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**STATEMENT**

**BY**

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**MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
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**AT THE**

**GENERAL DEBATE**

**OF THE**

**SIXTY-SECOND SESSION OF  
THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

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**PERMANENT MISSION OF BELIZE  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

Mr. President,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

For over 20 years we have been talking about rising atmospheric temperatures; the depletion of the ozone; rising sea levels and the impending inundation of low lying coastal areas.

Now that the climate change debate has finally become “the rage”, those of us who see the change and worry about the inevitable must unfortunately still contend with entrenched special interests who despite overwhelming evidence now available, continue to argue otherwise.

As we focus our general debate on climate change, it is the hope of my delegation that this will lead to more decisive action by ALL member states; so that we can begin to make the changes we believe are necessary for us to reverse the trends which so far continue to lead us down a destructive path.

#### **Building consensus: toward a global response**

We already agree that negotiations on action to tackle climate change should be conducted within the framework convention on Climate Change. We subscribe to the principle that each of us has a role to play. Those who are the largest polluters must reverse these trends. Those who are not among the larger polluters must take the necessary measures aimed at mitigation as well as adaptation methods to help in reversing these trends.

Developed countries must recognize the special needs of the most vulnerable, to support our efforts towards sustainable development and to assist us to make our communities more adaptable to change. We must develop the capacity to take action.

We must adopt more sustainable practices. For this to occur we must take specific action to limit green house gas emissions. It is not enough to say that we will reduce harmful emission; we have been saying that since Rio; we must DO IT.

The EU commitment on climate change is important politically; but we need to move beyond symbolism to action. Other developed countries and regions, as well as emerging economies, must take substantial steps towards mitigation and develop as well as share the technologies which result in low- or no-carbon economies.

## **Lessons from climate change**

In Belize, the symbiosis between our ecology and our economy is evident. Agricultural production, fishing, mineral-extractions and hydrocarbon explorations as well as tourism are all subject to the caprices of the climate. Must we also be subjected to an uneven playing field in the arena of international trade which is fast reaching the crisis level? To mix metaphors – sometimes a rising tide can swamp vulnerable boats.

The international community must keep development in perspective in the current climate change debate, since economic development better enables countries to tackle climate change.

Our focus on the urgencies of the current situation should not detract from the equally urgent if not dire situation of the development agenda resulting from complex factors including climate change and the failure of the international economic system to reinvent itself.

At the heart of the crisis is a fundamental distrust, and no place is this more evident than in the Doha development round. Doha doled out harsh consequences for developing countries particularly those that are commodity and preference dependent.

We ask the question: Is there is a serious commitment to the survival of the multilateral trading system? If the answer is no, we can expect to see even more bilateral and regional arrangements resulting in a movement away from the idea that together we are better at solving our common problems.

The discussions on climate change and the larger development debate exhibit the need for an effective, legitimate multilateral system that is fair and balanced and that operates in a transparent and inclusive manner. Responsible leadership that adheres to the basic principles of justice and the rule of law is even more critical to achieving that system and maintaining its integrity.

### **Mr. President**

It is in this spirit of respect for law and justice, the desire for equity and for the preservation of human rights that we continue to struggle with the decision of this very body to exclude any true debate over the inclusion of the rights of the 23 million people of Taiwan to Representation in this institution. The desire of the people of Taiwan is not only to be a part of the deliberations of this institution, but to engage in these critical issues facing the international community. We remain steadfast in our support for their aspirations and will continue to advocate for their representation as well as that of the Saharawi people who lack a voice in our United Nations.

We continue to monitor the situation in the Middle East with great concern. The question of Palestine remains at the crux of the conflicts in the region. In this regard, it is high time that we realize the vision of two-States, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security.

### **A return to the basics**

The UN remains the key institution to facilitate cooperation and build global solidarity to solve our pressing economic, social and political problems. Its effectiveness has been challenged. The UN and its Member States have responded to this challenge by embarking on a comprehensive reform process to overhaul the system and to ensure that it is better equipped to meet contemporary global demands. We applaud reform that has been achieved in peace building, human rights and humanitarian assistance and encourage the UN to monitor these developments for their effectiveness and compliance with their mandate and the Charter of the United Nations. Belize continues to support the need for a comprehensive reform of the Security Council. In particular, we agree with other Member States who have called for a more results oriented debate during the sixty second session.

### **Conclusion**

Building trust requires a return to basics. To advance development, we must return to the basic principle of equity. In international peace and security, we must return to the basic principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the rule of law.

In the matter of Climate Change, this greatest challenge to our civilization, we must look to science to make those arguments which will diminish the skeptics, and we must return to the basic principles enshrined in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Let us give meaning to the moment. Let us get to work.