



## **SMALLER ISLAND STATES THIRTEENTH SIS LEADERS' SUMMIT**

**Apia, Samoa**  
*5 August 2004*

### **JOINT STATEMENT**

The Forum's Smaller Island States (SIS) Summit was held on 5 August 2004 in Apia, Samoa. Leaders from the Cook Islands, Kiribati, Niue, and the Republic of Marshall Islands attended. Representatives of Nauru and Tuvalu were also present. The meeting was chaired by the President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands. Leaders welcomed attendance by CROP organisations and representatives of the Association of South Pacific Airlines and the Pacific Forum Line.

#### **Pacific Islands Security Issues**

2. Recognising Nauru's economic crisis and the threats this posed to its security and national stability, and recognizing also Nauru's commitment to reforms, SIS Leaders strongly supported Nauru's request for Forum assistance under the Biketawa Declaration. The SIS Leaders urged the Forum and development partners of the region to mobilize resources to urgently assist Nauru. SIS Leaders were heartened by the activities of the Forum members and the Forum Secretariat in implementing the Biketawa Declaration, recognizing that such work was fundamental to ensuring stability and good governance as the foundation for sustainable development.

#### **Fisheries**

3. The SIS Leaders, recognizing the singular importance of fisheries to their economies, agreed to pursue the issue of increasing sustainable returns from their fisheries resources including through the possible review of current regional fisheries governance arrangements.

#### **SIS Membership**

4. Leaders of the SIS requested the Secretary General to review the SIS membership criteria, including observership, with a view to enhancing the SIS process. Leaders asked the Secretary General to report back at their next meeting.

#### **Shipment of Radioactive Materials**

5. Leaders requested that the Chair of the Forum write to the shipping States reiterating Leaders' concerns about possible economic loss in a non-release situation. SIS Leaders sought an assurance that where there is a demonstrable link between the incident and economic loss, Forum countries would not be left to carry such a loss unsupported by the shipping States.

6. Leaders strongly urged that further work be undertaken on the case for a region-specific Environment Impact Assessment. Leaders agreed that the case for continued dialogue with shipping States, or for the commencement of work on possible alternative approaches, be reviewed in light of the further responses from the shipping states.

### **Air Services**

7. SIS Leaders' welcomed the opening for signature of the Pacific Islands Civil Aviation Safety and Security Treaty at the Forum, noting its importance in underpinning the work of PASO. In regard to the Pacific Islands Air Services Agreement, Leaders noted its importance in establishing a regional regulatory regime that would facilitate the development of aviation in the region.

### **Small Grant Funds**

8. Leaders of the SIS thanked donors for their targeted support through programmes addressing the special needs of SIS members and urged the donor community to consider increasing this support. The programmes cover development funds; advisory schemes; training; marketing support and scholarships.

### **USP's Small Islands Special Development Fund and Related Matters**

9. Leaders of the SIS welcomed the University of the South Pacific's establishment of Small Islands Special Development Fund and its other efforts in support of smaller member states targeted at increased participation in USP activities. The Leaders also noted with appreciation that USP was investigating the possibility of establishing new university campuses.

### **Adaptation to Climate Change**

10. Leaders acknowledged the availability of resources to assist countries in adapting to climate change and encouraged members to integrate adaptation concerns into sustainable development strategies through projects sooner rather than later.

### **Petroleum Import Issues**

11. Leaders noted that a reduction in petroleum prices is achievable through the development and implementation of national petroleum policies and that are also aligned to and underpinned by regional initiatives.

12. In this regard, SIS Leaders noted the potential benefits of collective purchasing and requested the Secretariat to conduct a study to highlight the most appropriate supply model at country level. Additionally, the study could identify the framework required for alignment of the petroleum industry for the implementation of a joint purchasing scheme for the SIS where possible.

### **Republic of the Marshall Islands Radioactive Contamination**

13. Leaders reiterated the following Forum position on the issue of Republic of the Marshall Islands radioactive contamination. SIS Leaders encouraged members to lend support to Marshall Islands when making their UNGA statements this year.

*“The Forum recognised the special circumstances pertaining to the continued presence of radioactive contaminants in Republic of the Marshall Islands, and reaffirmed the*

*existence of a special responsibility by the United States towards the people of the Marshall Islands, who had been, and continue to be adversely affected as a direct result of nuclear weapons tests conducted by the United States of America during its administration of the islands under the UN Trusteeship mandate.*

*The Forum again reiterated its call on the United States of America to live up to its full obligations on the provision of adequate and fair compensation and the commitment to its responsibility for the safe resettlement of displaced populations, including the full and final restoration to economic productivity of all affected areas.”*

#### **Fourteenth SIS Leaders’ Summit**

14. SIS Leaders agreed that their 14<sup>th</sup> Summit, to be chaired by the President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, be held immediately prior the 36<sup>th</sup> Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting, with a full day being set aside for the purpose.

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