

**Honourable Chair, distinguished colleagues,**

I stand before you as a representative of Suriname, a nation defined not only by its diversity of people, cultures, and beliefs, but by its deep respect for nature. Over 92% of our land remains covered by forest. We do not merely speak of sustainability, we live it. As one of the lungs of our planet, we are determined to keep it that way for generations to come.

And from that reality, I bring a message of leadership grounded in principle:

**There can be no peace without justice.  
And no sustainable future without both.**

Across our world, conflict persists. Inequality deepens. And the gap between those with power and those without continues to widen, particularly for Small Island Developing States.

Too often, these nations are present in name, but absent in influence, even in institutions such as the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

That must change.

Because leadership today is not measured by words spoken in rooms like this, but by actions taken beyond them.

Let us speak honestly.

Those who gained the most from industrialization are the very ones who caused the greatest environmental damage. Yet they do not suffer the most. That burden falls on others, on countries like mine, on

communities that contributed the least to this crisis, but pay the highest price.

So today, I do not come with a request.

I come with a call to lead, together.

Let us move:

- From promises to **partnerships**
- From dialogue to **delivery**
- From awareness to **accountability**

Share knowledge.

Provide access to technology and resources.

Enable us to protect what remains one of the world's most vital natural assets, our forests.

Because protecting forests in Suriname is not only our responsibility, it is a global necessity.

At the same time, climate change is accelerating. In my country, more than two-thirds of our people are already facing the realities of rising sea levels, threatening homes, livelihoods, and infrastructure.

This is not tomorrow's crisis.

This is today's reality.

So I ask you, not as a formality, but as a moment of truth:

**Will we lead with courage, or delay with comfort?**

The people of SIDS are not asking for sympathy.  
They are demanding fairness.  
They are expecting leadership.

And history will judge us, not by what we intended, but by what we delivered.

We have the knowledge.  
We have the technology.  
We have the capacity.

What remains is the choice.

Let us choose action over hesitation.  
Let us choose justice over convenience.  
Let us choose a future where peace is built on fairness and shared responsibility.

Because true leadership is not about protecting national interest alone, it is about advancing our collective survival.

**Let us lead. Together.**

Thank you.

