



REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
MAJURO, MARSHALL ISLANDS

**28th Meeting of Parties to the Montreal Protocol
Kigali, Rwanda**

**High-Level Statement by His Excellency Mattlan Zackhras
Minister-in-Assistance to the President**

Thank you Mr. President, and thank you to the country of a thousand hills and a million smiles for all of your warm hospitality, and for all your tireless leadership of this process.

Mr. President, we are here in Kigali to make one of the most important decisions for the planet we all call home.

The amendment we forge here is not just the biggest thing we can do this year for the climate, but it may be the single biggest bite we ever take out of the global mitigation gap in one go.

Mr. President, our negotiators may be stuck in rooms full of Excel spreadsheets and numbers talking about baselines and freeze dates, but we cannot forget the people whose lives will be impacted.

The strength of the amendment we agree here will affect hundreds of millions of people, and billions that are yet to be born. And none more so than those that call the Marshall Islands home.

In the last year alone my country has suffered through more frequent and intense king tides, and a prolonged drought which forced us to declare a state of disaster. At one point our capital island Majuro was left with less than three weeks of fresh water.

My people have had their homes flooded, watched their crops die, and had their faith tested. But it is a measure of their resolve that this has only strengthened our will to continue to take up the climate fight. Our work here in Kigali through the High Ambition Coalition is perhaps the best example of this.

Mr. President, in Paris we all agreed to pursue efforts to limit global temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius. Without an ambitious amendment in Kigali this will be impossible. And that would mean my country will not survive.

Thankfully more than 100 countries have already pledged to accept nothing less through their support of the New York Declaration in September.

Our yardstick for ambition is therefore very simple. This amendment can either provide us a credible pathway to limiting temperatures to 1.5 degrees by the end of the century, or it cannot. It can either help us reduce carbon dioxide equivalent emissions by 100 gigatonnes by 2050 to help us get there, or it cannot.

Every year we delay our freeze date makes this less and less achievable. A five year delay on a freeze date may not seem like much, but it is the equivalent to running 700 coal fired power plants for the same period. And for every year we delay we lose the ability to wipe off a further 2 gigatonnes of equivalent emissions.

Mr. President, the current proposals on the table are getting there. But we can go further, we must go further, and we will go further. A full package of financial support will of course only increase those that are able to act early.

In closing, I want to commend the efforts of all countries but in particular that of our brothers and sisters in the Federated States of Micronesia. If we are successful in securing an ambitious Kigali Amendment, it will be one of the best examples of island leadership we have ever seen. We should remember that it was their first submission in 2009 that shone a spotlight on this whole problem.

Mr. President, let's get this done. And let's show the world that we have already started to work towards achieving the goals we agreed in Paris.

Our people are watching and our planet is waiting.

Kommol tata and thank you very much.