

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

“**Twenty-five years ago**, people could be excused for not knowing much, or doing much, about climate change. **Today**, we have no excuse.”

**Ten years after** Archbishop Desmond **Tutu** shared these words, what is **our** excuse?

The latest IPCC Report warns us that **half** of humanity lives in climate change hazards **danger zones**.

The report sets out the changes needed in **every sector** and in **every region** to keep global warming in the range of what is **still bearable**.

Scientists have been ringing the alarm bells for this transformation **for decades**.

Now we need **immediate** steps and a complete paradigm shift towards a **sustainable system**.

For that, we need a new approach **to** the economy and **in** the economy.

But mistrust, insufficient information, inertia, a lack of sustainable financing, and – let’s be honest — a lack of **will** still stand in the way of a greener and resource-efficient economy.

Ending our dependence on fossil fuels is a leap we must make **now**.

Slashing the emissions of short term lived pollutants is proven to be **the single fastest** way to tackle climate change.

Pacific Island countries, some of the world’s **most vulnerable** to so many challenges, are spearheading global efforts towards this end.

I **support** and **commend** crucial initiatives such as the Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance, and the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty.

But I also appeal to those who will **not** be among the first victims of climate change.

They also should act now, and they have **two reasons** for that.

A **moral** one: those who suffer first are often those **least** responsible for what is happening to our globe.

And a **practical** one: if not tackled, the climate crisis would not spare **anybody** on a boiling planet.

We need to act in **solidarity**, with **responsibility** and **urgency**.

We should unleash the **transformative power** of our global community: that of innovators, businesses, and financial markets, too.

For example, if we give pollutive corporations a **tax cut** for introducing sustainable business models, they will surely implement them.

In fact, we must **mainstream** science-based green transition policies into **all** our decision-making.

We used to say that the choices **we** make will define the future for the generations **after** us.

Now we have to say that the choices we make will decide **whether there will be** a future for the generations after us.

The SDG Summit in September should be a milestone event on our path to a world where all can thrive in a **fair, safe and sustainable** environment.

We are not lacking in ideas and plans; it is high time we **realized** them.

In the words of Einstein, "the world will not be destroyed by those who do evil, but by those who watch them without doing anything."

Let us be remembered as those who **did** something.

Thank you.