

# **Pacific Islands Forum High-Level Roundtable on Urgent Climate Change Action**

**Statement by Adianez Taboada, Deputy Minister of Science,  
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Ministry of Science,  
Technology and  
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Republic of Cuba



Embassy of the  
Republic of Cuba  
in Fiji

*Excellencies,*

*Distinguished participants,*

For several years, science has confirmed the accelerated worsening of global climatic conditions. Special reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change confirm the increase in global average temperatures, the degradation of soils, the pollution of the atmosphere and the deterioration of the oceans. These effects mainly affect small islands, disrupting their economies, their biophysical resources and their societies. Our islands are expected to have livelihoods loss, accelerated deterioration of coastal settlements and infrastructure and a decrease in the services provided by ecosystems, all of which will adversely impact their economic activity.

The rising temperatures, in particular, will increase the amount and violence of the hurricanes that devastate our islands, while the melting glaciers will increase the level of the sea causing permanent coastal floods with the possibility of disappearance of several of our islands. Many other adverse effects are already being clearly observed, including the destruction of coral reefs, the salinization of groundwater, the destruction of ecosystems and consequently the changes in the species that always inhabited our islands.

The Pacific Islands, like the Caribbean ones, are not immune to these damaging effects of climate change. Therefore, urgent actions and more ambitious commitments are required to help mitigate or totally eliminate the disaster that lies ahead of us.

Since the past century last decades, we have advanced in the hierarchization of policies and scientific programs aimed at improving the form and content of climate change facing. Since 2017, Cuba has a "State Plan for Addressing Climate Change", known by our society as "Tarea Vida" (Task Life). It is an ambitious plan to face climate change throughout the national territory with adaptation and mitigation actions, involving all sectors of the economy and society, in correspondence with the country's Economic and Social Development Program until 2030. Task Life considers the dangers and risks arising from our condition as an island archipelago, as well as concrete actions and resources to reduce them.

In the international order, Cuba has taken important steps in complying with the climate agreements. We submitted our first Biennial Updated Report and our third National Communication to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Cuba also presented the update of its Nationally Determined Contribution containing thirteen adaptation actions and five mitigation goals, mainly directed to the agriculture, transport, forestry and renewable energy sectors.

By 2030, Cuba has planned to have an energy matrix with 24% electricity generation from renewable energy sources; reduce the use of fossil fuels in land vehicles by 50% and increase the forest cover by up to 33%.

The international action to address climate change needs due cooperation from developed countries, whom are primarily responsible for the current climate deterioration. According to their responsibility, these countries must lead the global actions to mitigate greenhouse gases emissions and support developing countries under the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

In particular, the United States of America must end, without conditions, the blockade, the sanctions and the repressive and subversive measures against Cuba to allow us to dedicate more financial resources to face climate change impacts on our island.

The global response to COVID-19 has shown that we can change our behavior and implement far-reaching measures in an immediate, ethical and caring manner. Efforts to confront climate change must be aligned with this approach to achieve a sustainable recovery in our nations.

Cuba reaffirms its solidarity with the Pacific Islands, for constituting one of the most affected regions by climate change, and for whom we always claim fair, special and differentiated treatment.

Thank you.