

Island States call for concrete results from upcoming UN climate change meeting



Amb. Camillo Gonsalves of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

29 September 2010 – Three small island States today said the forthcoming climate change conference in Cancun, Mexico, must come up with a binding agreement to address the problem, stressing at the General Assembly that their unique vulnerability made the issue even more urgent for them.

“We are threatening to destroy our own world, as we shamelessly squabble over dollars and degrees,” said Camillo Gonsalves, the Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, in his **statement** to the General Assembly’s high-level debate.

“Saint Vincent and the Grenadines has no interest in fiddling merrily while the Earth drowns, suffocates or burns. Climate change is the global challenge of our time, and failure and delay can no longer be a viable option,” Mr. Gonsalves said.

Tuvalu, for its part, decried the slow progress in climate change negotiations under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (**UNFCCC**), and what the country said was the lack of concrete commitments by key greenhouse gases emitting countries.

Afelee Falema Pita, Tuvalu’s Permanent Representative to the UN, **said** his country would like to see three key commitments made at Cancun.

“First, we would like to see all amendments and rules for the Kyoto Protocol agreed, so that such amendments are ready for ratification to avoid a gap in the commitments period,” said Mr. Pita.

“Second, we should decide on a mandate to start negotiations on a new legally binding agreement based on elements of the Bali Action Plan.

“And third, we should agree on a set of decisions that will provide interim steps to implement measures to be incorporated in the new legally binding agreement,” he added.

Echoing the same message, Tonga urged the world to work for greater consensus on climate change than was realized in the Copenhagen conference last year.

“Therein [the Copenhagen accord] lies the potential for all of us at Cancun to reach beyond our narrow national and regional interests and embrace our collective responsibility and

duty to each other as nation States and to those States in particular who are most vulnerable, least responsible for this situation and least able to address the capricious whims of climate change," Tonga's head of delegation Sonatane Tu'Akinamolahi Taumoepeau Tupou, said in his **statement** to the Assembly debate.

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