

**Ávarp Þórunnar Sveinbjarnardóttur umhverfisráðherra á ráðherra fundi
Loftslagssamnings Sameinuðu þjóðanna á Bali í Indónesíu**

Statement by

H.E. Þórunn Sveinbjarnardóttir, Minister for the Environment, Iceland

Mr. President,

First, let me thank the government of Indonesia for inviting us here to Bali, at a defining moment in climate discussions.

We are facing a change in the Earth's climate, greater than any since the birth of civilization. It is **the** challenge of this century. The task is huge, the worst effects will be catastrophic and we need to commit now. Still, there are voices of doubt: Can we really halt climate change? Should we even try?

We should and we can. Here are some of the things we need.

We need **knowledge**.

The fourth assessment of the IPCC tells us that climate change is real, and serious. But it also tells us that we can limit global warming, and afford it. It is an excellent guide for action, which we must use.

We need **vision**.

We must define a shared goal; we must know where we are heading. Iceland believes we should aim to limit global warming to within 2 degrees Celcius compared to preindustrial times.

We need **fairness** and we need **trust**.

We all need to do our bit, but developed countries must lead the way and cut emissions. We also need active participation of developing countries. Our work cannot mean **less** development; we must forge a partnership for **better** development. In this context, Iceland plans to direct more efforts into combatting climate change, in particular through transfer of climate-friendly technology and support for adaptation.

And speaking of fairness: The poor will be most affected by climate change. Seventy per cent of the world's poor are women. Less than one out of six statements from this podium is made by a woman – active participation by women is essential for real progress.

Mr. President,

We need **courage**.

We need to act now. Tackling global warming should not be seen as a grim task of economic hardship; it is about innovation, new technology and a partnership between the North and the South for truly sustainable development.

We need **resources**.

Mitigating climate change is a security issue. We spend globally over one trillion dollars per year on defense. We must direct more resources to combat climate change, for actions that also conserve energy, reduce air pollution and reclaim forests, soil and wetlands.

Mr. President,

Iceland wants to be in the forefront of dealing with climate change. We are a small country relying almost 100% on renewable energy for stationary energy use. We aim to set a good example by cleaning up our economy, sector by sector. We will step up our work in disseminating geothermal and other climate-friendly technology and know-how to other countries. We want to be a constructive participant in this forum; no country is an island, least of all in climate affairs.

I look forward to our collective journey, from Bali to Copenhagen, on the road towards a better planet.

Thank you,