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DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION!  
ENVIRONMENT

PROTECTION OF GLOBAL CLIMATE FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE  
GENERATIONS OF MANKIND

Letter dated 20 November 1989 from the Permanent Representative of  
Maldives to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I **have** the honour to **transmit** herewith the text of the Male' Declaration on Global Warming and Sea Level Rise, adopted by the Small States' Conference on Sea Level Rise, held in Male', Maldives **from 14 to 18** November 1989,

I would **be** grateful if you could kindly have this **letter** and the above-mentioned Declaration circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda **items** 82 (f) and 85.

(**Signed**) Huaaein MANIKFAN  
Ambassador and  
Permanent Representative

ANNEX

Male' Declaration on Global Warming and Sea Level Rise

18 November 1989

Environmental issues facing the world today clearly demonstrate that organisms and all the elements of nature including land, water and air cannot be exploited without far-reaching implications for the earth and its environment. It has been proved more conclusively than at any other time in history that the welfare of mankind is inextricably linked to the state of the environment. It has also been established that atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases have increased over the last two centuries. These increases are seriously threatening to cause climate change, global warming and sea level rise, which have become common concerns of mankind.

There is now a broad scientific consensus that the global mean temperature could rise approximately by 1° to 2° C by the year 2030. It is predicted that even if the increases in atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases were to be brought to a standstill immediately, however unrealistic that may be, the global temperature and sea level would continue to rise for decades to come.

Although the entire world would be adversely affected by these processes, low-lying, small, coastal and island States will face a decidedly greater predicament. Sea level rise would cause extensive damage to the land and infrastructure of those countries and even threaten the very survival of some island States. The possibility also exists of an increase in the frequency and/or intensity of natural disasters related to climate change, global warming and sea level rise,

Paradoxically the catalyst in this disturbing state of the global environment has been the rapid development of industrialization that was intended to lead to material progress. In view of the fact that the overloading of the atmosphere with greenhouse gases occurred primarily through the actions of the industrialized nations during the past two hundred years, these nations now have a moral obligation to initiate on an urgent basis, international action to stabilize and subsequently reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and to sponsor, as a matter of priority, an urgent world-wide programme of action to combat the serious implications of climate change, global warming and sea level rise. In addition, resources and technology should be made available by the industrialized nations, particularly to the most vulnerable States, which may not have the financial and technical means to address these problems.

A continuing dialogue between the small States and the rest of the world on the issue of sea level rise needs to be initiated. The small States call for an international response, especially from the developed and industrialized nations of the world. The likely effects of sea level rise urgently need to be established more accurately, and an effective international strategy for the small States of the world to cope with those impacts should be agreed upon as a separate issue within a global strategy. In this connection, the WMO/UNEP Intergovernmental Panel

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on Climate Change (IPCC) is **recognized** as the **main** forum **for** the ongoing **work on science, impacts and response strategies of climate change,**

**In the light of the scientific consensus regarding** the likelihood of climate change **and** global warming **and** deeply concerned over the changing global environment and its possible adverse **effects,** particularly the threat **of** sea level rise, the Small **States gathered here** in Male' **from 14-18 November** 1989, declare their intent to **work,** collaborate and seek **international** co-operation to protect the low-lying small coastal and **island States of the world from the dangers posed by climate change, global warming and sea level rise.**

THEREFORE, WE, THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SMALL STATES GATHERED **HERE:**

1. **Decide** to develop a programme of action within the small States, for **co-operation** and exchange of information on **strategies** and policies **in** relation to climate **change,** global **warming** and sea level rise **which** are common concerns **of mankind;** and **in** particular, to

(a) establish an **Action** Group, initially comprising of representatives **from** the Caribbean, South Pacific, Mediterranean **and the Indian Ocean** regions, to **oversee the** implementation of the decisions and recommendations **of the Small States Conference** on Sea Level Rise, to co-ordinate **a** joint approach on the issues of climate change, global warming **and** sea level rise, and to pursue and follow **up on** global and regional **response** strategies:

(b) consider the establishment of a climate and sea level programme and **a monitoring** network as an important component within the global measuring systems; **recognizing** the urgent **necessity** to take initial **measures to create a** monitoring infrastructure, bearing **in** mind the specific interests of small developing island States, to apply to the appropriate United **Nations** agencies (in particular WMO, UNEP, UNESCO) for assistance in its **implementation;**

(c) mount a campaign to increase awareness of the international community of the particular vulnerability **of the small States to sea level rise;**

(d) **consider the most effective** manner in which **the small States** can participate in the work **of** the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, and seek **assistance** for such participation; and

(e) seek assistance from the United Nations, its agencies and other appropriate institutions **in** the implementation of the decisions contained in this Declaration.

2. **Call** upon all States of the world family of nations to take immediate **and** effective measures according to their capabilities and the **means at** their disposal, to control, limit or reduce the emission of greenhouse gases, **and** to consider ways and means of protecting the small States of the world which are **most** vulnerable to **sea level** rise.

3. **Urge** all States to take immediate **measures** to enhance energy efficiency and to formulate plans and strategies for a change **over**, as far as possible, to alternative, less environmentally harmful sources **of** energy.

4. **Recommend** that where necessary all States take immediate **measures to** establish the institutional framework to protect and **manage** their coastal zones and to enact legislation to facilitate such **measures**.

5. **Call** upon all **States** to undertake environmental impact assessment studies **for** all development projects, review existing development programmes in terms of environmental impact assessment and strengthen environmental management capabilities.

6. **Recommend** that small coastal and island States take adequate measures to maintain their aquifers and protect vulnerable natural **ecosystems** such as coral reefs and mangroves, which **may** already be at risk, as they **can** provide natural protection against the adverse effects of climate change, global warming and sea level rise.

7. **Appeal** to all States to embark on intensive afforestation and/or revegetation programmes with **empha s** on the selection of plants and trees suitable **for** the **different** soil conditions, **and** salt-tolerant varieties **for** the **protection** of coastal areas,

8. **Recommend** that research be intensified in understanding the complex interrelationships concerning **climate** change, greenhouse effect, sea level rise and their implications on **the** environment and also to determine methods **of** ameliorating the impacts of these changes on coastal ecosystems.

9. **Urge** the **industrialized** nations to develop modalities and mechanisms to facilitate funding, technology transfer and training in areas related to the causes and problems associated with the rise in sea level. In this regard, the States facing immediate threat should be assigned a higher priority for assistance.

10. **Support** the call by the developing countries of the world for the strengthening of the existing funding, technology transfer and **information** mechanisms, not excluding the development of new mechanisms to assist them in implementing measures to control, limit or reduce emissions **of** greenhouse gases and adapt to and protect themselves from the adverse effects of unavoidable climate change, global warming and sea level rise. Such mechanisms would also help to ensure that the transition to a more **environmentally** sound world-wide programme of sustainable development can be achieved.

11. **Call** for negotiations for a Framework convention on climate change to **start as** soon as possible after the adoption of the interim **report** of the Intergovernmental **Panel** on Climate Change.

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