Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen.

On behalf of the Expert Advisory Group of the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) it is both an honour and a pleasure to be given an opportunity to address you on this auspicious occasion of the handing over of the Chairmanship of the CVF from the Philippines to Ethiopia.

First let me congratulate the Philippines for having led the CVF through a critical period and for helping achieve its signature success, namely the inclusion of the 1.5 Degree Long Term Goal in the Paris Agreement at COP21 in December 2015.

At the same time, Let me also congratulate Ethiopia for being elected the incoming Chair of the CVF who will have to lead the CVF to the even more daunting task of actually implementing the Paris Agreement on 1.5 Degrees.

Let me provide some background and history of the CVF for the benefit of those who may not be very familiar with the group, its composition and activities.

The CVF came into being in 2009 under the leadership of the Maldives who were the first Chair of the Group. At that time it consisted of around a dozen or so vulnerable countries drawn from three pre-existing groups of
vulnerable developing countries, namely the Least Developed Countries (LDC) Group, African countries and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and it was created as a high level political leadership group for the vulnerable countries and not as a new negotiating bloc under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

It also chose to focus on advocating for a single global ambition, namely setting the long term temperature goal of 1.5 Degrees Centigrade as the accepted long term goal of 2 Degrees was not acceptable to us.

Since that first meeting in 2009 the CVF has evolved over time with the leadership passing from Maldives to Kiribati and then to Bangladesh and then Costa Rica and finally to Philippines. Now it is about to pass on to Ethiopia.

Over this time I will recall a few major achievements and evolutions in the CVF.

Firstly, the achievement of the 1.5 Degree long term goal in the Paris Agreement in COP21 was by far the biggest achievement of the CVF as well as the LDC, SIDS, Africa Groups.

I would like to recall that going into COP21 on the 30th November 2015 there were just over 100 vulnerable countries supporting the 1.5 Degree long term goal with none of the developed or larger developing countries in support.
By the end of COP21 on 12th December 2015 all countries had been persuaded to support our position. This was achieved by unrelenting and focused diplomacy, partnerships, advocacy, support from civil society and media by all the vulnerable countries both individually as well as collectively.

The second major achievement of the CVF over the last few years has been to attract over forty countries to join the group from the initial dozen or so which are no longer confined to the LDCs, Africa and SIDS only.

Thirdly there has been a major evolution in the narrative of the CVF which initially started with a focus on our collective vulnerability to the adverse impacts of human induced climate change but it has now re-focused on our pro-active efforts to tackle those adverse impacts of climate change. So we have evolved from a group emphasising its collective vulnerability to one that is now emphasising its pro-active actions to tackle climate change, both on adaptation as well as mitigation.

Thus for example the CVF Finance Ministers have formed their own group called V20 where they have promised to provide finances at national level to tackle climate change.

Thus CVF countries are not just becoming champions of taking action locally and nationally they are also moving forward to share their knowledge with each other by way of South-South knowledge sharing cooperation and the announcement of the South-South Centre on Climate
Services being set up by the Philippines based at the Pagasa national Philippines climate centre in Manila.

Finally let me, on behalf of the Expert Advisory Group, assure the incoming chair Ethiopia of our continued support to your leadership in the coming years.

Thank you.

By:

Dr Saleemul Huq  
Chair, Expert Advisory Group, CVF  
Director, International Centre for Climate Change and Development  
Independent University, Bangladesh