



## PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM

### 2023 FORUM FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING

15 September 2023

Suva, Fiji

### OUTCOMES

The 2023 Forum Foreign Ministers Meeting (FFMM) was convened on 15 September 2023 at the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat headquarters in Suva, Fiji, as well as virtually.

2. The meeting was chaired by the Cook Islands and attended by Australia, the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, the Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. The meeting was also attended by Tokelau as Associate Member.

3. The Pacific Aviation Safety Office (PASO), the Pacific Community (SPC), the Pacific Islands Development Program (PIDP), the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), the Pacific Regional Environmental Programme (SPREP), the South Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO), and the University of the South Pacific (USP) attended as members of the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP). The Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner (OPOC) also attended the meeting. The full List of Participants is attached at [Annex A](#).

### OPENING

4. The Chair of the Meeting, the Honourable Mark Brown, Prime Minister of the Cook Islands, and Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum, referred to the extraordinary accomplishments of the Forum over the years, underlining the *2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent* (2050 Strategy) as the overarching blueprint to advance Pacific regionalism for the next three decades. The Chair emphasised the need to work together to find common ground that positively contributes to the Leaders' Vision. The Pacific Islands Forum Secretary General Henry Puna referred to the era of the Pacific century and encouraged continued engagement frankly and honestly. The Secretary General emphasised the need to define and drive priorities in the interest of all Pacific people. The full opening remarks by the Chair and the Secretary General are attached at [Annex B](#) and [Annex C](#).

5. Foreign Ministers **congratulated** Papua New Guinea on its 48th Independence Anniversary on 16 September 2023.

### ADOPTION OF AGENDA

6. Foreign Ministers **adopted** the revised Provisional Annotated Agenda and Meeting Timetable at [Annex D](#), and **established** a Drafting Committee.

### GLOBAL AND REGIONAL STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

7. Foreign Ministers **discussed** existing and emerging global and regional trends, highlighting key issues for noting in the Outcomes Statement, and taking into consideration the recommendations from the 2023 Pre-Forum Forum Officials Committee (FOC) Meeting.

8. Foreign Ministers:

- (i) **recognised** the shared security and development challenges of the Pacific region and **reaffirmed** that the collective strength of the Forum is drawn from its unity, Forum centrality and the depth of its solidarity as framed and articulated by the 2050 Strategy;
- (ii) **emphasised** the importance of Forum solidarity and engagement by partners with the full Forum membership in the face of heightening geostrategic interest in the region, and the need for partners to align with the 2050 Strategy and its impending Implementation Plan (2050 IP), including transformative actions through established priorities, processes and mechanisms for the well-being of all Pacific people;
- (iii) **encouraged** ongoing robust and comprehensive discussions within the Committee on all collective issues and related implications, reaffirming the importance of sustained engagement and participation at Senior Officials level;
- (iv) **recognised** the importance of greater collective ambitions to strategically position the PIF at the international level, and within multilateral processes, particularly in the context of the UN Summit of the Future in 2024, and UN reforms;
- (v) **recognised** and **reaffirmed** the unique vulnerabilities and challenging realities faced by Smaller Island States (SIS), and **called on** all CROP agencies to work through the 2050 Strategy and the impending 2050 IP to appropriately address SIS related issues; and
- (vi) **welcomed** the update by Papua New Guinea regarding the invitation by the President of Indonesia to the Leaders of the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) for a meeting in Indonesia to dialogue on the matter of West Papua (Papua). Ministers were very encouraged that this critical matter is addressed in a forthright and open dialogue manner, and **looked forward** to the outcome of the meeting with the President of Indonesia.

## **IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR THE 2050 STRATEGY**

9. Foreign Ministers:

- (i) **noted** the report and policy brief of the FOC Sub-Committee on the 2050 Strategy and **commended** the progress made by Members to develop the draft 2050 IP, emphasising the importance of continued Member leadership and ownership of the 2050 IP;

- (ii) **noted** the draft 2050 IP, and **recognised** the need for further consultation at senior official and national levels to ensure wide ownership;
- (iii) **reaffirmed** the importance of ensuring that the final draft 2050 IP is ready for endorsement (out-of-session) by FFMM and for conveyance to Leaders at the 52<sup>nd</sup> Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting (PIFLM52); and
- (iv) **noted** the proposed timeline as reflected in Annex E, and **agreed** to convene a hybrid special session of the FOC to consider a final version of the draft 2050 IP, attended at the highest level of representation befitting the occasion.

## FORUM ENGAGEMENT AND ADVOCACY

### 10. Foreign Ministers:

- (i) **noted** the work of the Forum International Engagement and Advocacy Sub-Committee (FIEAS) in driving strategic and proactive international advocacy on the Forum’s policy priorities, and updates on upcoming international meetings, including the 78th UN General Assembly (UNGA78) and side events, and the 2nd US – Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Summit;
- (ii) acknowledged with appreciation Australia’s support for the Pacific Political Climate Champions Program and the Pacific Moana Pavilion;
- (iii) **considered** and **endorsed** the UNGA78 Blue Pacific Key Messages Guide (Annex F), aligned to agreed PIF positions, and highlighting critical priorities including climate change, critical infrastructure, renewable energy, trade, nuclear legacy issues and unexploded ordinances;
- (iv) **welcomed** the update and continued commitment from Australia on its bid to co-host the 31st Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP31) in 2026 in partnership with the Pacific, highlighting a Pacific COP as a unique and unparalleled opportunity to elevate global climate ambition and to showcase and progress Pacific priorities;
- (v) **committed** to undertake a genuine partnership approach in designing and mobilising resources to ensure successful delivery of COP31 in 2026 (subject to securing the bid) including developing a shared regional vision;
- (vi) **noted** the draft 2nd US-PIF Summit *Joint Commitment on Reaffirming U.S.-Pacific Partnership*, and **called** on the FIEAS to urgently review the draft document in acknowledgment of the timeframe;
- (vii) **agreed** to embed the PIF International Engagement and Advocacy Strategy into the 2050 IP, while noting the importance of preparing annual Action Plans to capture arising Forum priorities;

- (viii) **agreed** to align the Forum’s advocacy and engagement priorities for 2024 to the priorities arising from the 2050 Strategy and 2050 IP and any other priorities identified at PIFLM52 and **directed** the Secretariat to develop a strategic and systematic approach to collective advocacy, ensuring alignment of international engagements with partners to regional priorities, in an accountable and transparent manner; and
- (ix) **reaffirmed** the importance and value of an annual calendar for regional and international engagements, and **tasked** the Secretariat to develop a 2024 calendar in consultation with CROP agencies and Members, for consideration at the next session of the FOC.

## **FORUM DIALOGUE PARTNER AND ENGAGEMENT MECHANISM**

### 11. Foreign Ministers:

- (i) **recognised** ongoing efforts to improve relations with Forum Dialogue Partners (FDP) and the importance of the proposed Partner Dialogue Engagement Mechanism to ensuring strengthened FDP coherence and to maximise the value of development support on Pacific priorities, and in the mobilisation of resources in support of the 2050 IP once approved by Leaders;
- (ii) **acknowledged** the linkages of this work to other complementary work, including the importance of member representation, ownership, regional coherence and representation in engaging with FDPs, and other external stakeholders;
- (iii) **proposed** the development of a standardised resource mobilisation criteria for all CROP agencies, focused on linkage to the 2050 IP and ensuring a membership driven approach in the negotiation of significant resourcing to CROP agencies;
- (iv) **supported in principle** the proposed partnership dialogue mechanism on the understanding that there will need to be further consultation on the incorporation of partner summitries and new partnership modalities (such as philanthropic organisations), as well as on the specifics of the proposed reforms, including the necessary revisions to the existing FDP / Forum Observer criteria;
- (v) **agreed** to place a hold on the applications for FDP status from Denmark, Ecuador, Israel, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, and Ukraine submitted against the 2021 Guidelines and Criteria for FDPs, as well as all new applications until such time that the RRA and other relevant pieces of work are completed to strengthen partner engagements and development coordination mechanisms;
- (vi) **noted** the converged timelines as reflected in Annex G, and **agreed** for this work to be sequenced appropriately to align to the 2050 IP process, and to be reflected in the RRA workplan to be presented to the Budget session of the FOC in December 2023; and

- (vii) **tasked** the Secretariat to progress work on the review of the FDP and Forum Observer criteria, and to present a revised criteria at the Budget session of the FOC in December 2023.

## WAY FORWARD ON THE FUKUSHIMA NUCLEAR WASTEWATER ISSUE

### 12. Foreign Ministers:

- (i) **recalled** the strong concerns by Forum Leaders for the significance of the potential threat of nuclear contamination to the health and security of the Blue Pacific as per the 2022 and 2023 Forum Communiqués, and **noted** the extensive Forum dialogue and engagement process taken over the last three years on this matter;
- (ii) **recalled** the Forum priorities of international consultation, international law, and scientific independent and verifiable assessments, and **emphasised** the importance of this transgenerational and possible transboundary issue particularly in the context of the region's nuclear testing legacy, the Rarotonga Treaty, and the 2050 Strategy;
- (iii) **recognised** the sovereignty of Members to determine their own national positions on this critical issue of plans by Japan to discharge over a million tonnes of Advanced Liquid Processing System (ALPS) treated nuclear wastewater into the Pacific Ocean;
- (iv) **acknowledged** the intensive dialogue with Japan, to date, following the high-level dialogue between the PIF Chair and PIF representatives with Japan Prime Minister Fumio Kishida in February 2023;
- (v) **acknowledged** the ongoing dialogue with the IAEA, including the visit by IAEA Director General (DG) Rafael Grossi to the Cook Islands in July 2023;
- (vi) **noted** the *Comprehensive Report on the Safety Review of the ALPS-Treated Water at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station* (IAEA Report) of 4 July 2023 on the *Safety Review of the ALPS-Treated Water at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station*;
- (vii) **acknowledged** the work of the PIF Experts and their initial advice in response to the IAEA Report;
- (viii) **acknowledged** the offer by the IAEA to establish an elevated dialogue mechanism with the PIF, and the IAEA's establishment of a permanent monitoring presence at Fukushima;
- (ix) **noted** the release of the ALPS treated nuclear wastewater into the Pacific Ocean on 24 August 2023 and continuing over the next 30 years, and **recommended** and **encouraged** Japan to:
  - (a) **embed** the Fukushima issue as a standing item of the PALM agenda; and

- (b) **establish** political dialogue annually to ascertain safety issues based on international safety standards and ongoing independent monitoring by the IAEA; and
- (x) **emphasised** the need to build regional scientific capacity and monitoring capabilities to assist the health and well-being of the marine ecosystems of the Blue Pacific including to human health within the region.

## REGIONAL SECURITY-RELATED INITIATIVES

### 13. Foreign Ministers:

- (i) **commended** Fiji and Tuvalu for their leadership in developing the Regional Climate Mobility Framework and **endorsed** the Regional Climate Mobility Framework (Annex H) for conveyance to Forum Leaders for endorsement;
- (ii) **noted** the findings of the review of the Pacific Humanitarian Pathway on COVID-19 and **endorsed** the formal closure of the initiative; and
- (iii) **noted** the continued work to develop a Pacific Humanitarian Response Coordination Mechanism, drawing on the lessons learned through the PHP-C.

## PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM 2023 DECLARATION ON THE CONTINUITY OF STATEHOOD AND THE PROTECTION OF PERSONS IN THE FACE OF CLIMATE CHANGE-RELATED SEA-LEVEL RISE

### 14. Foreign Ministers:

- (i) **recalled** Forum Leaders’ decision at the 51st Pacific Islands Forum where they noted that due consideration of the complex issues of sea-level rise in relation to statehood and the protection of persons affected by sea-level rise should be guided and informed by applicable principles and norms of international law and relevant international frameworks and standards, and the need for the region to unpack these issues further;
- (ii) **welcomed** and **commended** the report of the Specialist Sub-Committee on its work for the period 2022/2023, including the Outcomes of its eighth meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2023, in support of the region’s efforts to address “the threats of climate change and sea-level rise as the defining issue that imperils the livelihood and wellbeing of our peoples and undermines the full realisation of a peaceful, secure and sustainable future for our region” (Preamble, 2021 *Declaration on Preserving Maritime Zones in the face of Climate Change-Related Sea-Level Rise*);
- (iii) **strongly commended** and **agreed** to convey to Forum Leaders the 2023 draft *Declaration on the Continuity of Statehood and the Protection of Persons in the Face of Climate Change-Related Sea-Level Rise* (2023 Declaration) (Annex I), and its accompanying Aide Memoire (Annex J), for consideration and endorsement, and **tasked** the Specialist Sub-Committee to work with the FIEAS to urgently integrate

this work into the 2024 international engagement and advocacy plan to promote the 2023 Declaration, including through the International Law Commission (ILC) 75<sup>th</sup> Session (2024), the UNGA Sixth Committee (Legal), other UN mechanisms, and related meetings of other like-minded bodies;

- (iv) **commended** the region’s international advocacy on the 2021 *Declaration on Preserving Maritime Zones in the face of Climate Change-Related Sea-Level Rise*, which has garnered significant international recognition and support from around 100 states, to date, as well as non-opposition nor objections from any state, thereby proving to be influential in shaping the discussions in the ILC;
- (v) **strongly supported** ongoing Forum contributions to, and careful alignment of advocacy to, the ILC’s ongoing study on the topic “Sea-level rise in relation to international law”, and examination of the sub-topics “law of the sea issues”, “statehood”, and “issues related to the protection of persons affected by sea-level rise”;
- (vi) **welcomed** Member updates on, and **strongly encouraged**, the urgent finalisation and conclusions of outstanding maritime zones and boundaries as per Leaders’ commitments, as well as the sharing and adoption of best practices throughout the region to secure legal certainty at the national level, thereby also strengthening the effectiveness of the 2021 Declaration and the draft 2023 Declaration;
- (vii) **strongly encouraged** the participation of all Pacific Island Forum Member States in the advisory proceedings of the International Court of Justice in relation to climate change, by developing progressive and comprehensive national written submissions on the two questions adopted by UN General Assembly Resolution 77/276, by the extended deadline of 22 January 2024; and
- (viii) **agreed** that the Secretariat officially request permission from the ICJ Registrar to make a submission as the PIF Secretariat by the 22 January 2024 deadline, subject to clear Terms of Reference to be decided by the Specialist Sub-Committee.

## PACIFIC RESILIENCE FACILITY

### 15. Foreign Ministers:

- (i) **reaffirmed** the significance of the Pacific Resilience Facility (PRF) to asserting the Pacific’s agency in its development aspirations, and **encouraged** development partners to work through established Forum processes and mechanisms to support transformative outcomes for the Pacific, including safe states;
- (ii) **noted** the update on the status of work on the Forum Economic Ministers Meeting (FEMM)-approved PRF re-design elements;
- (iii) **supported** the PRF to be linked to COP27 decision to establish loss and damage financing arrangements as a as a resourcing mechanism for climate finance to the Pacific, and as a loss and damage financing mechanism;

- (iv) **supported** that contribution to the PRF is to be considered as a criteria for on-boarding new Forum Dialogue Partners;
- (v) **noted** the PRF legal workshop updates and **endorsed** the two-phased legal documentation approach;
- (vi) **noted** the draft Leaders Declaration on the Establishment of the PRF, for Leaders final consideration;
- (vii) **considered** and **noted** the PRF domicile selection process and timelines;
- (viii) **supported** the status update on the approval conditions from the Audit and Risk Sub-Committee (ARSC) and FOC Sub-Committee on Prioritisation and Resourcing (FSPR);
- (ix) **acknowledged** the generous contribution indicated by the Government of Australia and the United States to support the preparatory activities for the PRF, and to New Zealand for their interest to capitalise the PRF;
- (x) **endorsed** the key PRF milestones for completion prior to the Leaders' Meeting in November 2023 including the convening of special hybrid sessions of FOC and the Forum Economic Officials Meeting (FEOM), for endorsement and conveyance for out of session approval by FFMM and Forum Economic Ministers (FEMM) to ensure a shared understanding and ownership of the final products to be considered by Leaders; and
- (xi) **urged** all Members' economic, legal and foreign affairs officials to support the implementation of the approved re-designed PRF, to promote efficiencies at the national and regional levels.

## **REPORT BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL ON THE SOUTH PACIFIC NUCLEAR FREE ZONE TREATY**

### 16. Foreign Ministers:

- (i) **acknowledged** the 2023 Report by the Secretary General to Forum Leaders on the status of the Treaty and matters arising under it or in relation to it, in compliance with Article 9(3) of the Treaty;
- (ii) **promoted** full compliance by the Parties to the provisions of the Treaty in pursuit of safeguarding the Blue Pacific against nuclear threats, including nuclear contamination in accordance with international law and in pursuit of the 2050 Strategy;
- (iii) **reiterated** Forum Leaders' invitation to remaining non-Party Forum Members to accede to the Treaty, and **urged** the United States to ratify the Treaty Protocols;



- (iv) **noted** the requirements for States Parties under Article 9 of the Treaty to report to the Secretary General on any significant event within their jurisdiction affecting the implementation of the Treaty and to keep each other informed on matters arising under or in relation to the Treaty;
- (v) **expressed** ongoing concern regarding outstanding nuclear testing legacy issues and **reaffirmed** Forum Leaders' commitment to continue support towards bilateral, regional and multilateral action to achieve full, fair and a just resolution of all outstanding nuclear testing legacy issues in the Blue Pacific Continent;
- (vi) **commended** the Republic of the Marshall Islands and Members for the adoption by the Fifty First Session of the UN Human Rights Council on 7 October 2022 of the milestone Resolution 51/35 regarding “Technical assistance and capacity-building to address the human rights implications of the nuclear testing legacy in the Marshall Islands”, and **recommended to** Leaders to fully support its implementation;
- (vii) **noted** and **supported** progress and next steps to operationalise the Treaty, in terms of the outcomes of the 2021 Consultative Committee Meeting and its next steps;
- (viii) **noted** the status of the *Comprehensive Nuclear-Test -Ban Treaty* (CTBT) in the Pacific, and **urged** remaining members to sign and ratify the CTBT, as urged by Forum Leaders at their Fiftieth Meeting in Tuvalu in 2019; and
- (ix) **noted** the work of the CROP Taskforce on Nuclear Legacy Issues in the Pacific, the leadership of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Kiribati and Fiji, and the status on the study on nuclear contamination intended for the consideration by Leaders in 2024.

## 52<sup>nd</sup> PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM LEADERS AND RELATED MEETINGS

17. Foreign Ministers **welcomed** the update from the Cook Islands on the arrangements for PIFLM52.

## PACIFIC PARTNERSHIPS FOR PROSPERITY

18. Foreign Ministers:

- (i) **acknowledged** the Pacific Partnerships for Prosperity (PPfP) country initiative from the Cook Islands, recognising the opportunity it offers in identifying existing and new priorities for partners to support the successful delivery of the 2050 IP thus ensuring a focused and impactful approach to regional development;
- (ii) **recognised** PPfP as a strategic collaborative initiative to mobilise vital resources and commitment from Members and partners to empower our Pacific peoples;
- (iii) **endorsed** the Pacific Partnerships for Prosperity as it identifies strategically crucial Regional Collective Actions, providing impactful early wins and effectively

channelling partners efforts in supporting the development of PIF Members through strong collaboration and consultations; and

- (iv) **considered** opportunities for further collaboration of the PPfP to ensure its alignment to the work of the 2050 IP.

## **AUKUS**

19. Foreign Ministers **noted** the update provided by Australia in relation to the Trilateral Security Pact between Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States (AUKUS), and **welcomed** the transparency of Australia's efforts and commitment to compliance with international law, in particular the *Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons* (NPT), the Rarotonga Treaty, and IAEA safeguard agreements.

## **TEIENIWA VISION**

20. Foreign Ministers **noted** the update on the Teieniwa Vision, including the proposal to establish a Taskforce to oversee its implementation, and **commended** Kiribati for its continued leadership on anticorruption in the Pacific.

## **OUTCOME OF THE PAPUA NEW GUINEA-LED PACIFIC ICT MINISTERS MEETING**

21. Foreign Ministers:

- (i) **noted** the development of the Lagatoi Declaration on Digital Transformation of the Pacific and its links to the 2050 Strategy IP; and
- (ii) **agreed** to convey the Lagatoi Declaration to Leaders for consideration and to absorb ICT coordination efforts into the CROP process as a regional collective action to deliver on the Leaders' Vision under the 2050 Strategy.

## **PALAU COMMUNIQUE**

22. Foreign Ministers **noted** the Joint Communique of the Fifth Annual Joint Heads of Pacific Security of 23 – 24 August 2023 in Koror, Palau, and **tasked** the Secretariat, through the FSRs, to consider alignment of the JHOPS and Forum security efforts via the Review of the Regional Architecture.

## **HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**

23. Foreign Ministers **supported** the request by the Republic of the Marshall Islands for support to its second Candidature to the Human Rights Council for the 2025 – 2027 elections next year in October, and **commended** the Republic of the Marshall Islands for its leadership and achievements in its first candidature from 2020 – 2023, including in advancing critical issues of climate change in the context of human rights, nuclear issues, and strengthening the Council, and **encouraged** Members to take part in the Council.

## MEETING OUTCOMES

24. Foreign Ministers **endorsed** the Outcomes of the 2023 Forum Foreign Ministers Meeting.

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Suva  
15 September 2023

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

**AUSTRALIA**

Hon. Penny Wong  
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Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade

H.E. Ewen McDonald  
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Kate Logan  
First Assistant Secretary, DFAT

Max Willis  
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Director, DFAT

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**COOK ISLANDS**

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## **FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA**

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Hoanui Mariassouce  
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## **KIRIBATI**

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Uering Iteraera  
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## **NAURU**

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## **REPUBLIC OF MARSHALL ISLANDS**

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## **SAMOA**

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## **TONGA**

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Dr Tauisi Minute Taupo Faavae  
Secretary of Justice, Communication and  
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Lafita Paeniu  
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Eselealofa Apinelu  
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Tuvalu High Commission in Fiji

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Vanuatu High Commission in Fiji

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Richard Balkonan  
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Toney Tevi

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Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat  
15 September 2023

**Opening Remarks by the Honourable Mark Brown, Prime Minister of the Cook Islands  
and Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum**

15 September 2023

*Honourable Forum Leaders and Ministers of the Blue Pacific  
Heads of Delegation  
Excellencies  
Ladies and Gentlemen*

Kia orana and warm greetings to you all.

It is a great honour to be able to join this 2023 Forum Foreign Ministers Meeting as Chair.

Excellencies, please allow me to underscore that what we have been through and accomplished in the last three years is nothing short of extraordinary.

We developed and endorsed the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent as the overarching blueprint to advance Pacific regionalism for the next three decades.

And we did this all under the extreme pressures of the COVID-19 pandemic, which we responded to with arguably the most robust national and regional frameworks globally, keeping the health and safety of our people front and centre of our policies.

In the year 2050, those of us seated around the table certainly would have moved on from where we are today.

But our youth – our future Leaders – will look back at this period as a key moment in the history of the Forum. It is they who will reflect on whether our commitment to regionalism was enough to achieve the Vision for the Blue Pacific.

It is important to remember that in order for Pacific regionalism to work, we must be willing to work together to find common ground that positively contributes to the Leaders' Vision.

We must all be prepared to exercise some flexibility – to be prepared to adjust – for the future prosperity of the Blue Pacific.

Today we will discuss a range of issues, from the geopolitical context in which we operate, to the opportunities and challenges presented by our priorities.

Indeed, the theme that we have chosen for the 52nd Pacific Islands Forum, is reflective of the times that we are in: Our Voices, Our Choices, Our Pacific Way: Promote, Partner, Prosper.

In my capacity as Forum Chair, I have had the invaluable opportunity to participate in various global fora, including the G7 Summit in Hiroshima in May and the ASEAN Leaders Summit in Jakarta just this last week.

In the coming week, we will meet the world at the United Nations General Assembly, the annual meeting point of world leaders. We will also have the opportunity to meet, yet again, with President Biden and further on in the near future, the Annual Meetings of the World Bank.

Excellencies and Colleagues,

The strategic opportunities before us are great. The onus is on us to step up and grasp it. How we strategically engage as a region, is of utmost importance.

It is timely that with the ongoing regional processes, we will be able to find new and innovative ways to maximise the value of regionalism.

Indeed, a key deliverable this year will be the 2050 Strategy Implementation Plan. Shortly we will consider an update on the progress made to ensure that a comprehensive and thoroughly owned and led document is ready for Leaders' consideration in November.

The Implementation Plan is a critical cog in the machinery to deliver the 2050 Strategy, and as tasked by Leaders, will shortly be accompanied by a Review of the Regional Architecture.

So, we have a Strategy.

We are at the cusp of endorsing a Plan.

And we will shortly embark on a journey to deliver the architecture – our regional Team – to deliver the 2050 Strategy and Implementation Plan.

While we have accomplished so much, there is still a long road ahead of us. I ask that we exercise foresight and keep these critical pieces of pending work at the back of our minds as we consider the prioritised agenda before us.

I encourage deliberations today to be open, frank, and embrace the visionary principles we need to ensure that we deliver meaningful outcomes for our people.

As I bring my welcoming remarks to a close, I know I speak for us all here when I send the full support and encouragement of the Blue Pacific to all the Pacific Teams competing at this year's Rugby World Cup.

Just as we face in our line of work, our sporting teams face the same challenges and obstacles, with limited resources and opportunities when compared to other wealthier states.

But we are a resilient people. We punch way above our weight on the international scene, and I know our players will make us proud. All the very best to our Members waving the flags of the Blue Pacific in France.

Meitaki Maata, and I thank you.

**Opening Remarks by PIF Secretary General Henry Puna**  
15 September 2023

*The Hon. Mark Brown, Prime Minister of the Cook Islands and Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum*

*His Excellency, Taneti Maamau, President of Kiribati*

*His Excellency, Russ Kun, President of Nauru*

*The Hon. Fiame Naomi Mata'afa, Prime Minister of Samoa*

*Honourable Ministers of the Blue Pacific*

*Heads of Delegation*

*Excellencies*

*Ladies and Gentlemen*

Kia orana and ni sa bula vinaka.

I am so pleased to welcome you all again to this, your Secretariat.

It has been an incredible year for all of us and much has progressed on all fronts, since this august body met last year.

The agenda before us is comprehensive and is reflective of the increasing amount of work that is required to better position ourselves as a region, moving forward.

Strategic interest in the region is at an all-time high.

But it is an opportunity that will not last forever.

As a Forum family, we have withstood many challenges, changes and capitalized on opportunities over the last 53 years.

But this era, as one of our senior official summed-up quite aptly this week, this era is the Pacific century.

Let us not capitulate to external interests in the region, but rather, define and drive our own priorities in the interest of our people.

In essence, this is at the very core of our 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent.

If there is any advice that I can offer this august body it would be to engage frankly and honestly, and ensure that we leave here with clear agreements on the way forward on each of the issues we will discuss.

Your collective leadership is vital to our advocacy and solidarity.

Meitaki Maata, and I thank you.

**PROVISIONAL ANNOTATED AGENDA**

**OPENING FORMALITIES AND SCENE-SETTING SESSION**

1. **Opening** (9.00am – 9.05am)  
The Chair will call the meeting to order, and opening formalities will be observed.
2. **Adoption of Agenda and Meeting Timetable** (9.05am – 9.10am)  
*Please refer to the meeting paper PIFS(23)FFMM.2*
3. **Global and Regional Strategic Environment** (9.10am – 10.15am)  
To discuss the broader global and regional trends and dynamics shaping our regional context both from within the region and external to the region.  
*Please refer to the meeting paper PIFS(23)FFMM.3*

**MORNING TEA BREAK** (10.15am – 10.30am)

**ISSUES PRESENTED FOR DECISION**

4. **Implementation Plan for the 2050 Strategy** (10.30am – 11.00am)  
To consider an update on the draft 2050 Strategy Implementation and Monitoring Plan and agree on the next steps to finalise the document for Leaders' consideration.  
*Please refer to the meeting paper PIFS(23)FFMM.4*
5. **Forum Engagement and Advocacy**
  - i. **Forum Engagement and Advocacy** (11.00am – 11.30am)  
To discuss and agree on the region's engagement and advocacy priorities, including the regional messages for the 78<sup>th</sup> United Nations General Assembly and preparations for COP28, including updates on partner engagements and related issues.  
*Please refer to the meeting paper PIFS(23)FFMM.5(i)*
  - ii. **Forum Dialogue Partner and Engagement Mechanism** (11.30am – 12.00pm)  
To discuss the applications for Forum Dialogue Partner status and consider an update on the work to review the Forum Partner Engagement Mechanisms.  
*Please refer to the meeting paper PIFS(23)FFMM.5(ii)*
6. **Way Forward on the Fukushima Issue** (12.00pm – 12.30pm)  
To discuss the proposed way forward on the Fukushima Issue.  
*Please refer to the meeting paper PIFS(23)FFMM.6*
7. **Regional Security-Related Initiatives** (12.30pm – 1.00pm)  
To discuss and endorse proposals relating to two regional initiatives: the Regional Climate Mobility Framework and the Review of the Pacific Humanitarian Pathway of COVID-19.  
*Please refer to the meeting paper PIFS(23)FFMM.7*

**LUNCH** (1.00pm – 2.00pm)

8. **Draft Pacific Islands Forum Declaration on Statehood and Persons affected by Sea-level Rise** (2.00pm – 2.30pm)  
To discuss and endorse the draft *Pacific Islands Forum Declaration on Statehood and Persons affected by Sea-level Rise*, its Aide Memoire.  
*Please refer to the meeting paper PIFS(23)FFMM.9*
9. **Pacific Resilience Facility** (2.30pm – 3.00pm)  
To discuss the Declaration on the Pacific Resilience Facility (PRF) and consider an update on the re-design of the PRF as endorsed by the Forum Economic Ministers.  
*Please refer to the meeting paper PIFS(23)FFMM.10*

#### ISSUES PRESENTED FOR UPDATE

10. **Report by the Secretary General on the Rarotonga Treaty** (3.00pm – 3.30pm)  
To consider the Secretary General's annual report on the Rarotonga Treaty and related Nuclear Issues.  
*Please refer to the meeting papers PIFS(23)FFMM.11*

#### **AFTERNOON TEA** (3.30pm – 4.00pm)

11. **Update on 52<sup>nd</sup> Pacific Islands Forum Leaders and Related Meetings** (4.00pm – 4.30pm)  
To consider an update from the Office of the Forum Chair on the preparations for the 52<sup>nd</sup> Pacific Islands Forum Leaders and Related Meetings.  
*Please refer to the meeting paper PIFS(23)FFMM.12*

#### ANY OTHER MATTERS

12. **Pacific Partnership for Prosperity** (4.30pm – 4.45pm)  
To consider a presentation on the Forum Chair's initiative, *Pacific Partnership for Prosperity*.  
*Please refer to the meeting paper PIFS(23)FFMM.13*
13. **AUKUS** (4.45pm – 5.00pm)  
To consider a verbal update by the Hon. Penny Wong, Minister for Foreign Affairs for Australia.  
*Verbal Presentation*
14. **Teieniwa Vision**  
To consider an update on the Teieniwa Vision.  
*Verbal Presentation*
15. **Outcome of the Papua New Guinea-led Pacific ICT Ministers Meeting** (5.00pm – 5.15pm)  
To consider the Lagatoi Declaration as agreed by the Pacific ICT Ministers Meeting.
16. **Consideration of the draft 2023 Forum Foreign Ministers Meeting Outcomes** (5.15pm – 5.30pm)
17. **Closing** (6.00pm)

#### **Information Papers:**

ii.	Revitalisation of the Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration (PLGED)	<i>PIFS(23)OCS.11(ii)</i>
iii.	Regional Fisheries Ministers Meeting	<i>PIFS(23)OCS.11(iii)</i>

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat  
Suva, Fiji  
14 September 2023