

**NATIONAL STATEMENT OF SINGAPORE DELIVERED BY MASAGOS ZULKIFLI, MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND WATER RESOURCES, AT THE UNFCCC COP-24 HIGH LEVEL SEGMENT, DECEMBER 2018, KATOWICE, POLAND**

Mr President,

1. Congratulations on your election as the President of this Conference. Thank you for the warm hospitality and excellent arrangements.
2. As host of two previous COPs, Poland is well placed to lead us in our efforts to ensure that the Paris Agreement is translated into a truly functioning and effective regime to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change. I am appreciative of the Presidency's efforts in galvanising political commitment on other important issues such as forestry. Singapore is fully committed to work with Parties under your capable leadership to achieve a successful outcome for COP-24. I would like to express my sincere gratitude for Fiji's outstanding stewardship for the past year, which has set a strong foundation for our work here in Katowice.

Urgency for Global Climate Action

3. The recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Special report on 1.5°C has warned that the global warming threshold may be breached as early as 2030 if current warming trends continue. This will have dire consequences for many countries, particularly Small Island Developing States (SIDs). Singapore is one of these low lying island states that is vulnerable to sea level rise and severe floods from intense storms. Clearly, we need urgent, collective and coordinated efforts by all.
4. At a time when multilateralism is being challenged, COP-24 will be a key test of the multilateral system to deliver an effective response to the climate

change challenge. COP-24 must send a strong and unequivocal signal that the world is united in advancing global climate action. We must build on the Paris outcomes to consolidate the nationally-determined system of pledges, and put in place a robust enhanced transparency framework and an effective global stocktake mechanism to drive ambition over time by all Parties. Success at COP-24 will be measured according to the following deliverables.

5. First, we must conclude a credible, durable and pragmatic set of guidance to operationalise the Paris Agreement. The Paris Agreement was not designed to be a “perfect agreement”, but to enable all Parties to put their best foot forward and improve ambition over time. The “Katowice Rulebook” must hence be an enabler, and not a barrier, for action. We can achieve a successful outcome if we stay faithful to the principles and political balance achieved under the Paris Agreement.

6. Second, the Katowice outcome needs to drive urgent climate action by all. The Talanoa Dialogue must help identify climate solutions and forge new partnerships between all stakeholders. It must also send a strong message for Parties to push the envelope on climate efforts to stay within the global temperature goals of the Paris Agreement. The Dialogue is not about “finger-pointing” but should maintain the spirit of the Pacific islands’ “Talanoa” tradition, that is, ask questions, share experiences and identify solutions together.

7. Third, COP-24 must deliver a package of decisions to support the implementation of the Paris Agreement by all. A rulebook is only effective if it can be implemented domestically by all Parties. We must ensure adequate support for developing countries, particularly SIDs and the Least Developed Countries, to implement the guidance. This includes enhancing support to: (a) meet the requirements of the Enhanced Transparency Framework; (b) develop and access finance for their NDC implementation plans and 2050 low emissions strategies;

and (c) enhance adaptation planning, and manage climate change related disaster risks.

### Singapore's Climate Actions

8. Singapore is fully committed to supporting global action on climate change, and not only because we are extremely vulnerable. It is because global action calls for everyone, big and small emitters, to come on board. Singapore calls on everyone to see climate change not just as an inevitable catastrophe but as an opportunity to transform the way we live, work and pursue economic growth in a sustainable way. Even if the actions needed to address climate change are costly, and require resources to be channelled away from other competing needs, we deem them as necessary. Acting pre-emptively will be less costly in the longer term, and we believe it is important to move Singapore towards a low carbon and climate-resilient future.

9. As a small city state with limited access to alternative sources of energy, there is a limit to how much we can do. But we will not allow our constraints to be barriers to action. Singapore will continue to rely on innovation and long-term strategic planning to overcome our natural constraints. The government has been co-investing in our industries to make them more energy-efficient and provide the necessary policy signals to engender the transformation needed for a low carbon future.

10. We have therefore submitted an ambitious but challenging target or NDC<sup>1</sup>. Even though our share of global emissions is only around 0.11%, we are taking bold steps to reduce our carbon emissions. To complement our existing suite of mitigation measures, Singapore will be the first country in Southeast Asia to implement an economy-wide carbon tax. The carbon tax, which will start from

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<sup>1</sup> Singapore's NDC aims to reduce the country's greenhouse gas emissions intensity by 36% from 2005 levels by 2030, and stabilise emissions with the aim of peaking around 2030.

2019 and apply transparently and uniformly without any exemptions, will incentivise the transition towards a low-carbon economy and adoption of low-carbon technologies.

11. To galvanise ground-up action, I announced at COP-23 in Bonn that Singapore would designate 2018 as the Year of Climate Action. The campaign was a success. We have received over 300,000 climate pledges<sup>2</sup> from all stakeholders, including all our government Ministries, even companies affected by the carbon tax. More than 800 climate action events were held, many in partnership with NGOs and the private sector – this is in excess of 2 events a day every day in 2018. 2018 has built strong momentum for climate action, but we know this cannot be just a year-long affair. We will continue to work with our stakeholders to raise awareness and act together to address climate change.

12. At the same time, we are taking timely and concrete steps to protect ourselves against the adverse effects of climate change. Our adaptation efforts consider the far-reaching effects of climate change on our infrastructure and people. It includes significant and costly infrastructure investments such as raising the height of coastal roads and new buildings, and enhancing our drainage and flood managements systems. I have three examples to share. First, our new Changi Airport Terminal 5 will be built at 5.5 metres above mean sea level. Second, we are establishing a dedicated food agency, the Singapore Food Agency (SFA), from April 2019 to safeguard and strengthen the resilience of Singapore’s food supply, particularly given the challenges caused by climate change. Third, we have just commissioned the Stamford Detention Tank, the size of 15 swimming pools, 10 storeys below ground, to address the frequent flooding of Orchard Road, our commercial district.

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<sup>2</sup> This includes more than 500 pledges from businesses, close to 40 pledges from NGOs and more than 300 pledges from educational institutions.

13. We are happy to note that the Global Climate Action 2018 report prepared by the UNFCCC Secretariat for the Talanoa Dialogue has recognised Singapore's cost-effective and efficient integrated water management approach as a good practice. We hope that these efforts, apart from strengthening our climate resilience, will be seen as part of our contribution to the global goal on adaptation.

#### ASEAN's Climate Action Response

14. As the Chair of ASEAN and the ASEAN Working Group on Climate Change, Singapore has worked to make climate change a priority for the region. At the recently-concluded 33<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN Summit in Singapore, ASEAN Leaders adopted the ASEAN Joint Statement on Climate Change, where they reaffirmed the region's commitment to the UNFCCC process and the Paris Agreement.

15. Singapore also convened the Special ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Climate Action (SAMCA) and the expanded SAMCA in July, where ASEAN and China, Japan and the Republic of Korea reaffirmed the region's commitment to the Paris Agreement, and discussed ways to step up regional action to address climate change. A summary of our discussions has been submitted as input to the Talanoa Dialogue.

16. We also launched the ASEAN Smart Cities Network (ASCN), a collaborative platform for cities in ASEAN to work towards the goal of smart and sustainable urban development. 26 cities from all 10 ASEAN countries have been named as pilot cities and are developing concrete action plans to grow sustainably. Mayors and governors from ASEAN capitals also signed the Singapore Declaration on Environmental Sustainability on 7 July 2018 in Singapore. Cities and actors at the local level in ASEAN are committed to taking practical ground actions to address climate change and achieve sustainable development.

17. Singapore is also supporting the Southeast Asia Disaster Risk Insurance Facility (SEADRIF), which will be ASEAN's first regional catastrophe risk pool. The SEADRIF will be set up in Singapore by 2019 to address the rising natural catastrophe protection gap in the region.

18. ASEAN is making real progress. At the ASEAN Energy Ministers' meeting in Singapore on 29 October 2018, it was announced that ASEAN has exceeded its energy efficiency target, reducing energy intensity by more than 20% in 2016 compared to 2005 levels, well ahead of its 2020 target.<sup>3</sup> But we are not resting on our laurels. ASEAN has signed an MOU with IRENA in October to scale up renewable deployment further. ASEAN will continue with our efforts to implement the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

#### Working with the International Community

19. Internationally, Singapore is a keen advocate of a multilateral, rules-based approach to addressing climate change. Singapore was one of the first 55 countries to ratify the Paris Agreement, contributing to its early entry into force. Singapore is also doing our part to support the efforts of fellow developing countries to address climate change and be more climate resilient. Approximately 123,000 officials from 170 countries have benefited from the capacity building programmes run under the Singapore Cooperation Programme in areas such as disaster management, education, health, water, and human resource management. To build on this, Singapore launched a Climate Action Package in July to help fellow developing countries build capacity in areas such as climate change adaptation strategies, disaster risk management and green climate financing. To enhance regional resilience capabilities, Singapore hosts the ASEAN Specialised

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<sup>3</sup> The ASEAN Plan of Action for Energy Cooperation 2016-2025, among other objectives, seeks to reduce energy intensity in the ASEAN region by 20% from 2005 levels by 2020, and to increase the component of renewable energy in the ASEAN energy mix to 23% by 2025.

Meteorological Centre (ASMC). The Centre launched a Regional Capability Building Programme in 2018 to build capabilities in the formulation of national adaptation plans.

### Conclusion

20. Mr President, the Paris Agreement was a hard-fought agreement forged through the unity of purpose of all Parties. We must leave Katowice with a credible, durable and pragmatic rulebook that enables all Parties to implement the Paris Agreement in good faith. Allow me to close by recalling the words of former UN Secretary General and a key champion of the Paris Agreement Mr Ban Ki-moon, “Climate change is a global challenge demanding global solutions. No one country can face it alone, no matter that nation’s political, economic or military might. From the richest to the poorest, we all share one planet, and we all have a stake in its survival.”

Thank you, Mr President.