

BAHAMAS

29th Meeting of The Parties to The Ozone Layer

Minister's Remarks

Thank you (Mr./Madam) Chair

A pleasant good morning / afternoon to all my distinguished colleagues from around the world. It is indeed a great privilege to have this opportunity to give this address on behalf of the Government of the Bahamas.

Let me first take this opportunity to thank the Ozone Secretariat, Multilateral Fund, environmental agencies, and all other organizers of this very auspicious meeting. I would also like to thank both the government, and the wonderful people of Canada for the warm hospitality that my delegation has received since our arrival in this beautiful city of Montreal. This is indeed a historic place where our journey towards preserving the ozone layer began some 30 years ago.

It has been over twenty-four (24) years since the Bahamas became a signatory to the Montreal Protocol, and today as we face new challenges that threaten to disturb the delicate balance needed to sustain our way of life, we wish to affirm our commitment to this environmental treaty, and give the assurance in an official capacity to all our partners in the international community of our sincerity and unwavering support in the implementation of this agreement.

With the threat of Climate Change (SIDS) Small Island Developing States like The Bahamas are particularly vulnerable. Over the past few years we have seen significant changes in our weather patterns which have the capacity to dramatically alter life as we know it. In 2015, 2016 and just this year alone The Bahamas and the Caribbean Region has suffered though the devastating effects of Hurricanes Joaquin, Matthew, Irma, and Maria. The impact, size,

and strength of these hurricanes in succession was virtually non-existent just a decade ago, which is indicative of climate changes that we are experiencing

Mr. /Madame Chair, despite the successes of the Montreal Protocol there is no doubt that we have arrived at yet another crossroads similar to the one we were facing in 1988 in this very city. With the realization that most ozone-depleting substances are also greenhouse gases, it is the position of my government that the Montreal Protocol is the instrument best suited to tackle the challenges associated with Global Warming. Through its organizational structure, financial mechanisms, and capacity assistance programs, that are intrinsically weaved within the fabric of the Protocol we believe that this agreement is adequately positioned from a global perspective to respond to the looming challenges before us.

It should be noted that The Bahamas like many other countries in our region is a large consumer of HFC gases and equipment. This increase in the use of gases such as R-134a, and R-410A is due to the imposed quota system which restricts the quantities of R-22 that can legally be imported into The Bahamas.

As a result of this steady increase in the consumption of HFCs, it is the intent of my Ministry and Government, having been newly elected just six months ago to make the ratification of the Kigali Amendment a top priority in 2018.

Madam / Mr. Chair, as I close, I would like to encourage my distinguished colleagues to continue to be driven by a spirit of cooperation and mutual respect that has always been the hallmark of the United Nations, and to always be mindful during their deliberations that as the late British Parliamentarian Jo Cox reminded us **“the commonalities that bind us together are far greater than the differences that seek to separate and divide us”**Thank You

