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**STATEMENT BY  
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PAPUA NEW GUINEA TO THE UNITED NATIONS  
DURING THE INFORMAL THEMATIC DEBATE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
"CLIMATE CHANGE AS A GLOBAL CHALLENGE"  
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Madam President

Thank you for convening these informative sessions which have provided very useful information to enable delegations to be updated on various issues pertaining to climate change.

We acknowledge the statement made by the Chairs of AOSIS and G77 & China. Also statements made by other colleagues from the islands states.

Madam President

Many Pacific Island Leaders, notably from the smaller islands states, have made statements here at the UN about climate change and global warming for a very long time.

The current sense of urgency as expressed both in this House and elsewhere in the global community is welcomed. But a sense of urgency has to be translated into action! Our colleagues from the Maldives are right climate: change does not start and end in the Maldives. In fact it starts in all of our countries and continues its destructive course into each and every country. No one is immune!

This is a battle which we are all in and must address together. Madam President, you have chosen the title well as this is indeed a Global challenge. We have to have a sense of convergence for a united purpose to address this global threat and it has to be our common cause.

Madam President

Sea levels continue to rise along with other negative effects of global warming in many parts of the Pacific. Land and Marine ecosystems continue to be affected. Coral bleaching, depletion of marine resources and loss of land continue to be problems. Critical water resources are being affected from inundation by the sea of low lying areas. This phenomenon continues but at different levels and speed.

In the higher mountain areas of Papua New Guinea, diseases such as malaria, once never heard of before in these parts are now life threatening diseases as malaria carrying mosquitoes reach into the warm highlands.

While the destructive effects of Climate Change continue, many of the small pacific states continue to work and commit themselves in areas which provide some protection to our marine areas and resources in particular.

The initiatives include:

- \*the Micronesia Challenge which continues to be led by Palau along with the Marshall Islands and Micronesia,
- \*the declaration of a marine protected area by Kiribati (which is nearly as big as Portugal!),
- \*re-location of communities in many island states.

Various regional initiatives to protect our countries continue with assistance from regional agencies, bi-lateral and multi-lateral partners.

Madam President

In my own country, an avoided deforestation initiative has become a globally recognized and embraced initiative. In coalition with Costa Rica and other tropical forested countries around the world, the initiative continues to gain momentum. While the Stern report acknowledges the serious nature of deforestation, we are being told that numerous technical issues still need to be addressed. However, let there be no doubt that the IPCC has given its verdict that continuing deforestation is one of the major sources of CO2 emissions – calculated at upwards of 20% of global emissions. Therefore, the issue needs serious attention on the same global scale as all the aspects of addressing climate change. Indeed the perverse economic incentives need urgent attention along with the technical issues as I have just noted.

Madam President

The Prime Minister of the UK in his speech here at the UN yesterday, amongst other things and while referring to the MDGs, spoke about an “emergency situation requiring an emergency response”. This is an emergency we must act on accordingly. I am sure that the Prime Minister of the UK included the environment because in talking about the MDGs, Goal 7 relates to “environmental sustainability” which includes “climate change and climate stability”.

Madam President,

There is but one world, our world! It requires all of us to work together. In this spirit, we hope that Bali is not an end point for “new” talks to begin but a serious starting point for action on all that we have said and promised because the gravity of the issue demands it.