



## **PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM SECRETARIAT**

### **EIGHTEENTH SMALLER ISLAND STATES LEADERS' MEETING**

**Cairns, Australia**

*4 August 2009*

#### **SUMMARY OF DECISIONS**

The Pacific Islands Forum Smaller Island States (SIS) Leaders' Meeting was held on the 4 August 2009 in Cairns, Australia and was attended by Leaders from the Cook Islands, Nauru, Niue, the Republic of the Marshall Islands and Tuvalu. Palau's Vice-President and the Special Envoy of the Beretitenti of Kiribati also participated at the meeting. Tokelau was represented by the Ulu o Tokelau as an Observer. The meeting was chaired by the Premier of Niue, Hon Toke Talagi who on behalf of the Leaders welcomed Executive Heads and representatives of CROP organizations.

#### **(i) Update on the SIS Unit**

2. The Leaders noted that the SIS Unit is now in its third year of operation and that the Unit's primary role is to coordinate and support the implementation of regional initiatives and programmes outlined in the Pacific Plan of particular interest to SIS and SIS Leaders' decisions.

3. The Leaders highlighted the importance of the Secretariat providing adequate resources to the SIS Unit to ensure its continued support to the SIS members.

4. The Leaders acknowledged and welcomed the recognition given by the Forum Officials Committee (FOC) in approving adequate resources from the Secretariat's 2010 budget and work programme to the SIS Unit in the implementation of its activities.

**(ii) Update on the Temporary Movement of Natural Persons (TMNP) and other TMNP Related Developments**

5. The Leaders noted the update on recent developments on the Temporary Movement of Natural Persons (TMNP) initiatives, as well as parallel developments on the TMNP-related activities in the Pacific region.

6. The Leaders noted issues regarding the term of the NZ RSE Scheme and considered the suggestion to extend the term of employment of seasonal workers in New Zealand to increase the economic benefits from the scheme.

7. The Leaders endorsed the suggestion to consider the expansion of the NZ RSE scheme to include other sectors which could utilize skilled labour from Forum Island Countries.

8. The Leaders directed the Trade officials and the Secretariat to ensure labour mobility objectives of the Pacific Island Countries are achieved through PACER plus, PICTA, EPA and other trade agreements. In order to build national capacity for production and employment, the new trading arrangements should also accompany adequate and additional resources for human resource development and employment generation.

**(iii) Bulk Procurement Initiatives**

9. The Leaders noted the progress made to date in implementing the Pacific Plan's Bulk Procurement of Petroleum Initiative, particularly the launch of the first phase of the Pacific Petroleum Project.

10. The Leaders further noted that the MOU on the bulk procurement initiative was of critical importance and encouraged those members who had not signed to do so. With more signatories, members would benefit from cost-effective procurement and storage of petroleum across member countries.

**(iv) Shipping Services**

11. The Leaders noted and welcomed the establishment of a shipping service to support the smaller island states of Kiribati, Nauru and Tuvalu.

12. The Leaders further considered progress on work to assess the possibilities of establishing feeder shipping service routes between Samoa, Tokelau, Cook Islands, Niue, Tonga and American Samoa, and other interested states and territories. It was noted that this work will be conducted over the remainder of 2009.

13. The Leaders acknowledged that the establishment of such feeder services would enhance and stimulate economic growth and trade amongst the Forum Island Countries, in particular increasing export volumes.

14. The Leaders also discussed the possibility of members pooling resources to purchase a vessel to provide such services. In this respect, the importance of the regional commodity mapping exercise currently being conducted by SPC should provide options for the long-term viability of either nationally owned shipping services or commercial interests that meet this need.

15. The Leaders directed the SPC and the Secretariat to coordinate a meeting of regional exporters and importers to facilitate a coordinated and cost effective approach to strengthening shipping services.

**(v) Update on the Implementation of the 2008 Niue Declaration on Climate Change.**

16. The Leaders agreed that it was timely and extremely important for SIS Leaders to take a firm position on issues they should advocate at the Copenhagen meeting in December 2009.

17. The Leaders endorsed the following statement as their position in the lead up to Copenhagen and strongly supported its inclusion into the 2009 Forum Leaders Communiqué;

*Leaders reiterated their deep concern of the serious impacts and growing threat posed by climate change to the economic, social, cultural and environmental well-being and security of the Forum Island Countries as espoused in the 2008 Niue Declaration on Climate Change.*

*Leaders reaffirmed their commitment to the ongoing development and implementation of Pacific-tailored approaches to support national adaptation, mitigation and relocation measures to combat and respond to the adverse effects of climate change. In this respect, they emphasised the utmost urgency in securing support for the efforts of Pacific Island countries in addressing their respective and unique adaptation needs.*

*Noting the broad range of actions that have been launched to address the impacts of climate change, the Leaders called on regional and international partners to significantly increase and intensify assistance to the Forum island countries. Such assistance would enable countries to take action on adaptation in sectors that are already facing developmental challenges, including food, energy and water security, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, and health and also the capacity to deal with extreme climatic events such as tropical cyclones, flooding and droughts, while simultaneously delivering on sustainable development goals. Central to this, Leaders stressed the importance for sustained, predictable and expedited funding from both partners and global sources.*

*Leaders are committed to enhancing the resilience of ecological systems from the impacts of climate change and adopting ecosystem-based adaptation and community-based management approaches to the effects of climate change. This includes supporting food security and biodiversity conservation in Forum island countries through existing and new initiatives such as the Coral Triangle, Micronesian Challenge and Phoenix Island Protected Area initiatives.*

*Leaders welcomed the June 2009 United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/63/L.8/rev.1 on climate change in which Pacific Small Island Developing States played a leading role and its possible security implications.*

*Leaders reiterated the urgent need for all countries to cooperate and agree to a comprehensive and effective post-2012 framework at Copenhagen, noting that the Forum island countries, through the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), have advocated consistently for global emissions to be reduced by 85% from 1990 levels by 2050, and for developed countries as a group to commit to emission reductions*

*of 45% from 1990 levels by 2020, thereby seeking to limit temperature increases to below 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.*

*Leaders further agreed for inclusion in a post-2012 arrangement of concrete and practical solutions for Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) to respond to the growing dangers of climate change and, in particular to safeguard their security and sustainable development.*

*Recognizing the importance of effective regional coordination in addressing mitigation and adaptation, and recalling the Pacific Islands Framework for Action on Climate Change adopted by Forum Leaders in 2005, Leaders called for the active assistance of both national and regional stakeholders, with the support of development partners, towards facilitating stronger regional coordination through mechanisms such as the Pacific Climate Change Roundtable.*

*Leaders called on the international community to facilitate and promote the development, transfer and dissemination of appropriate technologies and practices to address climate change, to Small Island Developing States*

18. The Leaders noted the progress to date on the implementation of activities in SIS members in accordance with the Niue Declaration on Climate Change. These included progress in areas related to renewable energy, sustainable financing for climate change and regional meteorological services.

19. The Leaders also noted the link between climate change and the fuel and food crisis where, for SIS, the impact of climate change makes it more difficult to respond to both the impacts of the global economic crisis and strengthen sustained economic growth and resilience in the Pacific.

20. The Leaders expressed their gratitude to the efforts of the Pacific Island missions in New York for leading the agreed UN Resolution A/63/L.8/rev.1 which resulted in the call for an assessment of the possible security implications of climate change.

**(vi) Renewable Energy – Update on implementation of the Pacific Energy Minister’s Meeting (PEMM) Communiqué**

21. The Leaders noted the progress to date in addressing Pacific energy needs and supported the positive outcomes from the REM and PEMM 2009 Meetings in particular the progress made in engaging a wide range of donor partners and stakeholders.

22. The Leaders further noted and supported the outcomes from the PEMM Meeting as outlined in their 2009 Communiqué in particular the need to further strengthen regional and donor coordination, cooperation and delivery of energy services through one energy agency and through one programme, that will contribute to the development of a stronger energy sector and improved service.

**(vii) Sub-Regional Financing Mechanism**

23. The Leaders noted the findings of the study on the sub-regional financing facility initiative and noted two key constraints of development financing; that development funding mechanisms and facilities were either inaccessible or, countries were unaware of their availability.

24. The Leaders further noted the need to build capacity of national financing institutions to access development funding, to strengthen the capacity of financial institutions, and noted the limited support from development partners to invest funding that enables financial institutions to lend. The Leaders directed the Secretariat to assist SIS members in identifying relevant development funding facilities and to facilitate access to such facilities.

**(viii) Other Matters**

**The Majuro Declaration on Climate Change**

25. The Leaders noted the presentation made by the President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands on the *The Majuro Declaration on Climate Change* endorsed by the Heads of State of the Northern Pacific Island Countries, of the Republic of Palau, Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands at the 9<sup>th</sup> Micronesian Presidents’ Summit.

26. The Leaders noted the Majuro Declaration on Climate Change and agreed to endorse it.

### **SIS Chair Arrangements**

27. The Leaders agreed to formalize the appointment of the Chair through alphabetical rotation, however endorsed that in the instance that an SIS hosts the Forum Leaders meeting, the host country would also Chair the SIS Leaders meeting.

28. The Leaders also agreed that the appointment of the Chair for the SIS Officials meeting will align with the appointment of the Chair for the SIS Leaders meeting.

### **Vulnerability and Building Resilience**

29. In recognition of the theme of this year's Forum Leaders Meeting, the Leaders discussed the impacts of the global economic crisis (GEC) and the need to build sustained economic resilience in the region and accelerate progress towards achieving the MDG's.

30. In this regard, the SIS are fully cognizant of the impacts of the global economical crisis that are affecting them, which are exacerbated by the impacts of climate change. To this end, and to avoid economic and social catastrophe, Leaders seek the support of development partners to ensure they receive practical, tailor made assistance, including direct budget support, in line with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, Accra Agenda for Action and the Pacific Principles of Aid Effectiveness.

31. While acknowledging that traditional financial institutions have received additional funding as a result of the GEC, SIS Leaders emphasized the need to be in a position to fully access these resources.