

Bismillahir Rahmanir Raheem,

Alhamdhulillahi Rabbil Alameen, Wassalaatthu Wassalaamu ala Rasoolillahi
Wa' ala aalihi wa as-habihi waman thabia hum bi ihsaanin ilaa yaumiddin.

Mr. President, Secretary General, Chairperson, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies
and Gentlemen,

Assalaamu Alaikum and a very Good Morning to you all!

1. Thank you Mr. President and Secretary General for organizing this very important meeting that gives opportunity to member states to discuss the critical and impending issues related to the environment in aviation.
2. It is encouraging to see high level participation from Member states.
3. This subject is very critical and connected to all aspects of sustaining life in the Maldives.
4. The Maldivian Aviation sector has been blessed with extraordinary growth with a lot more potential to expand in the future.
5. The dispersed population across the Maldives and our tourism sector, is highly dependent on our air travel network.
6. As a result, the aviation sector brings significant economic and social benefits to our communities.

Mr. Chairperson,

7. Moving on to the subject at hand, we are here to discuss Carbon emissions from the aviation sector.
8. Reducing global Carbon emissions is crucial to combatting the climate crisis, and limiting global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees.
9. I do not have to re-iterate the natural beauty of the Maldives. Known for our white sandy beaches and rich marine life, the Maldives is one of the most sought after destinations in the world.

10. For us, aviation and tourism is our economy. Our livelihood. Our survival, and livelihoods depend on how well we manage and protect our natural systems. we
11. We need environmental sustainability. There is no debate about it.
12. No one has to tell us – the Maldivian People – the effects of Climate Change on human life. We live with the consequences of the climate crisis every day. This year’s South West Monsoon has already displaced some of my people from their homes, causing damage to their properties and havoc in their lives.
13. Storms are increasing in their frequency and intensity, causing extensive loss, damage and disruption to peoples’ lives and property.
14. Lying just 1.5m above sea level, tidal surges that pour sea water into our islands and inundate our critical infrastructure is a pressing concern.
15. That’s the Maldives, if we look closer to where we are today, we are experiencing scorching temperatures, loss of wildlife and lives. All due to climate change.
16. Extreme weather events have a significant effect on aviation infrastructure and operations too.
17. We need to take substantial steps in combating climate change. Find smarter ways of continuing our development projects, adapt to the projected changes, and keep our head above the water.
18. That’s why whenever there is an initiative to discuss environmental sustainability and climate change, the Maldives is be eager to join, listen and find out how we can contribute.
19. The Maldives has shown commitment for a greener and sustainable air transport sector and shown its commitment to the ICAO’s initiatives by volunteering to participate in CORSIA from next year onwards. This is not mandatory for us. But we wanted to volunteer.
20. We have been ringing alarm bells on Climate Change for a long time. The Maldivian people and our leaders have been tireless in this regard. Therefore, we need to lead by example.

Mr. Chairperson,

21. The rest of the sectors have made their commitments on their carbon emission contributions.
22. It is time the aviation sector makes a commitment too.
23. We have the data. ICAO has done a fantastic job. The ICAO Committee on Aviation Environmental Protection has published their report. The Task Group has done their job.
24. Now it is ..time for us to do ours. The science on this matter is clear. The Facts are clear. The options are also clear.
25. It is time that we start practicing what we preach.
26. It is time to put politics aside and reflect on why we are all here today. It is time to stretch the boundaries of hope and do our best to protect everyone.
27. I think we have had enough discussions and deliberations on the subject. It is time to make a decisive commitment and establish a long term goal.
28. I will go further and say, not only do we need a goal, we need an action plan too, we need a timeline of deliverables.
29. In the words of someone very dear to me, Aim for the moon, not the stars, if you don't reach the moon, you might catch a star on the way back. Let us find it within us, to try ... harder.
30. As policy makers today, we cannot be selfish and make decisions based on just the outcomes on our balance sheets, profit margins, bottom lines and portfolios.
31. Besides, the data shows that we would reduce expenditure on disaster relief in the future if we start acting now. The effects of our decisions today gives a greater chance to our future generations.
32. If we delay, some of the effects of climate change will become irreversible. In the near future we may be non-existent.

Mr. Chairperson,

33. Today, my people are being displaced from their homes. The effects are more significant on small vulnerable states like ours. We may be the first, but we surely will not be the last.
34. Those who are the most vulnerable aren't those who are contributing to the issues we face today. Sadly, they are the ones who have to bear the brunt of the disasters and are left with the financial difficulty dealing with the aftermath.

Mr. Chairperson.

35. I pray, for the sake of humankind, to make us brave, courageous and considerate, to make the right call. To do the right thing and do justice.

Thank you very much for the time,

And thank you all, for listening to the Maldives.

Wassalaamu A'laikum.