



Climate Vulnerable Forum Leaders' Dialogue COP26

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Intervention of H.E. John Kerry

H.E. John Kerry, Special Presidential Envoy for Climate of the United States of America

“Thank you so much Madam Chair, it is a privilege for me to be here, and I just want to say to everybody, I apologize for both being late but also for jumping in and speaking right away. We just got noticed and president Biden wants to meet with me. He's about to do a press conference before he leaves to head back to Washington to win the budget that he's trying to get. But I want to begin by thanking Sheikh Hasina so much for her leadership of the Climate Vulnerable Forum. I had the privilege of participating in the July summit, the Climate Vulnerables Finance Summit and I also visited Bangladesh shortly after I started my role as Special Presidential Envoy, and I'm super delighted to be here and I will explain to you why in a moment.

But I also want to express my congratulations to President Nana Akufo-Addo, Hon of Ghana, we had the privilege of riding in the train to Washington from New York not so long ago, and we are delighted that he is going to assume the CVF Presidency next year. I do want to celebrate, especially the accomplishments that the CVF has made under Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's leadership. She called the climate crisis exactly what it is: a planetary emergency. She has done a terrific job in our judgment of ensuring that climate vulnerables' perspective is represented in global climate discussions. During her Presidency, Bangladesh released its climate prosperity plan and that is the first prosperity plan of its kind. I suspect I am accurate because I have been told that a number of you are already trying to figure out how to put together your prosperity plans, and this may be really generating a certain kind of energy.

So let me take the glasses off, put the paper away, and just look you in the eye and talk to you for a couple of minutes, if I may, from the heart and from the gut. I know the anger that you feel and you should feel. Your lives are disrupted, your nations are at risk, and why? Because for a long time the developed world and even some of the developing world has decided that they are going to pursue choices that carry huge risks. It is clear now through all of the evidence, we know what is causing the climate crisis: us, the choices we make. And you pay the highest price in many cases, not all, but many cases. So obviously adaptation and resilience are just critical, and President Biden has acknowledged that by increasing our commitment to adaptation by six



times, as well as announcing the President's Emergency Resilience Adaptation Plan called "Prepare", he announced it yesterday, which will be an all of government initiative to bring people

together to consider every decision and choice we make as to how it will be impacted by climate and how it will impact vulnerable nations of the world.

Now I am going to be very direct and very, you know, I hope not unpolitic or undiplomatic, but I am going to be honest, which we need right now. The United States, Japan, Canada, South Korea, the UK, and the EU are good part of the 20 wealthiest nations in the world. The 20 biggest economies. And as we know, 20 economies equal about 80% of the emissions. But those countries I just listed, mine among them, have put forward definitive plans, which the modelers climate action rhodium, will show you: keep 1.5 degrees alive. If we do everything we have said we were going to do, we are aiming for a power sector of our economy that by 2035, we will have no carbon. We are the largest oil and gas producer in the world but we are going cold Turkey folks in 2035. No carbon does not mean no fuel, no gas; it means no carbon. So we either solve the problem of capture, storage, or we have to do something else. And why do we make that choice? Because the scientists have told us unequivocally that if we do not reduce enough between 2020 and 2030, we cannot get where we need to go. We do not keep 1.5 alive and we do not get to net zero by 2050.

So if we are going to be responsible to ourselves and to the world, we have to reduce emissions. And we also have to be responsible by doing enough for adaptation to take care of damage that has been done and to help countries be able to work through it. We know that, so 65% of global GDP, the countries I listed have plans on track to keep 1.5 degrees alive. But I am saying to you very directly, if 65% have those plans and we are moving in that direction, it means 35% does not. And we can't get there, even if we do everything we say we are going to do, we cannot get there unless that other 35% steps up. So I will be very direct with you folks, your complaint about what got us here is legitimate but the future is going to be defined, but what we choose to do, and there are people who are not choosing to do what we need to do, and they need to hear from you. The world needs to hear from you to connect the dots. It is no longer the less developed world versus the developed world. It just is not. There are emerging economies, there are less developed economies, there are middle level developed economies, and there are some that are very wealthy spending a lot of money.

So we have to move to a different place. We can do this together. I am not standing up here to create a division between anybody, I am not naming any country. I just want you to figure out for yourselves, where is the problem? How do we solve this? We have as much stake now in getting to the solution of reducing the emissions of mitigating, of adapting, of building resilience as anybody else. We had people dying in New York city from a storm in their basements when they are sleeping, we had people freezing to death. And in Texas we had fires ravaging California,



mudslides. We're all suffering. These consequences. We're all in this together. Except we are not. Because some people are not choosing to be in it together.

So my friends we can get there. We are trying to work with every country. We have sat down with Russia. Russia is moving. We have sat down with India. India wants to do 450 gigawatts of alternative, renewable energy. We formed a partnership with India. We are going to bring finance and technology to the table to help make that happen. And guess what, when India reaches that 450 gigawatts, then they're in compliance with the 1.5, a developing country, a massive big country can get there and they can get there. Others can get there too. So I do not want to abuse my privilege here of speaking, but this connecting of the dots is really important folks. We are prepared. And by the way, I know some people say, well, you did not keep the promise on the a hundred billion. Well, we started out doing that with president Obama. We put a billion dollars right on the table the moment we did that and we delivered it because we knew there would be a problem with that next president who was coming in and sure enough, he pulled out of the agreement, he cut the money off.

Now we come in and our budget process does not allow us to, we do not even have a budget, our next budget is 23. We have put it in, but we have worked with other countries and today Japan made a very important announcement after discussions we have had with them and after their own new Prime Minister has come in, and they have decided they are going to do an additional \$10 billion over, over five years, 2 billion, and that allows us to get leveraged money from the world bank and others, which counts in the OACD, which gets us to the hundred billion for 2022. So we have 20, 22, 23 going forward. So that is a big step forward together with the money that we hope to win from the Congress that will allow us to help bore on adaptation and other issues. So my friends let's be in this together. Let's really be in this together. Let's do the things based on the science. There is no politics in anything. I said, there is no ideology in anything. I said, we are basing what we are trying to do and what we need to do on two principles, things, mathematics and physics. Science is driving this and if we honor that, so help me, we can and will get this done.

Madam Sheikh Hasina, thank you so much for the privilege of sharing some thoughts with you.

Thank you.