

Your Excellency, General Prayuth Chan-o-cha, Prime Minister of Thailand

Your Excellencies - My Fellow Pacific Leaders

Your Excellency, Mr. Ly Tuck of Cambodia, outgoing Chair of the 70th Commission

Dr Shamshad Akhtar, Under-Secretary of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCAP

On behalf of the Government and people of Kiribati I extend our greetings - Kam Na Bane Ni Mauri.

Ladies and Gentlemen

I want to start off by thanking the Prime Minister of the Royal Thai Government for welcoming us warmly to his beautiful country. I also commend the Executive Secretary and her staff for bringing us here. And I want to thank the outgoing Chair for good leadership of the last session and again congratulate and welcome Prime Minister Bainimarama, the incoming chair of this Session.

Distinguished Chair

Extensive discussions and consultations have taken course to shape the post 2015 agenda and shape strategies on how to achieve these. This 71st Session of the Commission is furthering consultations from our Asia Pacific region – evident in the theme “Balancing the Three Dimension of Sustainable Development: from integration to implementation”.

In talking about sustainable development let us not forget climate change. For there cannot be sustainable development if the future of mankind and the earth we live on is at risk. For us on the frontline, climate change is no longer about who is at fault or who is to blame. It is about the survival of people, cultures and nations. It is about what we can and should do individually and collectively as good global citizens of this planet.

But even after all these years of talk it is sad that climate change is not even on the agenda of the Security Council, sad that global action no-where near matches the severity and urgency of the challenge.

But on the positive side it is pleasing that climate change is becoming part of the mainstream talk. You hear it mentioned in commencement speeches at colleges and universities, in discussions within religious groups and many other forums.

The common people are talking about climate change. And this is good for there is nothing more powerful than the voice of the mass. WE need the voice of the people to speak out and demand that if we are responsible leaders – we must ACT NOW.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Let us listen to the voice of the people. They are calling for action - at all levels - from all of the United Nations, the Security Council, and UN agencies – not just at the UNFCCC. From governments – the powerful and the not so powerful. From the rich and not so rich. From all sectors and all walks of life.

Let us unite to bring action. For it is only through action that we bring meaning to our talk.

Mr. Chairman

I wish to bestow upon us all our Kiribati traditional blessing of Te Mauri, Te Raoi ao Te Tebomoa.

Thank you.