



Remarks by H.E. Mr. Musinga T. Bandora, United Nations Resident Coordinator, at the
Conference on the COP 21-The Alliance of Paris on Climate Change

23 June 2015-French-Namibia Cultural Centre, Windhoek

Ladies and gentlemen

I wish to thank the Honorable Minister of Environment and Tourism, Mr Pohamba Chifeta and her Excellency Mrs. Jacqueline Bassa-Mazzoni, Ambassador of France for convening this dialogue and inviting the UN system to say a few words. I also join in welcoming Mr. Stéphane Gompertz, the French Ambassador on Climate Change for Africa.

I commend the Government of Namibia and its partners for raising awareness of the urgent need to promote sustainable development and address climate change. Mitigating climate change and adapting to its effects are necessary to eradicate extreme poverty, reduce inequality and secure equitable, sustainable economic development. That is why United Nations regards climate change as the defining issue of our time.

Responding to it effectively is essential for sustainable development. Climate change is intrinsically linked to public health, food and water security, migration, peace and security.

It is an issue of social justice and human rights. Climate change is occurring - NOW - and human activities are the principal cause.

Our response has to be global, holistic and rooted in universal values. Climate change affects us all, but not equally. Those who suffer first and worst are those who did least to cause it: the poor and most vulnerable members of society. Action is needed soon to reduce greenhouse

gas emissions and also to help countries build resilience and prepare for a world of dramatic climate and weather extremes.

Climate change is increasing the incidence, frequency and magnitude of natural disasters and exacerbating the vulnerability of countries and communities around the world. Climate-related hazards – whether drought, or rise in sea level – can have serious effects on people. It is therefore essential to enhance their respective capacity to adapt and be resilient to a changing climate

The Pope Francis encyclical “On Care for Our Common Home,” issued recently makes explicit the connection between climate change and oppression of the poorest and most vulnerable. He warned of unprecedented destruction of ecosystems and serious consequences if humanity fails to act on climate change.

If ever there was an issue that requires unity of purpose, it is climate change. Science tells us we are far off track from reducing global emissions sufficient to keep global temperature rise below 2 degrees Celsius. We are, in fact, currently on course for a rise of 4-5 degrees Celsius. This would alter life on Earth as we know it, particularly places like Namibia that are already arid, experiencing extreme warm temperatures and unreliable and erratic rainfall.

Many countries are transitioning toward a Green Economy, a low-carbon development pathway that entails investing in cleaner production technologies and energy that can power truly sustainable development. To transform our economies, however, we must first transform our thinking, and our values.

I trust the recently published UN-supported Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessment for Namibia would guide the country to transform, by ensuring adequate adaptive capacity and to facilitate a green economy transition. This Assessment conveys the urgency to protect the natural environment as an urgent imperative.

In December in Paris, at the COP 21, governments will meet to forge a meaningful universal agreement on climate change. While this Paris meeting is critical, it is not the end point, but it must be a turning point in finding a common way forward in meeting the climate challenge.

The Paris conference has a historical responsibility to achieve a legally binding and universal agreement on climate going from where the Kyoto Protocol ends and beyond. The UN Secretary General has asked these leaders to bring bold announcements and actions to the Summit that will reduce emissions, strengthen climate resilience, and mobilize political will for an agreement in Paris.

The Secretary General of the United Nations has called for global leadership to address issues of adaptation to climate change, technology transfer, accountability, transparency, differentiation, and weave them together in a comprehensive climate change agreement. He is calling for a clear commitment to the 2°C upper limit on global warming, so as to achieve net-zero Green House Gas emissions no later than 2070 as required to stay below the 2°C upper limit. He has urged especially the industrialized countries to draw National Deep Decarbonization Pathways to shift to a low-carbon energy system by 2050. He is urging countries to commit to strong actions post 2020 through Nationally-Determined Mitigation Contributions as well as to work together to mobilize \$100 billion per year of climate finance beginning 2020.

From Paris, the world expects a comprehensive and ambitious but fair and equitable global agreement that takes a long term view on reducing emissions and adaptation including action on deforestation and land use. The world expects an agreement that provides clear links to the 2015 Sustainable Development Goals. Action on climate change is essential to meeting the sustainable goals, including poverty eradication, health, education, food and energy security.

Citizens around the world are demanding an agreement and demanding action. I urge you to join them as Namibia would be one of the hardest hit countries if the globe becomes just 2 degrees Celsius warmer.

Esteemed Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am grateful for this opportunity to deliver these brief remarks at this important event. I hope sincerely that Namibians will obtain a copy of the Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessment to become familiar with the projected impacts of Climate Change on your country.

Thank you