

His Excellency, the Secretary General of the United Nations, Ban Ki Moon  
Fellow Leaders  
Ladies and Gentlemen, girls and boys,

My name is Apisai Ielemi and I am Prime Minister of the island nation of Tuvalu. Tuvalu is a small island country located in the South west Pacific. My country is made up of a series of coral atolls with highest point above sea level of less than 4 metres. From my office here in Funafuti I can see the oceans on both sides of this island. We are certainly one of the most vulnerable countries to the impacts of climate change.

We are hoping that the climate change meeting in Copenhagen will be a new page in the history books where it will be written that the world leaders decided to properly tackle climate change. We must seize this opportunity. Never, in the history of humankind have we faced such a global challenge. We leaders, must do this for our children and our children's children. I plea for your support to make the Copenhagen meeting a global commitment to action on climate change.

In this short video I want to highlight some key outcomes we hope will come out of the Copenhagen meeting. As the first step, it is essential that we sign off on a new legally binding agreement in Copenhagen. We also need to reconfirm our commitment to the Kyoto Protocol. Both these outcomes are critical.

To ensure a Tuvalu's future we must agree that global emissions will peak no later than 2015 and ensure that the global effort to reduce emissions means that global average temperature increase is below 1 point 5 degrees Celsius.

We must agree to new financial arrangements to support the most vulnerable countries build their resilience to the impacts of climate change. As part of this new arrangement, we need a commitment to establishing regional centres on adaptation and an international insurance mechanism to help poor countries rebuild from the impacts of climate change.

We must agree that all major greenhouse gas emitters, wherever they may be, take clear and explicit actions to reduce their emissions significantly. This must be done within a short timeframe.

We need a new institutional framework that will provide finance and technical support for developing countries with significant emissions to leapfrog fossil fuel technologies and move quickly to renewable energy and energy efficiency systems. A new financial arrangement such as renewable energy bonds should be developed to support efforts to deploy these new technologies.

We must properly tackle emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. In doing so, tackle the drivers of deforestation and not simply see this as a new money making scheme for carbon market opportunists. Whatever action we take at the international level on REDD we must ensure that the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities are properly protected.

These are just a few suggestions for us to “seal the deal” in Copenhagen. We hope you will join us and share this vision for real action. The future of my country, Tuvalu, is in your hands.

Tuvalu mo te Atua , I thank you.