related to climate change.

Recently, and to further demonstrate leadership and total commitment to our energy transformation, we installed a fifteen kilowatts (15kW) solar electric system on the Office of the Prime Minister, which will result in a sharp reduction in the government's electricity bill.

Renewable energy is certainly at the foremost of our thoughts and action.

Mr Chair, these are significant achievements and goals for any small island and we look forward to doing even more as these activities provide, among other things, employment and infrastructural development benefits to our country. The communities surrounding these projects also experienced relevant co-benefits to support their abilities to be more resilient.

On adaptation, this is necessary for our very survival. Much work has been done in adaptation thus far, from strengthening our policy and planning frameworks to work across various sectors of society and in communities. However, the evidence

is clear: we have a far way to go, even as the global emissions continue to trend upward as shown in the recent UN Environment's Emissions Gap Report, and the consequent effects worsen.

We encourage Parties to increase support for adaptation to vulnerable countries such as Jamaica and other Small Island Developing States, and to take this into account in the guidance for adaptation communications, and the further work to be undertaken by the Adaptation Committee and the Least Developed Countries Expert Group.

Despite our efforts at adaptation, these gains could easily be reversed with the direct hit of a single hurricane. These rapid onset events happen even as we struggle to understand and cope with the true impact of slow onset ones, including sea level rise, ocean acidification, loss of biodiversity and salinization.

Jamaica supports the establishment of a work programme under the SBSTA that will assess how adaptation efforts in developing countries have been funded since the entry into force of the Convention. Such a work programme has taken greater importance based on the recent IPCC special report on the impact of temperature rise of 1.5°C and will inform recommendations on how to better address the needs and concerns of developing countries.

There are limits to adaptation which we must acknowledge and take into account across the spectrum of work of the Paris Agreement. This year, we celebrate the five year anniversary of the Warsaw International Mechanism and

we are heartened by the advances made, but much more need to be done and we look forward to the outputs of future work in the five-year rolling work plan on loss and damage.

We also acknowledge the work of the Task Force on Displacement which has produced work highlighting the real consequences of climate change relating to forced migration, a real issue for island states where coastal lands are being lost.

Mr Chair, we believe that the Talanoa Dialogue is an excellent framework for implementing the IPCC Report, contribute effectively to raising ambition and reduce emissions so as to prevent warming from exceeding 1.5°C. We call on all Parties to demonstrate the political will necessary to make this happen and translate the Talanoa Dialogue into scaled-down, implementable actions on the ground which will lead to increased ambition.

Mr Chair, the task here in Katowice seems daunting but they are not insurmountable. We need a renewed focus in furtherance of previously agreed outcomes to get us back on track to effectively address climate change.

Parties have an obligation at COP 24 to the citizens of the world and we must show that the international community is still capable of coming together to solve any difficult problem.

Mr Chair, we must move from Climate Talk, to Climate Action.

We do hope *that the outcomes of COP 24 will result in the full and effective operationalisation of the Paris Agreement*. Indeed the world is watching and waiting and we cannot disappoint.

Mr President, excellencies, distinguished delegates, I thank you.