

## Maldives again hails climate pact as big victory for small nations

Maldives on Monday hailed the recently concluded global climate summit in France as a big victory for small island nations like the Maldives.

Environment minister Thoriq Ibrahim, back from the French capital where he had represented the Maldives at the COP21 summit, told reporters that small nations like the Maldives had worked tirelessly to make their voices heard. Three important demands by island nations – maintaining the average temperature at 1.5 degree Celsius, setting up a fund worth USD\$100 billion for climate change adaptation and mitigation, and giving special status for small nations – were included in the final agreement, he said.

“The biggest challenge was to align the stand of all the small nations in the same direction,” the minister said, during the press conference at the Ibrahim Nasir International Airport (INIA) Monday evening.

Thoriq, however, stressed that some big nations were against including the demands made by small nations.

According to the minister, his delegation held several events on the sidelines of the summit in order to raise public awareness about the effects of climate change. Maldivian officials also participated in an event held by the World Bank and briefed attendees about renewable energy projects being carried out in the archipelago, he added.

The environment minister’s comments follow similar remarks by him a day earlier when he had declared that as the chair of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), the Maldives’ endeavours have brought a victory and smiles to small nations.

Shedding light on the COP21 summit held in Paris from November 30 to last Friday, the minister noted that the climate deal reached in the conference was a great triumph for small states.

Cheering envoys from 195 nations on Saturday approved a historic accord in Paris to stop global warming, offering hope that humanity can avert catastrophic climate change and usher in an energy revolution.

The post-2020 Paris Agreement ends decades-long rows between rich and poor nations over how to carry out what will be a multi-trillion-dollar campaign to cap global warming and cope with the impact of a shifting climate.

With 2015 forecast to be the hottest year on record, world leaders and scientists had said the accord was vital for capping rising temperatures and averting the most calamitous effects of climate change.

Without urgent action, they warned, mankind faced increasingly severe droughts, floods and storms, and rising seas that would engulf islands and coastal areas populated by hundreds of millions of people.