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DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER OF BELIZE AND MINISTER OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

HIGH LEVEL SEGMENT SPEECH

Madame President,

I bring you greetings and best wishes from the people of Belize, your neighbor and friend to the south. We share with the people of Mexico and indeed the people of Central America the pride in your leadership as President of this Conference. We commend you for your commitment to transparency and inclusiveness which has gone a long way in rebuilding trust and confidence in this negotiation process. It is now our responsibility to deliver a successful outcome.

Belize is amongst the lowest emitters of greenhouse gases. With a population of just over 300,000 and a small industrial base, we account for much less than 0.01 percent of the overall global emissions. Yet, our country finds itself in a unique position drawing more than 50 percent of its energy from renewable resources. We are eager to partner with other

countries given our experience and in this regard stand ready to host the headquarters of the renewable energy facility for all Small Island Developing States (SIDS/DOCK) that the Global Environment Facility will support.

Madame President, as you are aware, our region prides itself in having the longest barrier reef in the Western Hemisphere of which 80% is entrusted to the people of Belize. However, without significant efforts to curtail ocean acidification and increased sea surface temperature, we stand to lose this globally important World Heritage Site.

It is with great pride that my government can say that almost 70 percent of its territory is under natural forest cover. Through the implementation of the mechanisms under REDD +, and with the rapid, predictable and sustained inflow of funds, we will be able to maintain the sustainable management of our forests which will serve as an important carbon sink and provide ecological services for our people and the entire global community.

Madame President,

Time is not on our side. We must imbue this process with the necessary political will and determination that would ensure the achievement of a comprehensive legally binding agreement to stem the tide of global warming and sea level rise. We join the overwhelming call from the State Parties to limit the increase in global temperature below 1.5 degrees Celsius.

The global response to climate change must be comprehensive and all inclusive with adequate rules that will ensure the environmental integrity of the climate change regime. All parties to the process must undertake appropriate commitments, having regard to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. Belize draws the Parties attention to the need to allow for the Republic of China on Taiwan to meaningfully participate in the Convention for every country must play a role in finding solutions to climate change.

We recognize that regardless of whatever mitigation efforts are

undertaken, adaptation will be necessary and indeed mandatory for countries such as Belize. It is time to conclude the negotiations on the process issues to enable a timely, balanced, sustained flow of funds for adaptation. It is clear that without adequate financing to sustain and enhance our efforts, Belize will find it increasingly difficult to meet its commitment and contribution to the Convention goals. We cannot continue to bear the costs of the externalities resulting from the historical greenhouse gas emissions of the industrialized nations. Annex 1 parties must finally implement their obligations to provide financing and support under the Convention.

All eyes are upon us. We must recognize that the credibility of this process is at stake. Let us seize upon those actions that can immediately address the needs for adaptation and mitigation and that would move us closer to a legally binding outcome. The time for action is now. Let us "stop the talk and walk the walk". We must get the job done for our planet; we must get the job done our children! I thank you!