



STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR PETER THOMSON, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
OF FIJI TO THE UNITED NATIONS AT THE UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY-GENERAL'S  
CLIMATE SUMMIT  
(NEW YORK, 23 SEPTEMBER 2014)

The Secretary General,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

As a nation, Fiji wishes for this Summit to be a watershed event in our collective quest to deal with the scourge of climate change. We thank the Secretary General for his timely initiative and applaud his efforts to catalyze concrete actions.

The science is clear and the evidence unequivocal. IPCC has warned us that if the current rates of emission are unchecked, the average global temperature will rise by 2.6 to 4.8 degrees Celsius, with sea levels rising by over 1 meter by 2100. These levels will spell doom for many of our coastal communities, national infrastructures and economic livelihoods. Even a 1.5°C warming will have adverse effects on many SIDS, exceeding their ability to cope and adapt to pervasive impacts and compromising decades of development gains.

Faced with these IPCC warnings, the future of our children looks bleak. They will grow up in a world with increased coral bleaching, ocean acidification, flooding, erosion, contaminated ground water, and degraded ecosystems including mangroves, wetlands and forests. These effects will lead to decreased food security and inevitable loss of economic opportunities. Indeed climate change threatens the future of our natural and human systems, it threatens our very existence.

We therefore underline the imperative of the international community limiting global warming and maintaining temperature increases to less than 1.5°C. This Summit provides all countries: big and small, developed and developing, rich and poor, the opportunity to demonstrate their commitment and political will to deal with this global challenge. We require visionary leadership and genuine pledges for transformational actions to address climate change. The solution is not beyond our human and technological capabilities, what we require is political will.

For its part, Fiji's total GHG emissions are less than 0.06% of total global emissions. Nevertheless, Fiji has taken bold and ambitious actions to reduce emission levels even further and pursue a low-carbon development pathway. Amongst other things, our target includes increasing the share of renewable energy for electricity generation from the current level of 60% to 100% by 2030.

The Fijian Government has recently adopted policy initiatives, such as the national Green Growth Framework, setting out our goals to promote clean energy. We are pursuing innovative ways to reduce risks, manage disasters and enhance resilience of our vulnerable communities and ecosystems. These actions are designed in order for Fiji to pursue low-carbon and climate resilient growth by reducing or avoiding emissions. We trust that our actions will encourage others to make bold and decisive pledges.

We also urge all countries to work diligently towards a fair and equitable, and at the same time ambitious, legally-binding climate agreement to be adopted in Paris in 2015. We reiterate our call for the provision of necessary finance and technology to enable countries like ours to realize our ambitions of reducing emissions and deal with the serious climate change impacts already being experienced.

We urge developed nations to honor their current commitments under the Convention and Kyoto Protocol, and call on them to demonstrate decisive leadership as we approach the uncertainties of the future. The Green Climate Fund provides the best opportunity for countries to demonstrate their commitment to addressing Climate Change, by expediting its operations through the proposed \$15-billion capitalization of the Fund in time for the Lima COP. The new legally binding climate agreement expected to be finalized by the Paris COP, will be a fitting testament of our global resolve.

We urge everyone at this Summit to commit as a family of nations to saving our planet, so that we will not be found wanting by future generations.

Thank you.