

Mobilizing Parliaments to Act on Climate Change

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Mr. President, your excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen. Assalaam alaikum. A very good afternoon.

At the outset, I would like to take this opportunity to express how pleased we are to be part of this great assembly. This Assembly demonstrates a strong solidarity to find solutions for a more sustainable world.

In the Maldives, we are facing an uncertain future for the next generation as climate change threatens our islands, its coastal infrastructure, our livelihood, and fresh water. Frequent flooding during the monsoon and destruction of coast lines increases the immense human suffering in some of our communities today.

As climate change intensifies, we must take a step back and analyse the problems faced by the individual countries.

In the Maldives, based on a simple, implicit assumption, that islands will continue to behave naturally, we carry out expansion of islands, dredging, taking sand from lagoons, just to name a few.

As a result of those human activities, the natural ability of the ecosystem to mitigate the climate change is lost. This again increases the rate and severity of erosion in the Maldives.

Several recommendations that have been formulated, putting greater emphasis on preservation of the natural ecosystem have been ignored for political reasons and to meet the public demands in the elections.

However, I am pleased to highlight that the Maldivian Parliament has been proactive in addressing climate change. We have taken several initiatives. We don't allow single use plastic products in the parliament. We have established a Standing Committee on Environment and Climate Change. We have passed few bills including the Climate Emergency Bill. Few resolutions also have been passed to fight climate change.

Ladies and gentlemen! We, the parliamentarians have stronger relationships, stronger affinity to our communities. We should be voices that resonate, see through the lenses of the underprivileged, the underrepresented women and children. Our commitment should not be confined within the four walls. We need to think out of box and walk the talk.

Post Covid, as we begin to focus on rebuilding, we, the parliamentarians must be united as a driving force to incentivise, engage, and influence to our communities. The IPU family with its strong leadership should be capitalised to fight climate change agenda that we endorsed locally and internationally.

My fellow participants! how many new towels and napkins did we use in the hotel yesterday? How much water and food did we waste yesterday? I call all of us to reflect, critically think about our actions!

Let us change our minds and hearts to live more ecofriendly lifestyle. Let us become the ambassadors to fight the climate change and promote healthy practices to make the world a sustainable place. Change begins with us; and we can be the change agents. Together, we can make a difference. Thank you.