

**FIFTIETH PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM**

**FUNAFUTI, TUVALU**

**13 – 16 August 2019**

**FORUM COMMUNIQUÉ**



**PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM SECRETARIAT**

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### FORUM COMMUNIQUÉ

The Fiftieth (50th) Pacific Islands Forum was held in Funafuti, Tuvalu from 13 – 16 August 2019 and was attended by the Heads of State, Government, and Territories of Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of Fiji, the Republic of Kiribati, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Republic of Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, the Kingdom of Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. Niue, Palau and French Polynesia were represented by Ministers. The Forum Leaders' Retreat was held at the Kainaki II Falekaupule in Funafuti, Tuvalu.

2. Tokelau, and Wallis and Futuna attended the Formal session as Associate Members. The Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP) were represented by the Heads of Organisation of the: Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA); Pacific Aviation Safety Office (PASO); Pacific Power Association (PPA); South Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP). The Pacific Community (SPC) and the University of the South Pacific (USP) were represented at senior officials' level. The Asian Development Bank, the Commonwealth Secretariat, the United Nations (UN), the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), the International Organization for Migration, and the World Bank attended as Observers. Forum Leaders also welcomed the opportunity to engage with the broader Forum family, including civil society and the private sector, and looked forward to its engagement with Forum Dialogue Partners.

3. Leaders expressed their deep appreciation to the Right Honourable Enele Sosene Sopoaga, Prime Minister of Tuvalu, the Government and the people of Tuvalu for the warm hospitality extended to their delegations. Leaders commended the preparations and facilitation of the 50th Pacific Islands Forum, which enabled Leaders and participants to hold constructive discussions and contributed to the overall success of the 50th Pacific Islands Forum.

### SECURING OUR FUTURE IN THE PACIFIC

4. Leaders **congratulated** the Government of Tuvalu for the 50th Pacific Islands Forum theme – *Securing our future in the Pacific* – which builds on the themes of the 2018 and 2017 Pacific Islands Forum meetings held in Samoa and Nauru, respectively, and underscores the need for strategic and visionary action to Building a Strong Blue Pacific Continent for our People within the spirit of the *Framework for Pacific Regionalism*.

### A 2050 STRATEGY FOR *SECURING OUR FUTURE IN THE PACIFIC*

5. Leaders **noted** that escalating climate change related impacts, coupled with the intensification of geostrategic competition, is exacerbating the region's vulnerabilities. In

reflecting on this, Leaders **noted** that securing the future of the Blue Pacific cannot simply be left to chance, but rather requires a long-term vision, a carefully considered regionalism strategy, and most importantly a collective commitment to achieve it. The strategic value that the Pacific region currently holds provides unprecedented opportunities and leverage to realise the Blue Pacific Continent.

6. In this context, and in promoting the fundamental principle of inclusivity and equality, particularly the role of women, ensuring increased representation at all levels, and of youth, for advancing regionalism, Leaders **endorsed** the development of a *2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent*, while acknowledging the need for urgent, immediate actions on the threats and challenges of climate change facing the Blue Pacific and realising the health and wellbeing of Pacific people to secure a bright and prosperous future for the Pacific.

7. In framing the development of the *2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent*, Leaders **agreed** the Strategy must ensure social, cultural, environmental and economic integrity, sovereignty and security in order to protect people, place and prospects of the Blue Pacific.

8. Leaders **welcomed** the offer by the Prime Minister of Tuvalu to commence dialogue with Leaders on a new 2050 vision for Pacific Island countries that recognised the Blue Pacific Continent that make up the territories and economic exclusive zones of the region and how Pacific Island countries can form an effective union, building on the SAMOA Pathway and the *Boe Declaration*, to ensure a safe and secure future for the Pacific in the face of climate change.

9. Leaders **agreed** that strong political leadership to advance climate change action, protecting our Ocean's health and integrity, sustainably managing our island and ocean resources, connecting our oceanic continent (air, sea and ICT) and ensuring healthy people, as cornerstone priorities informed by science.

10. Leaders **tasked** the Secretariat to work closely with Members to prepare a draft strategy for Leaders' consideration in Vanuatu in 2020.

11. Leaders **tasked** the review of the regional CROP architecture to re-examine and ensure the requisite governance and resourcing arrangements that promote, govern and deepen collective responsibility and accountability to deliver the *2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent*.

12. Leaders further **agreed** that in order to secure the Blue Pacific, this would require strong political leadership and Members' commitment to champion priority initiatives to drive and deepen regional cooperation, collaboration and integration, under the *2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent*.

## **PRIORITIES FOR SECURING OUR FUTURE IN THE PACIFIC**

13. Leaders **acknowledged** that the Forum's efforts to advance regionalism under the *Framework for Pacific Regionalism* depends on the solidarity of all the members of the Pacific Islands Forum and its efforts to address the regional priorities to secure its Blue Pacific Continent.

## *Climate Change and Disaster Resilience*

14. Leaders **reaffirmed** climate change as the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security and wellbeing of the peoples of the Pacific and our commitment to progress the implementation of the Paris Agreement.
15. In acknowledging with appreciation the visit of the UN Secretary General to the Pacific Islands Forum in May 2019, Leaders **agreed** to build on their *Blue Pacific's Call for Urgent Global Climate Change Action* through the ***Kainaki II Declaration for Urgent Climate Action Now*** (Annex1) as the basis of the Forum's leadership and moral authority to engage at the UN Secretary General's Climate Action Summit and the 25<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties (COP 25) to the *UN Framework Convention on Climate Change*.
16. In recognising the need to formally secure the future of our people in the face of climate change and its impacts, Leaders noted the proposal for a UN General Assembly Resolution seeking an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice on the obligations of States under international law to protect the rights of present and future generations against the adverse effects of climate change.
17. Leaders **recognised** the value of the ongoing collective efforts as one region and ocean, and the need to address financing for building resilience in the Blue Pacific. In support of the decision of Forum Economic Ministers, Leaders<sup>1</sup> **endorsed** the concept and transitional arrangements for the establishment of the regionally owned and led Pacific Resilience Facility on the objectives, governance arrangements, financial products and capitalisation.
18. Leaders **encouraged** the Pacific Resilience Facility Technical Working Group to mobilise the requisite resources from new and existing partners to establish the Pacific Resilience Facility.
19. Leaders **noted** the expression of interest by Samoa to host the Pacific Resilience Facility once it is established as an international organisation.
20. Leaders also **recalled** the *Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific* (FRDP) and reaffirmed the importance of a member-driven, inclusive and coordinated action on climate and disaster resilience. In this respect, Leaders **noted** the work carried out to date to implement the FRDP and **agreed** to extend the trial period on the Pacific Resilient Partnership (PRP) governance arrangements until 2020 to be informed by a review of the effectiveness and efficiency of the governance arrangements.
21. Leaders further **directed** the PRP taskforce to further elaborate the FRDP in line with the Paris Agreement, and to finalise the Monitoring & Evaluation framework by the end of 2021, with a progress update in 2020.
22. Leaders also **noted** the need for the Pacific Resilience Partnership to consider other risks such as from solid waste, including technological, medical and chemical waste.

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<sup>1</sup> Noting Fiji's reservations

### *Regional Security*

23. Leaders **commended** the progress made on implementing the *Boe Declaration* and **endorsed** the *Boe Declaration* Action Plan, including the establishment of the Sub-Committee of the Forum Officials' Committee on Regional Security. Leaders **requested** that traditional and cultural norms be acknowledged and considered as an underpinning imperative of all security initiatives under the *Boe Action Plan*.

### *Oceans and Maritime Boundaries*

24. Leaders **noted** with concern the threat posed by sea level rise to securing the Blue Pacific, and **reaffirmed** their commitment to conclude negotiations on all outstanding maritime boundaries claims and zones.

25. Leaders **discussed** progress made by Members to conclude negotiations on maritime boundary claims since the Leaders meeting in Nauru 2018, and **encouraged** Members to conclude all outstanding maritime boundaries claims and zones. Additionally, Leaders **reaffirmed** the importance of preserving Members' existing rights stemming from maritime zones, in the face of sea level rise, noting the existing and ongoing regional mechanisms to support maritime boundaries delimitation.

26. Leaders **committed** to a collective effort, including to develop international law, with the aim of ensuring that once a Forum Member's maritime zones are delineated in accordance with the 1982 *UN Convention on the Law of the Sea*, that the Members maritime zones could not be challenged or reduced as a result of sea-level rise and climate change.

27. Leaders **agreed** that pursuing their claims for extended continental shelf, under Article 76 of the *UN Convention on the Law of the Sea*, is important and requested ongoing support and assistance by relevant regional agencies on Members' submission to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf.

### *Nuclear Contaminants*

28. Leaders **expressed concern** for the significance of the potential threat of nuclear contamination, World War II wrecks and unexploded ordnances to the health and security of the Blue Pacific her people and prospects, **acknowledged** the importance of addressing the long-standing issues of nuclear testing legacy in the Pacific and **called for** the operationalisation of the provisions of the *South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty* (Rarotonga Treaty), as necessary.

29. Leaders **recalled** that the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres raised concerns about the nuclear waste storage facility on Runit Island, Enewetak Atoll, Republic of the Marshall Islands as 'a kind of coffin' and warned of health consequences to the local communities resulting from the nuclear tests. Leaders **reiterated** their ongoing concern on nuclear contamination issues in the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and particularly in respect of the nuclear test site at Runit. Leaders **called** on the United States Government to increase its monitoring and to address health consequences related to the nuclear testing programme.

30. Leaders **agreed** to continue **support** towards bilateral, regional and multilateral action to assist the Republic of the Marshall Islands in its efforts to engage the United States Government in a meaningful way, in order to achieve for the Republic of the Marshall Islands, full, fair and a just resolution of all outstanding nuclear testing legacy issues, and agreed to submit letters to the United States Government urging the United States Government to take further action to meaningfully address the ongoing impacts of its Nuclear Testing Programme; and to the UN Secretary-General requesting the assistance of the relevant and competent UN agencies and any other partners in addressing the ongoing impacts of nuclear testing in the Pacific.

31. Leaders further **recalled** their decision from 2016 and reaffirmed in 2017 that the Secretariat coordinate assistance by CROP Agencies to the Republic of Kiribati and the Republic of the Marshall Islands in addressing ongoing impacts of nuclear testing, including inter alia, human rights, environmental contamination, and health impacts, and **acknowledged** the ongoing dialogue between the CROP Agencies, particularly SPREP and SPC, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands National Nuclear Commission. Leaders further **tasked** the Secretariat to report to Leaders at their next meeting in Vanuatu.

32. Leaders **endorsed** the need for the commissioning of an appropriate body to undertake a comprehensive, independent and objective scientific assessment of the contamination issue in the Pacific, including in the nuclear test site at Runit.

33. Leaders **agreed** to request a meeting with the United States President to discuss the current and emerging issues of the nuclear testing legacy in the Republic of the Marshall Islands and in the Blue Pacific.

34. Leaders **urged** members to sign and ratify the *Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty*.

*West Papua (Papua)*

35. Leaders **reaffirmed** recognition of Indonesia's sovereignty over West Papua (Papua). Leaders **acknowledged** the reported escalation in violence and continued allegations of human rights abuses in West Papua (Papua) and **agreed** to re-emphasise and reinforce the Forum's position of raising its concerns over the violence.

36. Leaders **called** on all parties to protect and uphold the human rights of all residents and to work to address the root causes of the conflict by peaceful means. Further, Leaders **agreed** to maintain open and constructive dialogue with Indonesia on the issue of alleged human rights abuses and violations in West Papua (Papua).

37. Leaders **welcomed** the invitation by Indonesia for a mission to West Papua (Papua) by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and **strongly encouraged** both sides to finalise the timing of the visit and for an evidence-based, informed report on the situation be provided before the next Pacific Islands Forum Leaders meeting in 2020.

## COLLECTIVE ENGAGEMENT AND ADVOCACY FOR SECURING OUR BLUE PACIFIC

38. Leaders **acknowledged** the increasing strategic competition and cooperation in the Pacific and the opportunities presented for *securing our Blue Pacific Continent*. Leaders remained cognisant that the challenge for the Forum would be maintaining regional solidarity in the face of more intense political engagement, which may serve to divide the Forum collective.

39. Leaders **emphasised** the importance of genuine partnerships that reflect the collective priorities of the region and engages all Forum Members, reaffirming our *Blue Pacific* approach. Accordingly, Leaders **endorsed** the following *Blue Pacific Principles* for collective Pacific Islands Forum Dialogue and Engagement:

- (i) *One Blue Pacific* – recognising and engaging with the full Forum Membership;
- (ii) *Regional priorities* – embedding and progressing the Forum’s regional priorities;
- (iii) *Partnership approach* – joint planning, programming and delivery by both the Pacific Islands Forum and the Forum Dialogue Partner(s);
- (iv) *Utilising existing mechanisms* – aligning with, and seeking to build-off existing regional and international mechanisms, processes and meetings; and
- (v) *Collective outcomes and impact* – developing joint outcomes statements and outlining a clear process for follow-up and implementation.

### *Forum Dialogue Partners Review and Engagement*

40. In consideration of the *Blue Pacific Principles* and in recognising the importance of effective partnerships and engagements, Leaders **noted** with concern that not all Forum Dialogue partners are effectively engaging with the Pacific Islands Forum to a level that justifies their status as Forum Dialogue Partners.

41. Leaders **directed** a review of the criteria set to become a Forum Observer or a Forum Dialogue Partner for their consideration at the 51<sup>st</sup> Pacific Islands Forum.

42. In reflecting on the effectiveness of partnerships, Leaders **discussed** the recent developments on the UN General Assembly Resolution on UN – Pacific Islands Forum Cooperation. Leaders **agreed** to engage and seek to secure the support and solidarity of Forum Dialogue Partners in international fora.

43. Leaders **considered** recent applications for Forum Dialogue Partner status by the Kingdom of Norway and the Republic of Chile and **agreed** to defer its decision on these to their next Forum. Leaders also **considered** an application for Forum Observer status from the International Committee of the Red Cross and **agreed** to respectfully decline the application on the basis that the organisation did not meet the criteria set out for Forum Observers.

## STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS TO SECURE OUR BLUE PACIFIC

44. In the context of securing the Blue Pacific, Leaders considered a range of regional institutional arrangements.

### *Review of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism*

45. In considering a long term 2050 strategy for securing the future of the Blue Pacific, Leaders **reaffirmed** the importance of inclusivity and **agreed** to maintain the public consultation process as a fundamental principle for advancing the strategy and for driving collective action under the *Framework for Pacific Regionalism*.

46. Leaders **agreed** to the review of the Terms of Reference and mandate of the Specialist Sub-Committee on Regionalism (SSCR), including for greater oversight by Members as a means to better ensure that the SSCR is able to provide advice on the *2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent* for deepening regionalism, to be considered together with the Strategy at the 51<sup>st</sup> Pacific Islands Forum Meeting in Vanuatu.

### *Independent Report on the Forum Troika Review of Forum Meeting Processes*

47. Leaders **welcomed** the *Independent Report on the Forum Troika Review of Pacific Islands Forum Meeting Processes* and **supported** the proposal from Forum Foreign Ministers to refer the Report to the FOC Sub-Committee on Forum International Engagement and Advocacy for further discussion, and to report to the 2019 FOC Budget Session.

### *Regional Fisheries Ministers Meeting*

48. Leaders **recalled** their 2015 decision endorsing Fisheries as a regional priority and the 2017 decision that Fisheries be a standing item on the Leaders agenda. Leaders further **recalled** their 2018 decision endorsing the establishment of a Regional Fisheries Ministers Meeting to ensure effective oversight across the multidimensional issues that impact our region's fisheries.

49. Leaders **welcomed** and **endorsed** the Terms of Reference for a Regional Fisheries Ministers Meeting and **agreed** with the advent of the Special Regional Fisheries Ministers Meeting to disband the officials level Fisheries Taskforce.

50. Leaders also **welcomed** the adoption of the *Regional Longline Strategy* by Forum Fisheries Ministers.

51. Leaders **considered and accepted** the report card of the *Regional Roadmap for Sustainable Fisheries* by the Forum Fisheries Committee (FFC) Chair (Federated States of Micronesia) and the outcomes of the FFC Ministers Meeting in June 2019.



52. Leaders **reaffirmed** their commitment to work collectively to harness, secure, protect and sustainably manage, use and conserve, the living resources of the Blue Pacific such as coastal and oceanic fisheries – as part of the *2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent*.

*A Regional Mechanism to Address Oil Spills*

53. Leaders **recognised** the significant environmental risk posed by oil leaks and spills from the corroding hulls of World War II Wrecks. This risk is exacerbated by climate change events such as severe tropical cyclones and typhoons.

54. Leaders **agreed** that the Forum Officials' Committee and the Secretariat, in collaboration with other CROP agencies, work on a Regional Mechanism and Action Plan, and that the Action Plan be presented to Leaders for consideration in 2020, taking into account the review of the Pacific Island Marine Spill Contingency Plan (PACPLAN) being undertaken by SPREP.

*Ad Hoc Ministerial Meetings*

55. Leaders **agreed** to convene a Forum Trade Ministers Meeting, to be hosted in Fiji in 2019, to consider and discuss a range of sustainable development challenges faced by the Pacific region to enable formulation of coherent economic, social and environmental regional strategies and policies that are inclusive, promotes regional economic integration, strengthens connectivity and leads to export-led growth, increased investment in priority areas and decent work opportunities in the region.

56. Leaders **agreed** to convene a Regional Aviation Ministers Meeting in 2020 to consider and discuss aviation-specific matters of importance to the region, in particular aviation safety and security, compliance with International Civil Aviation Organisation standards and opportunities for increased connectivity, and for the subsequent consideration of Leaders at their meeting in 2020, as appropriate.

*Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP)*

57. Leaders **welcomed** the progress on the implementation of the CROP Charter since Leaders' endorsement in 2018.

58. Leaders **agreed** to maintain the status of the Pacific Islands Development Programme as a member of CROP, for a further 6 to 12 months, subject to further verification of their standing against agreed CROP Member Criteria.

*29<sup>th</sup> Smaller Island States Leaders Meeting*

59. Leaders **endorsed**, with qualification, the *Summary of Decisions of the 29<sup>th</sup> Smaller Island States Leaders Meeting* and directed the Secretariat to institute a process for tabling the SIS Leaders' decisions at Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' Meetings.

## DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

60. Leaders **welcomed** and **confirmed** the future hosts of the Forum as follows: the Republic of Vanuatu in 2020, the Republic of Fiji in 2021 and the Republic of Kiribati in 2022.

## OTHER MATTERS

### *APEC 2021*

61. Leaders noted New Zealand's hosting of the APEC in 2021 and welcomed the invitation to Pacific Leaders to attend APEC Leaders' week.

### *One Planet Summit – Oceania*

62. Leaders **welcomed** the invitation to visit French Polynesia in April 2020, on the occasion of the official visit of the President of the French Republic, HE Emmanuel Macron, who will host the *One Planet Summit – Oceania*.

### *Candidacies*

63. Leaders **endorsed** the Republic of the Marshall Islands' candidature for the Human Rights Commission from 2020 to 2022, noting that voting will take place in October 2019.

### *Hosting of regional meetings and workshops*

64. Leaders **encouraged** CROP agencies to consider holding regional meetings and workshops in Smaller Island States such as Nauru and Tuvalu, given the improved facilities and infrastructure available to host there.

### *Pacific Skills Portal*

65. Leaders **welcomed** the update on the launching of the Pacific Skills Portal on 14 August 2019.

### *Anti-Corruption Meeting*

66. Leaders **welcomed** an update from Kiribati on preparations for the Regional Anti-Corruption Meeting, which was postponed to the first quarter of 2020, with confirmed dates to be advised.

### *Regional Health Issues*

67. Leaders **noted** a comprehensive update from the Cook Islands on this matter. Leaders acknowledged with appreciation the efforts of Pacific National Health Authorities and regional organisations, including the SPC, in supporting the delivery of better health outcomes for Pacific Peoples.

68. Leaders **noted** the issues raised by the recent Pacific Health Ministers Meeting held in Pape’ete and expressed their concern at the slow progress made on health issues in the region. Non-Communicable Diseases are the leading causes of death, disease and disability in the Pacific.

69. The critical impact of the climate crisis amplifies the challenges the region is already confronted with in the health sector. Leaders **called** for more consolidated and concerted efforts at national, regional and global levels to raise our ambition and to better support those working to improve the health of our people.

70. Recognising the centrality of the health of Pacific Peoples in the Leaders’ Vision for the Blue Pacific, the current state of crisis confronting the health of Pacific peoples, and the importance of ensuring adequate resources and a whole-of-government approach in the health sector, Leaders **agreed** that health remain on the agenda of future Pacific Islands Forums.

#### *4th Climate Action Partnership Programme*

71. Leaders **welcomed** the invitation from the Cook Islands to participate in the 4<sup>th</sup> Climate Action Partnership Programme in Rarotonga in the second quarter of 2020 on the theme “*Climate Drawdown: Banking on viable Pacific futures*”.

#### *Pacific Islands Sports Ministers Meeting*

72. Leaders **noted** the outcomes of the Pacific Islands Sports Ministers Meeting held in Apia, Samoa in July 2019 and the opportunity and contributions that sports provide to improving peoples’ health and wellbeing. Leaders **thanked** and **congratulated** Samoa for the excellent arrangements and hosting of the 2019 Pacific Games.

## **Kainaki II Declaration for Urgent Climate Change Action Now**

### ***Securing the Future of our Blue Pacific***

1. We, the Leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum, meeting in Tuvalu see first-hand the impacts and implications of the climate change crisis facing our Pacific Island Nations.
2. Right now, climate change and disasters are impacting all our countries. Our seas are rising, oceans are warming, and extreme events such as cyclones and typhoons, flooding, drought and king tides are frequently more intense, inflicting damage and destruction to our communities and ecosystems and putting the health of our peoples at risk. All around the world, people affected by disaster and climate change-induced displacement are losing their homes and livelihoods, particularly the most vulnerable atoll nations.
3. As Leaders, we reflect and acknowledge the substantial work and investment over two and half decades of climate change negotiations, commitments, and scientific advancements, all intended to avert the crisis we now face. However, we are concerned that progress within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) must keep pace with the challenges we face today and in the future, in line with the *Boe Declaration on Regional Security*.
4. We hear the voices of our youth and the most vulnerable within our societies, having a loud and resounding impact. In amplifying the alarm we have been sounding for decades, including the youth of Tuvalu who called for the preservation of their homeland and culture. We welcome the Republic of the Marshall Islands' role as co-lead on the United Nations Secretary General (UNSG) Climate Action Summit's Youth and Public Mobilisation track, including through promoting the "Kwon Gesh" Youth Climate Pledge.
5. We welcome the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which remains the authoritative scientific body on climate change and is regarded as providing governments the best available science on climate change. The *IPCC Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C* indicates that in model pathways with no or limited overshoots of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, global net anthropogenic carbon dioxide emissions decline by about 45% from 2010 levels by 2030, reaching net zero around 2050.
6. We note with grave concern and fear for our collective future that global greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise, reaching record levels; and based on current trends, without urgent action, we will exceed 1.5°C by as early as 2030 and reach 3°C or more by the end of this century.
7. We are of the conviction that the shared prosperity and security of our Blue Pacific can only safely exist if the international community pursue efforts to limit global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, as set out in the Paris Agreement. The science is non-negotiable. Urgent action by the international community to reduce greenhouse gas emissions is critical to keep us on the 1.5°C pathway.

8. Urgent action is needed to ensure our shared needs and interests, potential and survival of our Blue Pacific and this great Blue Planet.

9. It is clear that to overcome the climate change crisis facing our Pacific Island Nations, we must increase our global solidarity and align our actions with our common concerns. Any failure to act will impact not just us, but our children and all generations to come. The time to act is now.

10. The Pacific Ocean is at the heart of our Blue Pacific narrative and critical for our future. As Leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum, custodians of the world's largest ocean and carbon sink, and representatives of our Pacific peoples, we call for immediate action and not just discussion of ambition. Action must be taken in our region, and internationally, to support clean, healthy, and productive oceans, the sustainable management, use and conservation of marine resources, growth in the blue economy and address the impacts of climate change on ocean health.

### ***Our Commitment to Bold Regional Climate Change Action***

11. As Leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum, we recognise that to lead is to act and acknowledge the action being taken by all our Members, but we know more needs to be done. To secure the future of our Blue Pacific, we have pursued and must continue to pursue, bold and innovative regional solutions recognising that each of our nation's futures, as well as the actions we choose to take, are interconnected.

12. Our actions and voices must be consistent with a collective vision and we have committed to developing a regional 2050 Strategy to secure the future of the Blue Pacific. Further, the *Boe Declaration on Regional Security* recognises climate change as the region's single greatest security threat and through its expanded concept of security, we are increasing our ability to respond and manage threats to our security.

13. We have established the *Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP)* and its inclusive *Pacific Resilience Partnership (PRP)* as an integrated approach to address climate change adaptation and disaster risk management and will continue to collaborate to build regional resilience. In this spirit, we direct the *PRP Taskforce* to further elaborate the *FRDP* in line with the Paris Agreement and finalise the Monitoring & Evaluation framework by the end of 2021, with a progress update in 2020.

14. We are committed to a collective effort, including to develop international law, with the aim to ensure that once a Forum Member's maritime zones are delineated in accordance with the *1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)*, that the Member's maritime zones could not be challenged or reduced as a result of sea level rise and climate change.

15. We are taking action to protect our fisheries resources, and to conserve and restore our marine ecosystems and biodiversity. We are working to protect our ocean from harmful plastics through our *Pacific Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter 2018-2025* and call on Pacific Rim countries to join and commit to action on addressing marine pollution and marine debris.

16. As a region, we are also creating innovative regional platforms, financial instruments, and services to build our resilience and secure our future. We welcome the substantial investment and technical support provided to date, and request further financial and technical support to elaborate our emerging initiatives.

***The Blue Pacific's Calls for Urgent, Transformational Global Climate Change Action***

17. This December marks the twenty fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 25) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and is a key opportunity for countries to highlight and increase their pre-2020 ambition and action before the Paris Agreement is fully operational in 2020.

18. We firmly believe that the UNSG Climate Action Summit, the SAMOA Pathway Review, and COP 25 are global turning points to ensure meaningful, measurable and effective climate change action. As Leaders, we commit to act as one family, with mutual respect and responsibilities, to empower our people and secure a shared, bright future for our Blue Pacific. We reinforce the need for transformational change at scale, and for courageous and committed leaders prepared to urgently deliver on real, tangible outcomes.

19. We, the Leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum, call for:

- (i) As we approach the 2020 milestone, all parties to the Paris Agreement to meet or exceed their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) in order to pursue global efforts to limit global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, recognising that this is critical to the security of our Blue Pacific. For those that are not a Party to the Paris Agreement, we believe they should take similar steps to pursue efforts to limit global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels;
- (ii) All Parties to the Paris Agreement to formulate and communicate mid-century long-term low greenhouse gas emissions development strategies by 2020. This may include commitments and strategies to achieve net zero carbon by 2050, taking into account the urgency highlighted by the *IPCC Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C*, and establish the necessary policy, financing and governance mechanisms required to achieve this;
- (iii) All countries to recall the United Nations Secretary General's opening remarks at the *Pacific Islands Forum Leaders-UNSG High-level Dialogue*<sup>2</sup> in May 2019 regarding carbon pricing, fossil fuel subsidies, and just transition from fossil fuels, and invite all Parties to the Paris Agreement to reflect on these views when updating their NDCs and formulating Low Emissions Development Strategies (LEDS);
- (iv) The members of G7 and G20 to rapidly implement their commitment to phase out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies, acknowledging the priorities of the United Nations Secretary General for the upcoming Climate Action Summit;

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<sup>2</sup> The UN Secretary General's opening remarks made at the *Pacific Islands Forum Leaders-UNSG High-level Dialogue*<sup>2</sup> held at the PIF Secretariat in Suva, Fiji on 15 May 2019, can be found at <https://www.un.org/press/en/2019/sgsm19579.doc.htm>.

- (v) The international community to continue efforts towards meeting their global climate finance commitment of USD 100 billion per year by 2020 from a variety of sources in the context of meaningful mitigation actions and transparency on implementation, through bilateral, regional or global mechanisms, including the replenishment of the Green Climate Fund; and to complete work required to enable the Adaptation Fund to serve the Paris Agreement;
- (vi) The international community to immediately increase support and assistance for Pacific-led science-based initiatives intended to improve our understanding of risk and vulnerability, including through support for modelling and risk mapping capabilities, the development of methodologies for understanding, projecting and responding to climate change-related economic and infrastructure impacts, and capacity building support for evidence-based decision-making and project development;
- (vii) The international community to welcome the work of the IPCC and consider in relevant decision-making the findings of the *Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C*, the *Special Report on Climate Change and Land* and the upcoming *Special Report on Oceans and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate*;
- (viii) All parties attending COP 25 to welcome the focus on oceans, and consider developing a work programme on oceans within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change process and convene a workshop on the climate-ocean nexus in 2020;
- (ix) All countries to accelerate support for the work of the *Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts* and ensure that efforts to avert, minimise and address loss and damage are key elements of the financial support needed to meet climate change and development challenges in the Pacific region; and,
- (x) The United Nations Secretary General to urgently appoint a Special Adviser on climate change and security and the United Nations Security Council to appoint a special rapporteur to produce a regular review of global, regional and national security threats caused by climate change, in recognition that climate change is the single greatest threat to the Blue Pacific region as reaffirmed in the *Boe Declaration on Regional Security* and is a growing global security threat.

20. We call on all countries and non-state actors to join with the Blue Pacific in taking bold, decisive and transformative action to address the ever-present challenges of climate change.