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INTERNATIONAL MEETING OF PARLIAMENTARIANS ON CLIMATE CHANGE: BEYOND COP 17

Dhaka, Bangladesh
14 - 16 March 2012

ONE VOICE ONE GOAL
INTERNATIONAL MEETING OF PARLIAMENTARIANS ON CLIMATE CHANGE BEYOND COP17
DHAKA | 14 - 16 MARCH, 2012

PARLIAMENTARIANS FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE
ONE VOICE ONE GOAL

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Foreword

I am delighted to present a summary of some of the main points of this conference that aimed to provide a forum for parliamentarians from those countries most vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. It seems very relevant that this conference has been hosted here in Dhaka as Bangladesh has witnessed first hand the devastating consequences of climate change.

The impact on our communities of climate change is one of the greatest challenges facing the world today. It requires real and effective public policies both to reverse global warming and to assist communities adjust traditional livelihoods and ways of life to cope with changing climatic conditions. It needs more than ever coordinated action at local, national and global levels and a real commitment of all members of the international community.

Until recently it has been the developed industrialised nations that have been at the vanguard of global climate change discussions. This has meant at times those nations and communities most affected have been marginal in this debate.

Today a changing approach is transforming this debate. Developing countries whose communities are often the most affected by climate change are starting to speak with a common voice, they are raising common concerns and they are importantly highlighting common challenges and seeking collective solutions.

This event provides a unique opportunity, and I hope will act as a catalyst, to further develop and enhance the role of parliamentarians in improving responses to climate change challenges from a stand point of the countries most exposed to its impact.

It has been an opportunity to lay the groundwork for future formulation of negotiating strategies for the international stage and exchange experience and knowledge of climate change.

As an active member of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, the Bangladesh Parliament has been promoting increased engagement of parliamentarians on climate change issues.

Parliament views international cooperation between parliamentarians as providing an important opportunity to influence how we deal with climate change on a local and global level, particularly to give a greater voice, to those most affected by the environmental challenges we are faced with.

The establishment of a network for climate justice will further encourage parliamentarians to collaborate on the urgent need for a global solution to climate change.

Md. Abdul Hamid, Advocate
Member of Parliament and
Honourable Speaker, Bangladesh Parliament

About the Conference

The role of members of parliament in confronting climate change is crucial. As legislators and elected representatives of communities parliamentarians have demonstrated they can effect real and lasting change in how climate change solutions are framed at local, national and international levels.

As key agents of change parliamentarians, particularly those representing communities most affected by climate change, can be vital. And it is in this respect that parliamentarians, many of whom, are from the most vulnerable countries exposed to the effects of climate change, participated in this conference providing a platform for discussion, cooperation and exchange.

The key outcome of this conference was the formation of a network whose objectives is outlined in this conference summary and include:

a. The creation of a network of parliamentarians to share experiences on best practices and open space for dialogue and interaction on climate change challenges;

b. Identify opportunities for parliamentarians of the countries most effected by climate change to collectively negotiate at national and international levels to institutionalise climate change related policies;

c. Facilitate the development of strategic alliances for the most vulnerable countries on climate change for future discussion.

This event has been organised by the Bangladesh Parliament in cooperation with the Standing Committee on Ministry of Environment and Forest. It has been supported by the United Nations Development Programme's 'Improving Democracy through Parliamentary Development' project.

The Continuing Challenge of Climate Change

Climate change has far reaching consequences that affect the entire global community. The continuing process of global warming requires collective action to reduce the rates of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions released into the atmosphere as well as manage its impact and the changing environmental conditions that communities inhabit.

> *The challenges of climate change are real as is their existential threat to humanity. At negotiations we need to participate with agreement that environment, economy, development, and security are intertwined, and that production and consumption is putting our life support system at peril.*
>
> H.E. Sheikh Hasina, Honourable Prime Minister of Bangladesh

These challenges are multifaceted and profound and require action by the whole of the global community in cooperation with one another.

Reducing the harm caused by industrial and domestic consumer greenhouse gas emissions released into the atmosphere and improvements to how we collectively manage the planet's resources is the only permanent solution to the current crisis facing the planet.

Mitigation strategies to meet targets and reduce these levels are urgently required to be strengthened.

Equally, policies and resources to assist communities adjust to coping with the impact of climate change to ameliorate its impact are vital.

Adaptation schemes are essential particularly for those nations that are most vulnerable to

climate change as the changing environment continues to effect weather patterns, sea levels and traditional livelihoods. Developing countries are today the most exposed to the impact of climate change and as a result these communities most vulnerable to the adverse effects of it. Although in relative terms these countries have low per capita carbon footprints they are at the frontline of climate change impact.

> *Climate change in its current form is one of the greatest challenges of our time, with projected impacts on forests, soil degradation, declining food and energy security, human and animal health and supply of clean water, as well as heightened risks of flooding, drought and other calamities globally.*
>
> *All Parties must, therefore, work together to address climate change so as to ensure long-term sustainable development, food, energy and water security and reduce the risk of natural hazards turning into disasters.*
>
> Outcome Document of the Parliamentary Meeting on the Occasion of the United Nations Climate Change Conference, Durban, South Africa 2011

The rise in sea levels has affected island communities with some threatened with complete submersion of their entire land mass under water, coastal communities have experienced coastal erosion and delta communities soil erosion and saline water inundation. These profoundly change local ecosystems and the manner in which communities can live and work.

Changing temperatures also affect communities living in places as diverse as scarcely populated mountainous regions and densely populated urban areas.

Floods, droughts, and more extreme weather patterns including storms can all have disastrous consequences for peoples' lives.

This is especially for the poorest and most vulnerable in communities who lack resources and often experience the most severe consequences of all. Urban slum dwellers, indigenous and tribal communities, island communities and those that live in river delta systems as well as mountain communities are exposed to the potentially devastating effects of climate change.

Women are faced with particularly heightened risks as they usually act as the principal manager of the household and carer in the family and are often marginalised from the decision-making process in communities and lack knowledge of climate change issues due to limited opportunities to access information.

Excerpts of the Reports on the Conference of the Parties 16th and 17th Sessions

Mitigation	Adaptation
Social and economic development and poverty eradication are the first and overriding priorities of developing country Parties [a] low-emission development strategy is central to sustainable development, and that the share of global emission originating in developing countries will grow to meet their social and development needs. Developed country Parties, shall provide enhanced financial, technological and capacity building support for the preparation and implementation of nationally appropriate mitigation actions of developing country Parties.	Adaptation is a challenge faced by all Parties, and that enhanced action and international cooperation on adaptation is urgently required to enable and support the implementation of adaptation actions aimed at reducing vulnerability and building resilience in developing country Parties, taking into account the urgent and immediate needs of those developing countries that are particularly vulnerable. Enhanced action on adaptation should […] follow a country-driven, gender sensitive, participatory and fully transparent approach, taking into consideration vulnerable groups, communities and ecosystems, and should be based on and guided by the best available science and, as appropriate, traditional and indigenous knowledge, with a view to integrating adaptation into relevant social, economic and environmental policies and actions, where appropriate.

To combat climate change developing countries need to be at the cutting edge of both mitigation and adaptation innovation, research and development to find inclusive solutions.

As developing countries' industrial production capacities grow these nations can contribute to lead the way by example in respect to mitigation strategies combatting the causes of climate change. By innovating early, potential environmental harm from industry or domestic energy consumption can be offset by investment in renewables and clean energy sources, and many developing countries are well suited to harness the potential of natural energy producing technologies. Equally, early innovation in agricultural production and livestock management by farmers in developing countries can provide dividends that work towards global solutions.

As communities in the developing world continue to be effected by climate change adaptation innovation assisting people adjust their social and working lives to become more resilient to changing environmental conditions requires huge challenges to be met. Managing changing rural and urban habitats can also offer the opportunity for green living and carbon efficient solutions that can pave the way in respect to carbon neutral living. It also offers challenges of creating innovation in disaster and risk management and developing countries can contribute to finding effective solutions to disaster risk as a contribution to the global response to climate change.

There is therefore a collective responsibility for the global community to harness the potential of human ingenuity not only in the wealthy industrialised countries but also in the developing world where support to innovation can be a catalyst to a reinvigorated global response for mitigation and adaptation strategies.

With access to human and material resources developing countries and especially those most exposed and vulnerable to climate change can be empowered by climate change innovation and provide national responses leading to global shared solutions.

Parliamentarians and Climate Change

> *Parliamentarians need to engage in climate change simply because we have a duty to represent our constituents and, today, they are vulnerable to the effects of climate change. We have a daunting responsibility to act now, ensuring our governments make the right policy decisions.*
>
> Abdul Momin Talukder, MP and Chair of the Standing Committee on the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Bangladesh Parliament

Parliamentarians can play a crucial role in climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies.

Not only do they need to be at the forefront of national and international policy dialogue. Their potential role needs to be recognised both on national and international policy levels. This will better ensure the priorities of communities are incorporated into tangible policy responses and interventions are tailored to local needs and implementation delivers expected outcomes.

As representatives of constituencies in local communities parliamentarians are a central channel between local people, national parliaments and forms of government. In climate change responses parliamentarians can have a profound impact on both how local communities react to climate change and how national parliaments and governments act to respond to community needs.

> *The global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation by all countries and their participation in an affective and appropriate international response, with a view to accelerating the reduction of global greenhouse gas emissions.*
>
> Conference of the Parties 17th Session in Durban, South Africa

At local level parliamentarians can:

Act as a crucial channel for local voices to raise concerns and challenges to livelihoods of climate change and reflect these concerns at national level.

Provide greater information to local communities on climate change and support increased levels of knowledge to assist these better understand mitigation and adaptation and how strategies to target these can be incorporated into daily life.

Promote and lobby for best practice in local communities engaging community forums and industry to improve the local environment and awareness of rights and obligations.

Provide a forum for debate and discussion for local communities and stakeholders including the vulnerable, civil society organisations, opposition parties and businesses.

Play a watchdog role in local communities to ensure when environmental damage is being caused that this comes to light and is publicised to prevent such abuse. Likewise, parliamentarians can play a key role in implementing support to mitigation and adaptation measures to ensure financial accountability and delivery oversight to create transparent and accountable activities.

Local voice
Information provider
Promote and lobby for best practice
Forum of debate
Watchdog and accountability

At national level parliamentarians can:

Introduce legislation and steer legislative developments to incorporate cross cutting green pathways to ensure new and revised legislation is climate change responsive and environmentally sensitive. In countries where applicable, tools such as private members' bills, can be used, to table laws to promote climate change debate.

Lobby government and political parties for suitable policy and programme development and green practices that incorporate best practice climate change mitigation and adaptation principles and strategies.

A Scottish parliamentarian's account of a private member's bill setting a green agenda

In 2005 I proposed a member's bill to the Scottish Parliament entitled 'Energy Efficiency and Household Renewables Bill.' My aim was to address the issue of fuel poverty by providing incentives for householders to install energy efficient measures or small-scale renewables by giving them local tax breaks. Also included in the Bill was a requirement for renewable energy technology to be included in new housing stock.

I campaigned different groups including the business community, communities, environmental campaigners and also lobbied my peers in parliament and trade unions. The proposals in the Bill were subsequently incorporated into the Climate Change Bill and I worked together with other members of the Scottish Parliament on the parliamentary committee reviewing the Bill.

Although not all of the detailed provisions of my own private member's bill were retained in the law even ones that were replaced played an important agenda setting role and helped build support for an expansion of the Government's own proposals on energy efficiency.

Establish parliamentary committees and cross party caucuses to highlight and investigate national and local climate change trends and find sustainable solutions to ensure sensitive environmental and climate change policies are adopted by parliaments and executives. Promote climate change issues so they are represented on other committees to ensure cross cutting inputs.

Provide oversight of government activities in respect to spending and resource utilisation ensuring targeted interventions and value for money as well as adequate mainstreaming of climate change issues across policy portfolios. Use opportunities like question time to scrutinise government policies on climate change.

Promote knowledge of climate change issues within the parliament as well as other institutions to broaden understanding of its impact as well as strategies to combat and cope with it.

Engage stakeholders and networks in an inclusive process including members of the public, local government, civil society organisations, trade unions and the business community.

Legislation and regulations
Lobbying
Parliamentary committees
Oversight of government
Promote knowledge and understanding
Public hearings
Engage all stakeholders and networks
Ensure access to information
Lead by Example

Parliaments promoting cross-border solutions to climate change

The East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) is the legislative body of the East African Community. As an assembly it commits to promoting climate change policies and programmes through legislation, oversight and representation. A number of milestones have been achieved by the EALA. These include the 2012 East African Community Trans-boundary Ecosystems Act that provides a legal framework for managing trans-boundary ecosystems while enhancing the quality of the environment and ensuring the sustainable use of regional shared resources.

Public hearings used to give citizens a voice in the parliamentary process and mainstream climate change issues across public policy and consultation.

Ensure access to information at national and local levels, particularly for women and vulnerable groups in society. Public institutions, schools and libraries can be encouraged to adopt climate literature policies.

Lead by example by ensuring parliaments are working environments that fully adopt green and environmentally friendly policies.

At international level parliamentarians can:

Promote exchange and knowledge transfer of innovation and new technologies and know-how as well as experience and expertise in the fields of mitigation and adaptation on a global stage with regional and international peers, particularly highlighting achievements and needs of the most vulnerable countries as well as global obligations of states parties.

Collectively highlight the responsibilities of countries to combat climate change according to the principle of common but differentiated responsibility.

Share best practice amongst developing and developed countries and work together to find common solutions to problems of climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Jointly encourage action on ecosystems that span national boundaries to provide solutions that cross borders drawing on shared resources.

Discuss common policy positions and priorities in order to develop these in international negotiations and forums to develop common priorities.

Promote exchange
Highlight responsibilities
Share best practice
Jointly encourage action
Discuss common positions

Climate Change and Sustainability

> *In order to achieve a balance among the economic, social and environmental needs of present and future generations, it is necessary to promote harmony with nature […] We call for holistic and integrated approaches to sustainable development that will guide humanity to live in harmony with nature and lead to efforts to restore the health and integrity of the Earth's ecosystem.*
>
> RIO+20 Outcome of the Conference Statement

Climate change threatens the very existence of communities. It also hampers sustainable human development in communities. Compounding the problem is that it is the most vulnerable that are most adversely effected and they have few resources or options to turn to: they have little resilience in the face of the environmental changes taking place as a result of climate change.

Access to basic services is undermined and even the risk of cutting off access to food and water becomes increasingly likely. It is however, not only vulnerable communities that are affected by climate change. Businesses, local economies, infrastructure and the sustainability of progress made in human development are potentially undermined by climate change.

Key to finding real and lasting solutions are local communities supported with a real political commitment to mitigation and adaptation in climate change to build sustainable communities that live in harmony with the environment. As key agents of change parliamentarians can be a crucial factor acting as a catalyst of change in dialogue with local communities and at national and international levels.

Extensive damage to livelihoods and property caused by climate extremes is estimated to have affected millions of people. It forces migration that in turn leaves areas void of human or economic investment, increases migration to cities whose infrastructure may already be under stress due to overpopulation and can lead to the break up of communities. This in turn can create unemployment and abject poverty for communities living in the most affected areas.

Climate change also impacts on the security of communities and nations and it is crucial that security issues are more fully incorporated into a holistic approach to climate change. Cost savings due to reductions in spending on nuclear armaments could actually provide funding for real and tangible interventions in adaptation, mitigation and sustainable human development providing resources for long-term dispute resolution.

Sustainable development cannot therefore ignore the importance of the impact of climate change and needs to embrace climate change problems into mainstream thinking on development. Sheikh Hasina's Peace-Centric model that identifies the profound need for local participation and community empowerment in successful development provides a foundation for collective parliamentarian engagement on climate issues.

Investment in the green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication is one way solutions can be sought. Another complementary action is to ensure climate issues are cross cutting across the development paradigm and that they provide sustainable solutions to the world's poor and vulnerable communities.

Vulnerable Groups and Climate Change

Vulnerable groups, including women are faced with the particularly severe consequences of climate change and they are disproportionately affected. These groups have few or no recourse to resources to live alongside changing ecosystems that in many cases provides their only means of subsistence.

Gender equality and inclusiveness is crucial to finding sustainable solutions to climate change as women are the main managers of households and also crucial environmental managers.

Women are also workers, carers, educators and consumers all of which are activities that deeply impact on the environment. Their knowledge of local ecosystems and first hand experience of the adverse effects of climate change mean it is essential they are fully included in consultation and solutions to target mitigation and adaptation in the face of global warming.

- Ensure women and vulnerable groups are fully incorporated into the decision-making process on climate change issues.
- Support increased and equal opportunities and gender responsive planning for resource allocation to encourage a stronger role for women in climate change decision-making.
- Work towards the empowerment of women and vulnerable groups and ensure women have equal opportunities in participating in capacity building.
- Invest in women and ensure they have access to skills to fully participate in a green economy and be equally involved in mitigation and adaptation schemes.

Breakout Sessions' Key Points

	Disaster risk reduction	Climate finance	Capacity building
	Key session points		
	The need to respect the commitments in the Hyogo Framework for Action and ensure implementation is delivered more urgently.	Climate funds such as the Global Environment Facility are available to target global warming and its environmental consequences.	Commitments to capacity building should be stepped up and aim to close the technological and scientific gaps between developed and developing nations.
	Disaster risk reduction should be more fully integrated into policy frameworks and budgets at all levels including planning decisions.	Increased funding is predicted with direct access including for the countries most affected by climate change. There is an urgent need for better tracking and accountability mechanisms in spending and implementation to ensure outcomes are achieved.	A need to build capacity to generate and share information with stakeholder communities both within parliament as well as in communities and civil society.
	Commitment from developing and developed countries to enhance cooperation in disaster risk reduction in those countries most exposed to climate change through capacity building and training programmes as well as technological transfer.	There has been a lack of learning from past experience and an absence of international exchange of experience. Clear differences between regional experiences in implementing funds exist.	Develop best practice models and capacity building in parliaments. Parliamentarians can work to integrate climate change as a cross cutting issue in the work of parliaments.
	Increased capacity for communications and public information from public institutions including parliaments is required.		Monitoring and reporting capacities should be supported to ensure transparent and accurate financial and performance based monitoring.

	Disaster risk reduction	Climate finance	Capacity building
	Role of parliamentarians		
Local	Assist local communities understand the risks of disasters and incorporate disaster reduction mechanisms at local level with inputs from local communities.	Work with local communities to identify priorities and access opportunities for climate change funding.	Support local communities build their resilience to climate change and to identify best practice in technology and knowledge transfer.
National	Promote a preventative rather than reactive culture of disaster risk in legislation and policy approaches.	Provide an oversight function in respect to funding and implementation of direct and indirect contributions to climate change adaptation and mitigation.	Promote capacity building of parliaments, parliamentarians and other public institutions in order that they have the capacity to integrate climate change issues across their work.
International	Encourage cooperation between parliamentarians to ensure international knowledge and technological transfer.	Involvement in international and national funding solutions and identifying opportunities for funding of schemes.	Strengthen networks of parliamentarians regionally and internationally. South-south and north-south cooperation should be encouraged.
	Support international joint strategies to prepare preventative systems for disaster management.	Share knowledge and experiences of funding and implementation with international and regional peers and stakeholders.	Build a joint capacity to identify and lobby for collective priorities on climate change issues.

Plan of Action and Way Forward

There is an urgent need to reaffirm the world's commitment to protect the environment from the adverse effects of climate change. Under the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities states parties must ensure the gaps between what is required and what is being done to reverse the environmental degradation we are witnessing are identified and closed.

The countries participating in the conference from both developing and developed nations experience some of the most severe effects of climate change. Their parliamentarians are able to make a positive impact to further develop tools and instruments in both mitigation and adaptation to ensure human security and environmental harmony.

It is in this respect that the conference participants have agreed to form a network of parliamentarians for climate justice that will draw on the role of parliamentarians as lawmakers, representatives, political leaders and advocates to further the interests of developing and developed countries that are most affected by climate change.

Platforms for engagement

Parliamentarians' surgery at constituency level
Parliamentary committees and hearings
Local community meetings
Forums for targeting key groups including women aimed at empowerment
Engaging civil society and community leaders
Dialogue with business community
New and traditional mass media
Networks of peers
Website and information portal
International and regional forums

Dhaka Parliamentary Declaration

We, assembled Parliamentarians from Bangladesh, Canada, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, the East African Legislative Assembly, Indonesia, the Maldives, Mali, the Netherlands, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Samoa, Scotland, Senegal, Sri Lanka, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda, gathered in Dhaka, Bangladesh on 14th-16th March 2012, **recognise that climate change is now the greatest threat to the lives, livelihoods and welfare of our constituents** – as well as to the ecosystems upon which we depend. We acknowledge that climate change is a **global problem**, and as such demands a **global response**.

We recognise that climate change needs to be integrated into sustainable development and poverty reduction planning across sectors. The frequency and severity of climate change-related hazards such as cyclones, droughts, and floods are increasing at an alarming rate. **We must act now** to prevent these hazards from causing further human catastrophes such as famine, malnutrition, mass forced migration, and widespread disease; and reduce the threats to human development, national security and peace.

We **believe** that, since the ability of states and communities to adapt to climate change is limited, in the long run we as a global community must adopt mitigation measures to ensure a liveable planet for our future generations. To this end, all countries must pursue sustainable, low-carbon forms of development that empower the most vulnerable and seek to **limit the concentration of greenhouse gases in the Earth's atmosphere** to 350 parts per million CO2 equivalent.

We adhere to the principle of **climate justice**, and assert that allocation of substantial funds to averting a worsening crisis is a responsibility that no country can be permitted to evade.

We have gathered here with the intention of **defining and advancing the role of elected legislators** in responding, under an equitable and holistic approach, to the multiple challenges posed by a warming climate, with respect to adaptation, mitigation and disaster risk reduction.

We **commit to mainstreaming** climate change mitigation and adaptation measures in our respective parliaments by:

1. *collaborating* across party boundaries to work for the welfare of those most affected by climate change;
2. *establishing*, where they do not already exist, parliamentary committees or multi-party caucuses for monitoring and oversight of climate-related policy; and

3. *organising* awareness-raising and capacity-building programmes to deepen our understanding of the threats from climate change and the solutions to those threats.

In our role as **lawmakers**, we will legislate and support policies designed to:

1. *develop* integrated local, national and regional frameworks for climate change adaptation, mitigation and disaster risk reduction (DRR) – including establishing risk assessment methodologies, early warning systems, hazard mapping and disaster response teams;
2. take steps to *implement* the Hyogo Framework for Action, which provides ready tools for countries to take immediate actions to reduce the risks associated with climate-related hazards; and
3. *prioritise* funding for climate-friendly programmes, including climate change adaptation (CCA), energy efficiency projects and measures to incentivise investment in renewable energy.

In our role as **representatives** of the people, we will **raise awareness** of climate issues and **build support** for our actions by:

1. *fostering* dialogue, debate and discussion with constituents (including women, youth and children), civil society groups, farmers, NGOs, businesses, trade unions and other stakeholders, and *communicating* the needs and experiences of our constituents to policy-makers at the national level;
2. *involving* the public in the policy-making and scrutiny process through the use of participatory, bottom up and inclusive consultations; and
3. *engaging* with news and social media to ensure that the public is adequately informed about climate change and its impacts.

In our role as **political leaders**, we will forge strategic alliances to **urge governments worldwide** to:

1. accept the principle of common but differentiated responsibility (CBDR), recognise that deep cuts in greenhouse gas emissions are required well before 2020 if there is to be any hope of limiting the global temperature rise to 2°C, and raise the level of ambition to aim for a 1.5°C limit;
2. honour their commitments to provide new and additional finance for vulnerable countries, including US$30bn immediately as fast-start funding for the Green Climate Fund (GCF), and US$100bn per year by 2020, as well as financing the Least Developed Countries Fund; and
3. engage in a constructive debate on the issue of technology needs assessment; innovation and transfer; production transfer, along with diffusion of innovative local technologies; with a view to

making the equipment needed for climate change mitigation and adaptation affordable in the countries of the Global South. South-south cooperation to this end will also be important.

In our role as **advocates**, we will convince our **governments of the need** to:

1. develop national action plans for climate change adaptation (CCA), disaster risk reduction (DRR) and nationally-appropriate mitigation actions that are integrated into sustainable development policies and plans;
2. allocate a fixed proportion of the national budget to a dedicated fund for climate change adaptation and mitigation measures and advance climate-sensitive national budgets;
3. abolish fossil fuel subsidies in a gradual manner which does not hurt the poorest people – and ensure availability of alternatives to fossil fuels.

In our **oversight** role, we will **hold the executive to account** on issues relating to climate change by:

1. *ensuring* that international commitments on climate change made by our governments are ratified and properly implemented;
2. *reviewing* government budgets, expenditure, policies, programmes and legislation, particularly when they do not take sufficient account of climate change – such as by investing in infrastructure that locks economies into fossil fuel dependency; and
3. *monitoring* disbursal of international climate finance to ensure it is spent effectively and transparently.

In order to more effectively collaborate on the urgent priorities we have identified, we **hereby establish** a global network of Parliamentarians in support of people most vulnerable to climate change, to be known as **"Parliamentarians for Climate Justice."**

The Network will be unique in that it will focus its resources on the people most vulnerable to climate change – wherever in the world they may be. It will be **open to all Parliamentarians** who endorse this Declaration and the forthcoming Statement of Principles, and will include adequate representation of women and indigenous peoples. The **Founding Members** present at the Dhaka conference encourage our parliamentary colleagues to join the Network.

This new Network will promote **strategic alliances** of Parliaments and Parliamentarians, working through existing structures where possible – including cross-party groups and parliamentary networks. It will be a platform for Parliamentarians to share **knowledge, information and best practices** and to engage with social and news media.

A full **Action Plan and Statement of Principles** for the Network will be elaborated by the **Steering Committee** by the end of June 2012. Immediate actions will include forming a Steering Committee to take decisions on policy priorities and **seeking funding** to organise gatherings and to employ a small Secretariat, which is likely to be hosted within an existing organisation. If funds are secured,

the Network will **organise regional and international conferences** on specific issues relating to climate change mitigation and adaptation, and will **organise delegations** of legislators to attend key United Nations (UN) conferences and to visit the most vulnerable communities so that MPs can see for themselves the everyday impacts of climate change.

In concluding, we communicate our **heartfelt thanks** to the Parliament of Bangladesh and to the UNDP for organising this timely and important conference, as well as to the Royal Kingdom of the Netherlands. We call upon colleagues in our respective Parliaments to take urgent action to implement the actions set out in this Declaration. Climate change is the greatest threat humanity has ever faced. Acting together and acting now manifests our strong commitment to provide a safe and better world for our people, especially the most vulnerable.

Statement of Principles

For the Establishment of "Parliamentarians for Climate Justice", a Global Network of Parliamentarians in Support of the People Most Vulnerable to Climate Change

We ***endorse and adopt*** the Dhaka Parliamentary Declaration, which establishes Parliamentarians for Climate Justice - a new global network for international knowledge exchange, peer-to-peer relationship-building, sharing of parliamentary best practice and co-operation on climate change issues. The Network will facilitate the development of common strategies, build the profile of climate-related issues and seek to influence decisions taken at the local, national, regional and global levels. It will enable Parliamentarians from around the world to engage in collective, high-profile advocacy on these urgent issues.

The Network will give Parliamentarians from the countries most affected by climate change a ***louder voice*** in international forums, as well as providing a platform for Parliamentarians from around the world to act in solidarity with those most threatened by the climate crisis. Together, we will make a difference.

The Role of Parliamentarians

We ***assert*** that as elected representatives, Parliamentarians have a key role to play in ensuring good governance of climate change including promoting climate justice.

> Climate change affects all parliamentary functions. As an assembly of elected representatives Parliaments can and should play a vital role in providing the legislative basis for climate mitigation and adaptation actions, setting up an accountability mechanism in the implementation of policies and the utilisation of climate funds and defining and upholding the rights of the vulnerable people against climatic injustices. Parliaments should facilitate public participation in the decision and policy-making process relating climate change and justice issues.

We therefore, ***encourage*** Parliamentarians to establish within their respective parliamentary frameworks standing committees or cross party caucuses convened specifically for the purpose of monitoring and oversight of climate change adaptation and mitigation measures.

> These committees should be responsible for ensuring that mitigation and adaptation concerns are mainstreamed into all policy decisions. They must not, however, become a means by

which the issue of climate change can be marginalised or delegated to a specific group of Parliamentarians.

While we ***recognise*** the limits of the parliamentary mandate in certain domains, we ***believe*** that as people's representatives, Parliamentarians should be involved in decision-making fora at all levels.

As lawmakers, Parliamentarians are also able to communicate with national Executives in order to create pressure from within the national governance infrastructure. In the context of less-industrialised countries, international financial and development agencies and NGOs often have a significant influence on public policy. Until relatively recently, development partners have tended to focus exclusively on the Executive branch of government – working over and around Parliaments, rather than with them. Whilst this has begun to change, the transition to a mutually beneficial and communicative relationship between development agencies and Parliaments is ongoing. We therefore intend to ***engage*** in constructive dialogue with policy-makers in the Executive branch of government, in multi-lateral institutions such as the UN, and in development agencies and NGOs. As elected representatives, we carry a unique legitimacy to undertake such advocacy activities. Furthermore, Parliamentarians have a duty to ensure implementation of international agreements, and to encourage our governments to adopt constructive negotiating positions in international fora.

In order to ensure effective action, we ***underscore*** the need for enhancing knowledge and capacity of Parliaments and Parliamentarians with respect to the political, economic, legal and social implications of climate change, leading to more prevalent and adequate parliamentary responses.

Climate Change notions and principles that we uphold

We ***recognise*** that the scientific consensus on climate change is unequivocal, as shown repeatedly in the findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

The consensus is based on empirical observations of increased temperatures, melting ice and rising sea levels. An overwhelming majority of scientists attribute these phenomena to the increasing rate of accumulation of greenhouse gases in the Earth's atmosphere since the start of the Industrial Revolution. In turn, these climatic trends lead to increasingly frequent cyclones, drought, flooding and other climate-related hazards. In addition, climate change severely affects livelihoods and food security as a result of changing rainfall patterns and seasonal temperatures, desertification, coastal and river bank erosion and salination of water supplies,

amongst other factors. These phenomena have severe effects on human health as malnutrition rises and diseases spread – and as the ability of communities to respond to disease is weakened.

We applaud the work that is being done by the Climate Vulnerable Forum to highlight these impacts of climate change, and uphold the 2009 Male declaration and 2011 Dhaka declaration made by the Forum.

We ***believe*** in the notion of **climate justice** meaning that no country or population should bear the disproportionate burden of the developmental actions and that people's effective and meaningful participation should be ensured in matters that affect them.

We therefore ***support and uphold*** the principles of the common but differentiated responsibilities, precaution, sustainable development and equity stipulated in Articles 2 and 3 of the UNFCCC as they are core to the attainment of climate justice. We also uphold the related principles of intra and inter-generational trust, historical responsibility and polluter pays principle. We reaffirm the urgent need to support particularly the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and most vulnerable Small Island Development States (SIDS) in coping with the impact of climate change. In the poorest countries, adaptation is a critically important strategy for averting the worst effects of climate change in the short to medium term; while mitigation and green development in a low carbon pathway is essential.

With this in mind, we ***further recognise*** the need to mainstream climate change into sustainable development plans, policies and poverty reduction strategies, including efforts to fulfil the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which ensure the ***equal*** participation of women, indigenous people and other vulnerable groups that are adversely affected by climate variations.

There is an indisputable need to integrate the economic, social and environmental dimensions of development to achieve sustainability. We therefore ***support*** integrated policy frameworks in both public and private decision-making that embrace those three dimensions. This model should also be correctly reflected in the foundations of strategies to reach the Development Goals post 2015. In doing so, we ***endorse*** Sheikh Hasina's Peace-Centric model for development through People's Empowerment, which offers a participatory approach to finding local solutions to local problems. We ***emphasise*** that disadvantaged peoples, such as women, indigenous people and the traditional livelihood earners adequately participate and that their free and prior informed consent are obtained in the formulation of policies and actions on climate change.

We ***assert*** that, for the most vulnerable countries and populations, climate change represents by far the greatest risk to human development, national security and peace.

We ***recognise*** that climate change aggravate human vulnerability and national security. Climate change impacts like loss of territory, statelessness and migration, displacement, food and water insecurity and, resource competition, risk leading to (national, regional and global) political destabilisation. In this regard, ***we recall and uphold*** United Nations General Assembly Resolution 63/281 (2009), which recognises the profound security risks posed by failure to make deep cuts in greenhouse gas emissions and allows UN agencies to react to security risks of climate change. We ***urge*** all nations to consider the implications of this for government spending allocated to armaments and military activity. In particular, nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation could help to divert much-needed funds from the self-defeating nuclear 'deterrent' to averting the palpable threat of rising sea levels and increased climate-related hazards. Thus, we ***support*** adaptation, mitigation, sustainable human development, effective governance institutions and peaceful dispute resolution as critical means to prevent the security implications of climate change.

Furthermore, to ensure climate justice, we ***assert*** the need for committed, well-defined and targeted actions in the areas of mitigation, adaptation and disaster risk reduction integrated in national sustainable development and poverty reduction frameworks.

On the one hand, we must do all we can to expedite the global transition from fossil fuel-dependent economies to ones driven by abundant renewable energy in order to mitigate the most destructive effects of climate change – whilst simultaneously improving the welfare and livelihoods of the billions still living under the global poverty line. On the other hand, we must empower our people, build their resilience and ensure that our communities are adequately prepared for the consequences of the further temperature rises which will inevitably result from the greenhouse gases accumulating in the atmosphere.

We ***underscore*** the need for technological and financial support for the most vulnerable countries, within the COP guidelines and without barriers as to IPRs, in combating the challenges of climatic changes and for protecting and defending the natural and legal rights of their people.

Climate Change Adaptation (CCA)

We ***recollect*** the conclusions of the 2011 Fourth UN Conference on LDCs, which set out CCA and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) as priority areas for action.

These documents acknowledge the important role of Parliaments in debating and shaping policies, as well as in ensuring their proper implementation. As the impacts of climate change are already being felt all over the world, and are certain to worsen as greenhouse gas concentrations rise, vulnerable communities and ecosystems therefore need assistance to adapt to changing environments and more frequent natural disasters. Effective CCA requires the active role of Parliamentarians in overseeing planning, targeted and efficient allocation of resources, and political frameworks that empower the most vulnerable people to participate in decisions that affect them and collaborate in building resilient communities.

We ***assert*** that, in the context of the current global economic crisis, those nations responsible for the bulk of historic emissions must consider innovative financing mechanisms to fund adaptation measures in lower-income countries.

> These include, but are not limited to: special bond issues, taxes on financial transactions (e.g. the 'Tobin Tax'), reallocation of fossil fuel subsidies, levies on air travel, special drawing rights, and carbon taxes.

We ***commend*** the progress made within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) towards the establishment of a Green Climate Fund (GCF).

> However, we are concerned that as yet none of the monies pledged to the GCF have been forthcoming. We therefore call on the donor nations to honour the pledges made to provide US$30bn immediately as fast start funding, and US$100bn per year by 2020. We also note that, in the longer term, UNDESA estimates that at a minimum of US$500bn per year will be required at the global level for effective CCA. In order to avoid further indebting low income countries, this assistance must be provided in the form of grants, not loans.

We ***insist*** that the GCF must be disbursed via an equitable mechanism under COP Guidelines, under the auspices of an institution whose decision-making process is not dominated by the donor nations.

> By providing oversight of projects to disburse these funds at the national level, Parliaments can provide a cost-effective alternative to administration of funds by the World Bank or other multilateral agencies, which charge high administration fees. In order to improve recipient-countries' readiness to implement programmes effectively, these adaptation funds must include assistance for capacity-building as well as project implementation. CCA finances must be carefully targeted so that it reaches the most vulnerable communities.

We ***emphasise*** our position that financial commitments made for adaptation, whether via the GCF or any other mechanism, must be additional to existing development assistance commitments.

> They must not replace - in whole or in part – existing efforts towards poverty alleviation, or human development efforts in other domains.

Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)

We ***recall and uphold*** the Manila Calls for Action of 2008 and 2010, which emphasise the need for international cooperation and highlight the role of Parliamentarians in the field of DRR.

We ***note with concern*** that the number of people affected by climate-related disasters is increasing rapidly, and has already doubled from 121m/year in the 1980s to over 243m/year at present.

We ***recognise*** that while natural hazards will inevitably occur more frequently as a result of climate change, their negative impacts on lives and livelihoods can be greatly reduced with adequate prevention and planning.

> To be effective, risk reduction must be well-researched, properly resourced and implemented in a timely fashion. Advance planning and investment to minimise the risks from climate-related disasters is far more cost-effective than providing relief and reconstruction after the fact. To this end, we embrace the systematic approach offered by DRR models. The Hyogo Framework for Action (2005-2015) is the internationally-recognised standard in this regard, and offers a ready tool for governments to take immediate action in adapting to climate change – including risk-assessment methods, risk management approaches and early warning systems. In connection to this, we support the integration of disaster risk reduction and resilience in sustainable development goals and planning.

We ***underscore*** the need for appropriate legal measures both locally and at the global level for promoting DRR and reducing forced displacement due to climatic hazards through planned relocation.

Mitigation

We ***acknowledge*** that as a result of inertia and inaction on the part of developed countries over the decades since global warming was first understood, further warming of the Earth's climate is now inevitable.

We ***recognise*** that the bulk of greenhouse gases responsible for global warming result from the historic emissions of industrialised regions such as North America and Western Europe and ***lament*** that the most severe impacts of climate change tend to hit the poorest regions of the world first and hardest – particularly in Africa, Asia and the Pacific.

> Within these regions, the poorest and most marginalised communities bear the brunt of the impacts - most strikingly in the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and the Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Those countries and populations that suffer the worst consequences of climate change have the least say in the international community's decisions on climate crisis. In this regard we recall with enthusiasm the 2009 Joint Inquiry by the Bangladesh Parliament's All Party Group on Climate Change and Environment and the UK All Party Parliamentary Climate Change Group on Climate Change.

We ***regret*** that, despite the undoubted progress made in some areas, the outcome of the 17th Conference of the Parties (COP17) to the UNFCCC was not the major success the rhetoric would have us believe.

> By agreeing to further delay significant global emissions reductions until 2020, the governments of major economies have further increased the burden placed on those already struggling to

mitigate and adapt to a rapidly changing climate. Delaying significant action until 2020 defies the scientific consensus that global emissions must peak imminently if there is to be any possibility of avoiding a two-degree temperature rise, which is the goal formally adopted by the international community at the UNFCCC.

We ***recognise*** that while adaptation is essential, it does not offer a long-term solution to the climate crisis, so we must urgently redouble our efforts towards mitigation.

Solving the climate crisis by reversing the accumulation of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere is not a choice for the most vulnerable countries, but a necessity. We assert that only a 1.5°C target for average global temperature rise can protect the most vulnerable countries from being submerged, and that the best way to achieve this is to limit greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere to 350 parts per million CO2 equivalent.

While we ***acknowledge*** as an encouraging start the Secretary General's call to double the global share for renewable energy by 2030, we ***urge*** the international community to be still more ambitious, noting that we can and must develop the renewable energy sector faster if we are to avoid catastrophic warming. All countries need to follow the European Union's lead in introducing legally binding targets for the share of energy produced from renewable sources.

As argued by the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), enabling less- industrialised countries to embrace renewables requires not only technology transfer, but also production transfer. By locating production of renewable energy technology closer to sites of consumption, we can reduce import costs and generate "green" jobs in the global South. Renewable energy, by definition implies affordable energy even where grid does not reach; new opportunities for small entrepreneurs; decreased variability in energy costs; energy security and reduced import bills; and reduced environmental impacts. Indeed, renewable energy sits at the nexus of adaptation and mitigation, in that initiatives that help communities to adapt to changing climatic conditions and can also be a means to mitigate the future impacts of climate change.

We also ***recognise*** the efficiency gains that can be made by increasingly adopting energy efficiency measures to conserve energy in newly industrialising LDCs and SIDs countries. This will mean lighting / appliances that require less power; fossil fuel resources used more effectively; reduced energy costs for consumers; redistribution of electricity that now is wasted or lost; and more reliable electricity systems.

Last but not the least, we place high emphasis on universal access to modern energy which implies improved health; improved agricultural productivity; empowerment of women; business and employment creation; economic development; and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in the climate vulnerable countries.

With this in mind, we ***welcome*** the UN initiative to declare 2012 the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All.

Steering Committee of the newly formed Network of Parliamentarians for Climate Justice (in alphabetical order)

Name	Designation	Country
Sarah Boyak	Member of the Scottish Parliament	Scotland
Saber Hossain Chowdhury	Member of Parliament	Bangladesh
Kirsty Duncan	Member of Parliament	Canada
Claudio Enquire Monge Pereira	Member of Parliament	Costa Rica
Sisa James Njikelana	Member of Parliament	South Africa
Abdou Sane	Depute A L'Assemblee Nationale	Senegal
Melsenen S. Sarmiento	Representative First District Samar	Philippines
Lucky Sherpa	Member of Parliament	Nepal

List of Participants

National delegates

Bangladesh Parliament, Standing Committee on Ministry of Environment and Forests	
1	**Mr. Abdul Momin Talukder** Hon'ble Chair, Member, Standing Committee on Ministry of Environment and Forests, Bangladesh Parliament
2	**Dr. Hasan Mahmud** Member, Standing Committee on Ministry of Environment and Forests, Bangladesh Parliament
3	**Mr. Saber Hossain Chowdhury** Member, Standing Committee on Ministry of Environment and Forests, Bangladesh Parliament
4	**Mr. Md. Akabbar Hossain** Member, Standing Committee on Ministry of Environment and Forests, Bangladesh Parliament
5	**Mr. Monoranjan Shill Gopal** Member, Standing Committee on Ministry of Environment and Forests, Bangladesh Parliament
6	**Mr. M. A. Jabbar** Member, Standing Committee on Ministry of Environment and Forests, Bangladesh Parliament
7	**Mr. Md. Sohrab Ali Sana** Member, Standing Committee on Ministry of Environment and Forests, Bangladesh Parliament
8	**Mr. Golam Shabur** Member, Standing Committee on Ministry of Environment and Forests, Bangladesh Parliament
9	**Mr. Ghyas Uddin Ahmed** Member, Standing Committee on Ministry of Environment and Forests, Bangladesh Parliament
10	**Mr. Parveen Talukder** Member, Standing Committee on Ministry of Environment and Forests, Bangladesh Parliament

Bangladesh Parliament, Parliamentary Committee Chairs	
11	**Prof. Md. Ali Ashraf** Hon'ble Chair, Committee on Government Assurances, Bangladesh Parliament
12	**Mr. Krishibid Shawkat Momen Shahjahan** Hon'ble Chair, Standing Committee on Ministry of Agriculture, Bangladesh Parliament
13	**Mr. M Idris Ali** Hon'ble Chair, Standing Committee on Ministry of Defence, Bangladesh Parliament
14	**Mr. Meher Afroze Chumki** Hon'ble Chair, Standing Committee on Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, Bangladesh Parliament
15	**Mr. A.B.M. Ghulam Mostafa** Hon'ble Chair, Committee on Public Undertakings, Bangladesh Parliament
16	**Mr. A.B.M. Fazle Karim Chowdhury** Hon'ble Chair, Standing Committee on Ministry of Housing and Public Works, Bangladesh Parliament
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17	**Mr. Monowar Islam** Director General, Department for Environment
18	**Mr. Md. Zialul Haq** Deputy Director (LAW), Department of Environment
19	**Mr. A.M. Monsurul Alam** Director (Administration and Climate Change)
20	**Mr. Mohammad Zakaria** Chief Adviser, Association of Climate Refugees (ACR)
21	**Prof. AKM Saifur Rashid** Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon (BAPA)
22	**Mr. Pranab Chakraborty** National Project Director, IPD & Additional Secretary, Bangladesh Parliament Secretariat
23	**Mr. Md. Joynal Abedin** Deputy National Project Director and Personal Secretary to Speaker, Bangladesh Parliament

National resource persons	
24	**Mr. Mainuddin Khan Badal** Honourable Member of Bangladesh Parliament
25	**Dr. Abul Barakat** Professor, Department of Economics, University of Dhaka
26	**Dr. Atiq Rahman** Executive Director, BCAS
27	**Dr. Kazi Khaliquzzaman Ahmed** Chairman, PKSF
28	**Ms. Sharmind Neelormi** Gender and Climate Change Expert, UNDP, Bangladesh
29	**Dr. Sarwat Chowdhury** Climate Change Specialist, UNDP, Bangladesh
30	**Mr. Ghyas Uddin Ahmed** Member of the Bangladesh Parliament

International delegates

Members of Parliament		
31	**Ms. Kirsty Duncan** Member of the House of Commons, Canadian Parliament	Canada
32	**Mr. Peter Stoffer** Member of the House of Commons, Canadian Parliament	Canada
33	**Mr. Claudio Monge** Member of Parliament and Chair of the Committee on the Environment, Legislative Assembly of Costa Rica	Costa Rica
34	**Ms. Wudinesh Tekle Haymanot** Member of Parliament and Member of Committee on Natural Resources and Environment Protection Affairs, Parliament of Ethiopia	Ethiopia
35	**Mr. Abdirahim H. Abdi,** Speaker, East African Legislative Assembly	East African Parliament
36	**Mr. Ahmed Nazim**, Deputy Speaker, People's Majlis Maldives	Maldives
37	**Mr. Mohamed Adideye Maiga** Member of Parliament and Chair of the Commission of Rural Development and Environment, National Assembly of Mali	Mali
38	**Ms. Liesbeth van Tongeren** Member of the Dutch Parliament	Netherlands
39	**Ms. Lucky Sherpa** Member of the Constituent Assembly of Nepal	Nepal

40	**Mr. Hameed Ullah Jan Afridi** Member of the National Assembly, Chairman Intellectual Property Rights Organisation (IPO) Pakistan, Former Federal Minister of Environment	Pakistan
41	**Mr. Melsenen S. Sarmiento** Member of Congress of the Philippines	Philippines
42	**Mr. Muagututagata Peter Ah Him** Member of Parliament of Samoa	Samoa
43	**Mr. Lealailepule Rimoni Aiafi** Member of Parliament of Samoa	Samoa
44	**Ms. Sarah Boyack** Member of Parliament of Scotland	Scotland
45	**Mr. Abdou Sane** Member of Parliament of Senegal	Senegal
46	**Mr. Arundika Fernando** Member of Parliament of Sri Lanka	Sri Lanka
47	**Mr. Sisa James Njikelana** Member of Parliament and Chair of Energy Committee, National Assembly of South Africa	South Africa
48	**Mr. M. J. Skosana** Member of Parliament and Committee on Water and Environmental Affairs, National Assembly of South Africa	South Africa
49	**Mr. Hamad Mohammed** Member of Parliament of Tanzania	Tanzania
50	**Mr. Alex Bakunda Byarugaba** Member of Parliament of Uganda	Uganda
51	**Mr. Ssali Baker** Member of Parliament of Uganda	Uganda
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53	**Dr. Felix Schmidt** Resident Representative, Friedrich Ebert, Foundation India	Germany
54	**Dr. Pravin Sinha** Senior Adviser, Trade Union and Labour Relations, Friedrich Ebert Foundation India	India
58	**Mr. Bobi Odiko** Senior Public Relations Officer, East African Legislative Assembly, East Africa	Kenya
59	**Mr. Stuart Solomon** Programme Coordinator, Parliamentary Forum on Climate Change, Uganda	Uganda
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63	**Mr. James Corre** Policy Communications Coordinator, Climate Parliament	UK
64	**Mr. Kevin Deveaux** Parliamentary Development Policy Adviser, DGG/BDP UNDP	Canada
65	**Ms. Sofi Halling** Policy Analyst on Parliamentary Development and Political Parties, BDP/ UNDP	Norway
66	**Mr. Saleemul Huq** International Institute for Environment and Development	UK
67	**Ms. Feng Min Kan** Special Advisor, UNISDR Geneva	China
68	**Mr. Nicholas Dunlop** Secretary General, Climate Parliament	UK
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