



PACIFIC SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES
United Nations Member States

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Statement by

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On behalf of the
Pacific Small Island Developing States

During the informal consultations on the United Nations system-wide coherence

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Mr Chairman,

I am honored to speak on behalf of the Pacific Small Islands Developing countries including Fiji, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, and my own country, the Kingdom of Tonga.

At the outset, we would like to thank you for convening this meeting to discuss the important issue of System-wide Coherence. This is indeed a timely and pressing issue, as we have reached the mid-point in our time frame to achieve the MDGs by 2015. The result of governance and institutional reform directly impacts upon the UN system's ability in achieving the MDGs.

"Delivering as One" and overcoming systematic fragmentation is central to our discussion. Without effective governance, the UN system will operate in an inefficient manner, which contributes to duplication and operational inefficiencies across the entire system. The PIF group welcomes input and joins all Member States in these important discussions. We hope that these constructive and open discussions would lead to creative and practical solutions to achieve System-wide Coherence.

We are encouraged to see the various recommendations put forward to reform the UN system. These recommendations serve as original frameworks for us to fine-tune methods of reform. It is important to remain open and receptive to the suggestions and recommendations put forward during the discussions.

Mr Chairman,

The recommendation of the establishment of a Sustainable Development Board, particularly in the context of a strengthened ECOSOC with the mainstreaming of sustainable development is significant. The proposal to combine the boards of UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP is a bold step in creating a strategic oversight body in overseeing development activities led by the UN. The PIF group is aware of the merits as well as the downfalls of the proposal on the Sustainable Development Board; and we therefore remain open to further consideration of the idea and would like to offer our perspective.

The establishment of a Sustainable Development Board may have its merits in having an overseeing board to coordinate and drive development efforts. The Board, comprised by a subset of Member States based on equitable geographical representation, would act as a central body being responsible for joint planning among all funds, programmes and agencies.

Mindful of the centralized nature of the Board, we would like to emphasize that it is important to avoid over-reliance on a centralized system to achieve our respective development goals. Sustainable development is an issue that is unique to all Member States. It is important for the Pacific to maintain a strong grassroots input in our

development strategies. There must be strategic alignment between the focus of the Sustainable Development Board, our national governments and regional organizations, and our grassroots communities to ensure the authenticity and the effectiveness of the development strategies.

Mr Chairman,

The recommendation to create a firewall and to promote accountability between the management of UNDP and the management of the resident coordinator system is crucial. The separation of functions ensures greater input from other UN agencies in the resident coordinator system. The firewall gives the resident coordinator the authority to lead the national team in implementing the one country programme. This will enhance the effectiveness of field initiatives and improve accountability at the country level, serving the vision of "One United Nations"

We welcome the recommendation to create stronger links between the UN agencies and the Bretton Woods intuitions.

The Monterrey Consensus of 2002 provides the framework for development, with donor countries providing ODA and offering debt relief to developing countries. In 2005, donor countries made further commitments to increase aid by US\$50 billion by 2010. The achievement of MDGs cannot be made without reference to financing for development. It is fully recognized that even when there is an increase in aid for development, it needs to be complemented by functional systems, institutions and processes to ensure the achievement of effective and relevant development outcomes.

The lack of donor coordination leads to competition between UN agencies for funding, resulting in inadequate and often inconsistent allocation of funds for UN programmes. This leads to a supply rather than demand driven allocation of resources in development. It hinders the UN agencies to invest in their core comparative advantages and undermines the national ownership of UN programmes.

The synergy between the UN, the World Bank and IMF may secure adequate and consistent sources of funding, which complements ODA in financing development efforts. We are hopeful that that there will be a steady source of funding dedicate towards cross-cutting issues.

Mr Chairman,

I would like to take this opportunity to emphasize the importance for UN agencies to consolidate their normative and operational activities to effectively respond to cross-cutting issues such as climate change, gender and sustainable development. The improvement of inter-agency cooperation and partnership will create the necessary synergy to properly address the cross-cutting issues and to avoid the competition for funding and resources between the UN agencies.

Climate change has an enormous impact on women in rural and developing countries, women undertake two thirds of the work in agriculture, and account for the majority of the world's poor. Women are disproportionately affected by climate change. Nature disasters reinforce traditional gender roles, often to the detriment of women.

Women are largely responsible for cultivating crops, securing food and water, women are also largely responsible as caretakers in their communities. The effect of climate change reduces women's access to resources, and drastically increases their work load in securing food and water. The decrease in natural resources and arable land fuels conflicts within communities and thus further undermine the security of women by exposing them to increasing physical harm and sexual assaults.

It is therefore vital that the capacity-building for mainstreaming the gender perspective be strengthened and to integrate gender budgeting into normative and operational UN agencies. Gender budgeting helps to track how women's priorities are funded, and can assist UN agencies in allocating the necessary resources towards gender empowerment. Given that there is a clear link that the empowerment of women and the achievement of MDGs, we urge the UN to play a pivotal role in leading the efforts of gender empowerment by integrating it into the work of all UN agencies and by increasing financing for gender empowerment.

We look forward to the further discussion of the gender issue in detail at the its separate session in May.

During the special event on financing for climate change this week, the panelist emphasized the need to increase funding for climate change mitigation and adaptation and for sustainable development. Otherwise, we may face a dilemma of funding climate change mitigation and adaptation at the expense of sustainable development.

The Comprehensive solution is to combine efforts of the financing, climate change and the development community. The dilemma can be avoided through the strategic allocation of resources through UN agencies to expand the access to energy through capacity building of developing countries. Another suggestion is to expand the carbon market to provide cleaner energy. Neither suggestion can be properly implemented if sustainable development and climate change continue to be compartmentalized and viewed as separate issues.

The UN reform offers an opportunity to enhance partnerships between relevant agencies such as UNEP (normative) and UNDP (operative). The efforts will re-align overlapping priorities between the agencies to improve effectiveness and targeted action of environmental activities within the UN system. It is also important to increase funding to UNEP through strategic alliances with the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to fund projects in developing countries. Such efforts will help UNEP to become the environmental policy pillar of the UN and help to build a global consensus and capacity for action, as environmental issues have become inter-related and clearly linked to the work of other UN agencies.