



**Statement by Hon. James Fletcher**

**Minister for Sustainable Development,  
Energy, Science and Technology**

**Government of Saint Lucia**

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## **Meeting our Global Obligations**

Mr. Chairman, I wish to commend the Secretary General for his vision and leadership in convening this important and very timely Climate Summit.

Mr Chairman, my country Saint Lucia, despite the fact that it is an insignificant contributor to the global volume of greenhouse gases, is doing its part to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases. When our Government took office in December 2011, we immediately signalled our intention to increase the contribution of renewables to our electricity-generating matrix from 0% to 20% by the year 2020. Earlier this year, my Prime Minister increased this ambition to 35% by 2020. We also committed to reducing energy consumption in the Public Sector by 20%, also by 2020.

In less than three years we have taken significant steps in both these directions. By December 2016 we expect to see the construction of a 3 MW utility-scale solar photovoltaic facility, a 3 MW waste-to-energy plant, and a 12 MW wind farm, all of this on a country whose peak electricity demand is presently just over 60 MW. However, the initiative we are most excited about is the development of our geothermal potential, which, when realized, is expected to generate 30 MW of electricity. So, while we have publicly committed to 35% electricity from renewables, we are on a pathway to 80%.

Similarly, in the area of energy demand-side management, we have started the conversion of over 20,000 High Pressure Sodium streetlights to LED lights and the retrofitting of Public buildings to introduce more energy-efficient devices. We have also removed duties on electric and hybrid vehicles and will soon introduce legislation to provide tax deductions for households and companies that invest in grid-tied renewable energy and energy-efficiency retrofits.

## **The Interdependence of Mitigation and Adaptation**

Mr. Chairman, we often think of mitigation solely in the context of greenhouse gas emissions and the global temperature goal. However, mitigation is very closely linked to adaptation. In other words, delayed and insufficient mitigation leads directly to additional impacts on Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and associated increases in the costs of adaptation. Where mitigation ambition is not sufficient,

the cost of adaptation increases, as does the cost of the response to the permanent loss and damage that is caused by the slow onset impacts of climate change.

### **Living on the Front Line of Climate Change**

Saint Lucia, like other SIDS, remains at the mercy of our developed country partners in this global community. We find ourselves caught in a vicious cycle of repair and recovery, resulting from the ever-increasing impacts of climate change. To the extent possible, we have endeavoured to adapt and to build resilience. We have made some progress, but we recognise the escalating cost of survival for our people in the face of climate change; a cost with which we cannot keep up on our own. Much of our adaptation effort to date has been based on externally funded initiatives with support from, among others, partners like the World Bank, UNEP, UNDP, CDB, GEF, SIDS DOCK, the EU, USAID, the Clinton Climate Initiative, the Carbon War Room, and the governments of New Zealand, Japan, and Taiwan. While we are thankful for this financial and technical assistance, the required support for adaptation, as well as mitigation, has been unpredictable and insufficient. This has to be addressed.

Our countries are living on the front-line of the climate change battle and the casualties are beginning to mount. For us this is not merely about degrees Celsius, parts per million of CO<sub>2</sub>, or the number of hottest years since 1880; it is about lives lost in severe weather events, livelihoods impacted by declining fisheries and prolonged droughts, infrastructure damaged by raging floods, coral reefs destroyed by warmer and more acidic oceans, and coastlines lost to rising seas. That is our reality.

### **Decisive Action Needed**

Mr. Chairman, we are at the point where Parties need to make and deliver on bold mitigation pledges that are commensurate with the urgency of this problem. We hope that this High Level Summit will serve as a catalyst for global action, which will lead to an ambitious agreement and a significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Let us make 2014, the International Year of SIDS, the year the global community took decisive action to save SIDS from the certain hardship and horror that will come with an above-2 degree Celsius future.

I thank you.