



INDIA
भारत

Statement by

**Ambassador Syed Akbaruddin
Permanent Representative**

At

CARICOM-UN

High Level Pledging Conference

Building a More Climate-resilient Community

New York

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Mr. President,

Today's Pledging Conference is timely. We appreciate the efforts of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the UNDP in convening this important event to mobilize further international support for countries in the region devastated by the Hurricanes Irma and Maria.

2. We express our strong solidarity with the people in Anguilla, Bahamas, British Virgin Islands, Turks and Caicos Islands, Saint Maarten, Dominica and Antigua and Barbuda, whose lives have been devastated by these hurricanes. We feel your pain and we stand ready with you to assist in your efforts to rebuild broken lives.

3. We are hopeful that the Conference will contribute to the ongoing efforts in providing relief to the affected communities.

Mr. President,

4. India was among the first countries to make available an emergency aid of US\$ 200,000 to the worst affected countries. India also undertook evacuation from Saint Maarten for nationals of 10 countries.

5. India has also provided a sum of US\$ 2 million for rehabilitation projects in CARICOM, through the India-UN Development Partnership Fund hosted at the UN Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC). Suitable projects are being identified by partner countries Antigua and Barbuda and Dominica.

Mr. President,

6. Large scale devastation continues to be caused by nature's fury across the world. Greater resilience to natural disasters and climate change is becoming increasingly essential.

7. Earlier this year, when we launched the India-UN Development Partnership Fund on the occasion of World Oceans Day on 8 June, our focus was firmly on strengthening climate resilience.

8. The first project under this Fund focuses on 'Climate Early Warning Systems in Pacific Island Countries'. Our partners for this project are the Cook Islands, the Republic of Kiribati, the Republic of Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of Nauru, the Solomon Islands and the Kingdom of Tonga. The project aims to increase resilience from natural disasters of these seven Pacific island countries and contribute toward the Sustainable Development Goal of Climate Action.

9. India has now decided to step up the contribution to this Fund to the tune of US\$ 100 million over the next few years. We are willing to replicate such Climate Resilience projects or support similar projects under this Fund, in association with our partner countries and the UNOSSC.

10. Building climate and disaster resilient infrastructure is an important aspect. It is useful to note that the focus of this Conference is also aimed at building resilient infrastructure and helping the wider CARICOM Region improve its capacities in this regard, given its inherent vulnerability as a Community of SIDS - Small Island and Low-lying Coastal Developing States.

Mr. President,

11. We are hopeful that the world community will step up its efforts in a spirit of solidarity and cooperation to help the region in this time of urgent need and help mobilize the required resources for reconstruction efforts. For events of this type to succeed we need not only participants with deep pockets but large hearts to participate and we hope all here are large hearted in expressing their support.

I thank you Mr. President.