

# **Government of Barbados**

## **Written Statement**

### **For**

### **2018 Climate Vulnerability Forum (CVF) Virtual Summit**

Fellow Leaders, it is indeed a pleasure for me to deliver this short address to this the 2018 Climate Vulnerability Forum (CVF) Virtual Summit.

As the newly elected leader of a country that is desperately trying to recover from the extended shock of the 2008 global financial crisis, the compounding and broad-based impact of climate change demands that it be treated as a high priority concern by my administration. Perhaps with equal measure, this applies not only to the domestic actions that must be defined and implemented to build a climate resilient and sustainable economy, but also to lending our voice in support of other countries with equally challenging circumstances, if not more so, in championing the call for fairness in action and support from the international community. Climate change represents an unprecedented scourge on humanity that is on our doorstep and cannot be ignored any longer.

The very recent report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) expressed high confidence that at the

current rate global warming will likely exceed the 1.5 °C threshold at some time between 2030-2052, and also that this will cause further long-term changes in the climate system and its associated impacts. It does not help noting that the current level of global commitments to reduce global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions is appreciably lower than what is required to hold the global temperature increase below 2 °C by 2100 furthermore 1.5 °C. Consequentially these observations represent dire propositions for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and the broader CVF membership.

It is with the recognition of the highly vulnerable nature of our economy as well as the long-established requirement for global action that Barbados was among one of the first countries to sign the Paris Agreement. Though pre-conditioned by the availability of finance, technology support and capacity building, our signature of the Agreement confirmed a commitment to pursue the 44% economy-wide reduction in GHG emissions by 2030 reported in our Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), relative to our business as usual (BAU) scenario.

Since assuming the government our new policy position is to achieve 100% electricity generation from renewable sources by 2030 and to become a carbon neutral state within the same period. This audacious level of heightened ambition in effect

more than doubles the urgency of the required domestic actions and requirement for international support. It is not only intended to build resilience and transform our economy but serve as an exemplar for countries to act boldly in response to the uncharted and unprecedented challenge of climate change.