



(Check against delivery)

**STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE
REPUBLIC OF GUATEMALA, H.E. Mr. CARLOS RAÚL MORALES**

CLIMATE CHANGE SUMMIT
23 SEPTEMBER 2014

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

I congratulate you for convening this Summit on Climate Change. Such high level participation is testament to the high priority that this issue deserves in the global agenda.

Guatemala, a mega-diverse country with a rich cultural and natural heritage, feels a strong sense of commitment to address climate change. The adverse consequences of this phenomenon have a great impact in my country, as we are in a highly vulnerable region.

To illustrate, Central America and the Caribbean recently faced a prolonged drought, which in my country affected more than 1.2 million people, including half a million children under 5 years old. In light of this situation and other extreme events related to climate change we have declared a humanitarian emergency that has cost to date 5% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Although Guatemala has low greenhouse gas emissions (GHG), we are taking bold actions. We participate in global and regional initiatives such as REDD+ and recently launched the "Zero Footprint" initiative. I would like to mention several actions:

First: We are part of the Bonn Challenge and have begun to restore 1.2 million hectares of forests in highly vulnerable areas, with goal of further restoring 3.9 million hectares.

Second: We will produce 55 Megawatts of solar power, placing Guatemala among the leaders in Central America. We are committed to transforming our energy matrix towards more efficient and sustainable sources.

Third: Protected areas make up 31.2% of our country; we have one of the lungs of the region. We have invested more than \$200 million in reforestation and conservation which contribute to mitigation and adaptation. We hope to reduce carbon emissions by 17 million tons between 2016 and 2020 to the Carbon Fund and will reduce our dependence on firewood by improving cook stove technology.

Fourth: In October 2013, Guatemala adopted the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which promotes the responsibility of all sectors to address climate

change. The national climate change policy is also incorporated in The K'atun¹, our national development plan to 2032.

Fifth: We are leaders in forests concessions in the Mayan Biosphere Reserve, an initiative that benefits indigenous communities and we recognize their rights inside the buffer zones of the Sierras de las Minas Biosphere Reserve, acknowledging the collective management of land resources.

Excellencies,

We expect that the collective commitments of all Heads of State and Government transcend this Summit agree on a new legally binding instrument at the 2015 UN Climate Change Conference in Paris.

This summit will strengthen the commitment of all countries, particularly in mitigation, adaptation, finance and technology transfer. It is a priority to ensure the early capitalization of the Green Climate Fund.

We lend our strong support to the Government of Peru, who will preside over this year's "Conference of the Parties on Climate Change."

Thank you very much.

¹ http://www.segeplan.gob.gt/2.0/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1359&Itemid=372