FOURTEENTH SOUTH PACIFIC FORUM

CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA

29-30 AUGUST 1983

SUMMARY RECORD
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agenda Item 1</th>
<th>Official Opening and Election of Chairman</th>
<th>1 - 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agenda Item 2</td>
<td>Adoption of Agenda and Working Procedures: Appointment of Drafting Committee and Press Spokesman</td>
<td>6 - 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agenda Item 3</td>
<td>Decolonisation</td>
<td>8 - 32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agenda Item 4</td>
<td>Regional Nuclear Matters</td>
<td>33 - 92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Nuclear Testing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Nuclear Waste Disposal &amp; Storage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iv) Proposal by Australia for Establishment of Nuclear Free Zone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agenda Item 5</td>
<td>Single Regional Organisation</td>
<td>93 - 112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agenda Item 6</td>
<td>Trade and Industry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Regional Committee on Trade</td>
<td></td>
<td>113 - 119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Closer Economic Co-operation Among Forum Island Countries</td>
<td></td>
<td>120 - 125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agenda Item 7</td>
<td>Transport and Communications</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Shipping</td>
<td></td>
<td>126 - 166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Civil Aviation</td>
<td></td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) Telecommunications</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Proposed South Pacific Tele-communications</td>
<td></td>
<td>168 - 169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Satellite Options</td>
<td></td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agenda Item 8</td>
<td>Aid Co-ordination</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Relations with Regional and International Organisations</td>
<td></td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Disaster Co-ordination</td>
<td></td>
<td>172 - 177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) Pacific Islands Fund</td>
<td></td>
<td>178 - 185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agenda Item 9</td>
<td>Reports</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) SPEC Committee</td>
<td></td>
<td>186 - 187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Director of SPEC</td>
<td></td>
<td>188 - 189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Director of Forum Fisheries Agency</td>
<td></td>
<td>190 - 195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Vice-Chancellor of the University of the South Pacific</td>
<td></td>
<td>196 - 197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Regional Identity Card</td>
<td></td>
<td>198 - 203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agenda Item</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>1983 SPBC Budget</td>
<td>204 - 205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Other Business</td>
<td>206 - 207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Date and Venue for Next Forum Meeting</td>
<td>208 - 218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Adoption of Forum Record and Communiqué</td>
<td>219 - 221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annexes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>List of Participants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>Agenda</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>Forum Communiqué</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FOURTEENTH SOUTH PACIFIC FORUM

CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA

29-30 AUGUST 1983

SUMMARY RECORD


AGENDA ITEM 1 – OFFICIAL OPENING AND ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

2. The Chairman of the Thirteenth South Pacific Forum, the Right Honourable R.D. Muldoon, Prime Minister of New Zealand, called the meeting to order and welcomed Leaders to the Fourteenth South Pacific Forum. He expressed appreciation on behalf of all delegations to the Australian Government for hosting the Forum and for the excellent arrangements which had been made. The Prime Minister considered the South Pacific Forum to be one of the most productive of the international gatherings which he attended. It did not follow the UN system of resolutions and votes but provided an opportunity for Leaders to talk to each other, to exchange views on issues of mutual importance, and to come together as one.

3. The Prime Minister of New Zealand then called for nominations for the chairmanship of the Fourteenth South Pacific Forum. On the nomination of the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, seconded by the Prime Minister of Tuvalu, the Prime Minister of Australia, the Honourable R.J.L. Hawke, A.C., M.P., was unanimously elected as Chairman. Following his election the Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs the Honourable Bill Hayden M.P. assumed the Australian seat.
4. The Prime Minister of Australia, in accepting the Chairmanship, thanked the Leaders for the honour accorded to him. The new Australian Government appreciated the opportunity of hosting a Forum meeting so soon after it took office as it attached very great significance to meetings of the Forum. Australia saw its relations with South Pacific countries as of fundamental importance to its foreign policy and the Chairman assured Leaders that his government stood ready not just in word but in action, to assist in achieving the region's goals. As an example, the Chairman referred to assistance, which his Government would announce later that day in the provision of patrol boats for surveillance within Pacific countries' Exclusive Economic Zones.

5. The Chairman remarked that he was aware of the particular mode of conducting Forum meetings and that he would be seeking to foster informal discussion, giving all Leaders the opportunity to express their points of view. He supported the Prime Minister of New Zealand in his belief that more could be achieved through such discussions than through a United Nations style of approach.

AGENDA ITEM 2 - ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND WORKING PROCEDURES, APPOINTMENT OF DRAFTING COMMITTEE AND PRESS SPOKESMAN

6. The agenda as adopted appears as Annex 2. Working procedures were agreed upon and a Drafting Committee consisting of officials from Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea was appointed. The Drafting Committee was open to all other delegations.

7. The Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, the Right Honourable Michael Somare, was appointed Press Spokesman for the Forum.

AGENDA ITEM 3 - DECOLONISATION

8. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia opened the discussion on this Agenda Item by stating his Government's strong commitment to the independence of New Caledonia. This commitment had been stated publicly on numerous occasions and conveyed to the President of France by the Australian Prime Minister. Australia had gained the impression that the present French Government was committed to trying to resolve the New Caledonia situation in accordance with the legitimate aspirations of the
Kanak people. The Round Table discussions at Nainville Les Roches in July had addressed a number of specific points of concern to the Independence Front. Included among these points were the Kanaks' inherent and active right to independence and the need to achieve that right through the process of self-determination. The rights of other groups in New Caledonia had, in turn, been recognised by the Kanak people.

9. The Minister said that it was widely recognised that there were substantial problems to be overcome in the achievement of independence. The best interests of the Melanesian people might not be served by an immediate and total grant of independence. There were too few adequately trained Melanesians to run the country, which was a reflection on the colonial administration, and therefore immediate independence could take authority out of the hands of the Kanak people completely. France had so far acted as a restraining influence on the colonists. Furthermore, too rapid a move could lead to instability, insecurity and possibly to armed conflict. There was evidence that substantial caches of arms had been laid up in New Caledonia and the Australian Government was apprehensive that a rather nasty situation could arise if matters got out of hand.

10. Australia acknowledged the problems and at the same time gave credit to the French authorities for their willingness to move forward. France should be given the benefit of the doubt at this stage and encouraged to continue along the pathway to independence as quickly as the situation allowed. Australia was not suggesting that pressure on France to follow this path should be eased in any way, but on the other hand did not believe that inscription of New Caledonia on the United Nations list of Non Self-Governing Territories would be helpful at this stage. Such a move should only be undertaken after the ground had been well prepared as failure would mean the loss of a potential area of leverage. Australia preferred to keep this leverage in reserve.

11. The Minister concluded by suggesting a number of points for inclusion in any statement which the Forum might wish to issue on this subject: that colonialism was unacceptable; that the efforts of the French Government to make progress towards independence in New Caledonia should be recognised and encouraged; that the rights of the Kanak people must be respected, as well as those of other groups whose rights in turn have been recognised by the Kanaks; that an early date for independence for New Caledonia should be established; that modification was required to the present linguistic and cultural programmes which heavily over-emphasised French; that a rapid program of training Melanesians to take up the reins of government was required; and, finally, that land reform deserved the highest priority.
12. The Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea supported the concept of decolonisation. He recognised that the Kanak population of New Caledonia was in the minority and therefore care was needed in moves towards independence if violence was to be avoided. The French Government apparently recognised the need for change but the timing was very important. The New Caledonia situation had occurred elsewhere, where citizens of the colonial power had tried to prevent progress towards independence. This had not happened in Papua New Guinea's case but appeared possible in New Caledonia where there was a substantial body of French people with vested interests. This situation had certainly happened in other French colonies. Therefore, he reemphasised, care was needed in pushing towards the independence which was the Kanak people's right.

13. The Prime Minister of Solomon Islands said that while he appreciated the Australian Government position, he found it a little lame. He could support such a position if he was clearer on when the New Caledonia case might be brought before the Committee of Twenty-Four. The Solomon Islands Government's policy was to support the right to self-determination of colonised people and therefore its support for the Kanak people was clear and firm. They should receive independence quickly and bringing their case to the Committee of Twenty-Four should assist that objective. There was a risk in delaying independence any further as continued colonialism contributed to instability in the international arena. He contrasted the transfer of power practised by Australia, the United Kingdom and New Zealand with that evident from the history of French colonialism. The French had assimilated local cultures and produced hybrid situations. Moreover, the presence of numerous Francophone colonists was significant, particularly when there was evidence of arms caches and even a mercenary presence.

14. The Prime Minister suggested that the Forum seriously consider placing the question of New Caledonia before the Committee of Twenty-Four. He felt this would lessen the possibility of an explosive situation developing. In principle the Solomon Islands agreed with the communique from the Round Table talks, but found it lacking in clarity - consideration in the United Nations could provide this clarity. Certainly, the main emphasis must be on support for independence for New Caledonia and the right to self-determination of colonised peoples.
15. The Prime Minister of Vanuatu said that it was not only in the interests of France and the inhabitants of New Caledonia that that country should achieve independence peacefully, but it was also in the interests of the Forum countries and the region as a whole. It was with this in mind that the two preceding Forums had tried to encourage the French Government to carry out its responsibilities as a colonial power, and in particular, to resolve the present explosive situation and bring New Caledonia to independence peacefully. He hoped that the Forum would continue this role as the Government of France now recognised the Forum's legitimate involvement in the question.

16. A review of developments in the last three years showed that some reforms had been undertaken. It was a matter for the Kanaks to evaluate their success. However, Vanuatu was a near neighbour and it had the impression from political leaders in New Caledonia that they were not totally satisfied with progress. The reforms had been socially and culturally biased, and there had been inadequate administrative decentralisation. New Caledonian leaders sought an early transfer of political and administrative power from Paris to Noumea. The declaration arising out of the Round Table discussions was a declaration of intent and was not even clear, whereas what was required as a minimum was a transitional statute containing a definite calendar and a fixed date for independence. A static autonomy was not to be countenanced.

17. The Prime Minister drew the Forum's attention to the historical developments which had produced in New Caledonia a situation where the indigenous people were out-numbered by the migrant population. That demographic fact, a by-product of French colonialism, was very significant in relation to the decolonisation of the country. France's primary responsibility was to promote the well-being of the colonised people and involve them in the institutions of government. It was therefore especially important that the French Government had finally come to recognise the legitimacy of the Kanak people. It could not escape its responsibility by simply using as an excuse a demographic situation of its own making. All reforms and other steps taken by France must be viewed in this context. It had to be borne in mind that most other French colonies did not achieve independence peacefully; Vanuatu would not wish to see New Caledonia become another Algeria.

18. The Prime Minister proposed a number of points for inclusion in an appropriate resolution, as follows:
1) Forum should declare that New Caledonia should become independent in accordance with the expressed wishes of the colonized people in that colony;

2) Forum should urge the French socialist government to take up her responsibility in guaranteeing that the achievement of New Caledonia's independence must be peaceful;

3) Forum should urge all the political and community groups in New Caledonia to work closely together and with the French government towards the achievement of independence by peaceful means;

4) Forum should recognize that New Caledonia is a colony;

5) Forum should recognize the legitimacy of the Kanak people of New Caledonia as having an inherent and active right to self-determination and independence;

6) Forum should urge the French Government to immediately transfer more political and administrative powers to appropriate authorities in New Caledonia, especially full control of the internal affairs of the colony including the competence to participate in the electoral reforms and constitutional development processes;

7) Forum should declare that the setting up of an internal autonomy statute by the French Government in New Caledonia must be transitional and foreseeing a precise calendar and a fixed date for independence;

8) Forum should decide to send a mission to New Caledonia to observe developments to date; and

9) Forum should decide to consider the reinscription of New Caledonia on the United Nations list of non-self governing territories at its fifteenth (15th) session.
19. The President of Nauru agreed with those who supported independence for New Caledonia. He felt that the Forum might assist, in response to requests from New Caledonian political leaders, in two ways. Firstly, while Nauru was not a member of the United Nations it recognised the possible value of inscription on the United Nations list. If, as suggested by the Australian Minister, steps to inscribe New Caledonia on the United Nations list could run the risk of failure, perhaps Australia and other Forum countries in the United Nations could canvass support to avoid that possibility. It was clear that the New Caledonian people attached great importance to inscription and the Forum should assist their cause. Secondly, Nauru recognised that the indigenous people were a minority in New Caledonia. The President drew attention to one suggestion that had been made, that in the initial plebiscite on political status only the indigenous people should participate. Following the result of that plebiscite measures to protect the interests of other groups in the country could be instituted. The President concluded by reaffirming Nauru's support for independence as soon as possible.

20. The Prime Minister of New Zealand considered that central and fundamental to the whole question was the matter of a constitution for New Caledonia which properly recognised the rights of all people who would become citizens of the country. He did not believe that the Independence Front leaders in New Caledonia had a clear picture of what kind of constitution could be acceptable to them. They seemed to be thinking of an independent New Caledonia governed by the Kanak people with an undefined status being granted to non-Melanesian citizens. He doubted that the French or Forum countries would find such an approach appealing. If other minorities were in total greater than the Kanak population, this fact had to be faced. It undoubtedly posed a major problem on the road to independence. It was not, however, a satisfactory answer to say that the other groups in the country should have a lesser political status than the Kanak people. Perhaps there were ways to resolve the problem which needed consideration, such as the creation of electorates that would provide appropriate balance and give proper weight to the views of the various groups in the country. However, the Prime Minister doubted that the Forum would wish to interfere in the affairs of the future state of New Caledonia to the extent of trying to prescribe what New Caledonia should look like after independence. Such an approach would set an unfortunate precedent which would not ultimately benefit the region or the Forum.
21. The New Zealand Government believed that France was prepared to see New Caledonia become independent before too long. There was no reason why the Forum should not continue to press France to grant independence to New Caledonia. Indeed he would go further and support independence for French Polynesia before too long. However, at the same time the Forum should avoid laying down an absolute principle that colonial situations were bad _per se_. There were other colonial situations in the region, such as those of Wallis and Futuna and American Samoa, where the people might prefer not to pursue independence. The Prime Minister concluded that there was no difference of opinion among Forum countries on the desirability of independence for New Caledonia; it was more a question of approach. He believed that bringing it before the Committee of Twenty-Four would set back progress towards independence. France would take little notice of such a move, but it would divert attention away from progress in the territory into another forum. In his view it would be better to continue to emphasise to the French that the people of New Caledonia wanted independence and that the Forum was prepared to help in any way it could.

22. The President of Kiribati recalled that at the Rotorua Forum the consensus of opinion had been that France was moving towards the granting of independence to New Caledonia, but that this movement should be kept under review by the Forum. It was his impression that France was genuine in its intentions. If this was so, for the Forum to take a harder position might create a backlash against the interests of New Caledonian people. The Forum should continue to encourage French efforts and avoid steps that might prejudice progress.

23. The Prime Minister of Cook Islands, while taking note of the suggestions regarding the United Nations consideration of the question, believed that New Caledonia was a Pacific issue and one which the Forum should continue to address. In analysing the proposed resolution put forward by the Prime Minister of Vanuatu, he shared the view on the need for caution as to how far the Forum should go in proposing specific courses of action. The Cook Islands' own experience suggested that there may be arrangements other than full independence which would be viable and of some relevance to the situation. He referred to recent contacts with the Government in French Polynesia which suggested that they would be considering such options. It was up to the Kanak people to choose their own course and if they chose independence France should respond positively. He also shared with other speakers doubts about distinguishing between the 'colonised' people of New Caledonia and other groups in that country which considered themselves citizens. He referred to the situation in Fiji where there were several ethnic groups and yet a workable constitution had been established to allow those groups to operate side by side within a democratic political system. Given this example, he felt that New Caledonia could also achieve such a constitution.
24. The Prime Minister generally supported the other points put forward in the proposed resolution. In regard to inscription on the United Nations list, he noted that the resolution was not proposing action at this stage. This should permit continued dialogue but at the same time remind France that if reasonable progress was not made quickly the Forum would take other action. There was a danger in moving too soon, but an equal or greater danger in not moving soon enough, the Prime Minister concluded.

25. The Prime Minister of Fiji recalled that the Forum's position had evolved from the Eleventh South Pacific Forum in Vanuatu in 1981, which decided to send a mission to Paris to discuss the question with the French President. He drew the Forum's attention to the terms of reference of that mission and noted that at the Rotorua Forum he had reported on the outcome. The Rotorua Forum had then adopted a clear resolution on the question reflecting the Forum's views that France was making progress towards self-determination in New Caledonia. That being the case, he considered that the review of the present situation provided by the Australian Foreign Minister was a correct one and one which he endorsed.

26. The Prime Minister also drew attention to the declaration resulting from the Round Table discussions in July, which he believed reflected the views of the pro-independence leaders in New Caledonia that some progress was being made. In view of this background, Fiji was unable to support all that had been said on further moves that the Forum might make. In particular Fiji could not support the view that only the Kanak people should receive recognition or decide the political future of New Caledonia. In view of Fiji's own experience as a multi-ethnic country with a non-racial constitution, the Fiji Government would take the view that a selective or restrictive approach would not be the correct path to follow.

27. The Prime Minister of Solomon Islands recognised that the Round Table declaration identified the need for both France and the New Caledonian people to work out positive steps towards self-determination. France had co-operated well so far, but the independence groups in New Caledonia had no guarantee that this would continue. Those groups sought a definite time-table for independence in September 1984 and inscription of New Caledonia on the United Nations List as an insurance. He still believed that, despite the complexities of the problem, the sooner the matter was referred to the United Nations the better. As for the future constitution of New Caledonia, he agreed that this was a matter for the people of the territory to work out. The Prime Minister concluded by agreeing with aspects of the situation as presented by the Australian Minister, but stated that Solomon Islands would continue to advocate reinscription of New Caledonia on the United Nations list.
28. The Prime Minister of Vanuatu said that while his country had no hesitation in supporting reinscription, if the majority in the Forum was hesitant to accept this approach, it would be helpful to focus on ways of maintaining pressure on the French Government to make progress towards independence for New Caledonia. Discussion about constitutional models for the country was premature at this stage. He sought the views of other Forum members on ways of maintaining pressure on the French Government, in order that the Forum could assist the independence groups in New Caledonia to achieve their objectives.

29. The Prime Minister of Western Samoa recognised the fundamental rights of the people of New Caledonia to become independent. He had had contact with a number of political leaders from New Caledonia and received information from there and from the French Government. Western Samoa supported the United Nations emphasis on independence for colonial countries which wished to achieve that status. The Forum had taken positions in recent years which Western Samoa supported and in particular the need for the French Government to take immediate steps to advance New Caledonia's independence without prejudicing the stability of the country. This, in the Prime Minister's view, required a degree of caution, bearing in mind that all people in New Caledonia had a right to be involved in the political process.

30. In summing up the Chairman considered that despite the wide range of opinions raised by the Heads of Government under this item there appeared to be sufficient complementarity in the arguments to allow the Forum to reach a united position. He suggested the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia discuss the matter with other delegations with a view to drafting a common position for consideration by the Forum.

31. During discussions of the text presented to the meeting, the Chairman explained that he would convey it to the French Government, including the proposal that the French Government consider inviting a Forum mission to visit New Caledonia. If the response was positive, arrangements for the mission would be finalised through the Director of SPEC.

32. The Forum then adopted the following resolution:

Reconfirming its belief that the principles of self-determination and independence apply to non-self-governing Pacific territories;

Recognizing that a colonial situation exists in New Caledonia;
Acknowledging the continued efforts of the Kanak people in New Caledonia towards the attainment of self-determination and independence by peaceful means;

Taking note of progress which has been made by the French Government in relation to political evolution in New Caledonia;

Recognizing the legitimacy of the Kanak people of New Caledonia having an inherent and active right to self-determination and independence;

Welcoming the recognition by the Kanak representatives at the round table talks of the rights of other groups resident in the territory to participate in an act of self-determination;

 Declares support for independence in New Caledonia determined in accordance with the expressed wishes of its people;

Welcomes as a concrete step towards independence the French Government's intention to move to an act of self-determination in which the option of independence is included;

Urges the French Government to continue to carry out its responsibility in guaranteeing that New Caledonia's independence be achieved in a peaceful manner;

Further urges all the political and community groups in New Caledonia to work closely together and with the French Government towards the achievement of independence by peaceful means;

Requests the French Government, in drawing up the proposed new statute of autonomy, to transfer, at an early date, more political and administrative powers to appropriate authorities in New Caledonia, especially full control of the internal affairs of the colony;

 Declares that the establishment by the French Government of the internal autonomy statute should be transitional and include a precise calendar leading to independence;
12.

Urges the French Government, in conducting any act of self-determination to take account of the desirability of excluding from the franchise those who are short term or non-permanent residents in New Caledonia;

Proposes that the French Government consider inviting a representative Forum mission to visit New Caledonia to observe developments;

Decides to review the situation in New Caledonia at its 15th meeting and in light of this, to consider the desirability of reinscription of New Caledonia on the United Nations list of non-self-governing territories.

AGENDA ITEM 4 - REGIONAL NUCLEAR MATTERS

33. The Chairman invited the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia to lead discussion on sub-item (i) Nuclear Testing.

34. The Minister drew attention, first, to the invitation which a number of countries in the region had received from the French Government to visit the nuclear testing site at Mururoa. This invitation had resulted from the New Zealand Prime Minister's discussions with the French President. Australia was concerned that if the invitation was accepted and it was assessed that there were no environmental problems of an immediate nature, though there might well be a number of long term environmental concerns, some would assume that that was the end of the matter. In Australia's view the major point of concern was that nuclear testing was associated with the arms race, and the international instability resulting from it. Australia strongly supported halting the arms race and negotiating eventual arms reductions. Its opposition to testing was therefore founded on considerations that were wider than environmental issues alone. The Australian Government was initially concerned at some of the restrictions apparently being placed on any assessment team. However, in response to firm representations, these restrictions were being lifted, at least to some extent. Australia faced something of a dilemma in that a rejection of the invitation could attract criticism as to how genuine Australia's opposition to nuclear testing was, and therefore Australia would be interested in the views of Forum countries. If the Forum decided against the invitation Australia would not participate.
35. The Prime Minister of New Zealand said that he had received an invitation from the French President in May 1983 for a New Zealand team to visit the test site. As New Zealand had been pressing for access for a long time this was a welcome development. He considered that the views held by some anti-nuclear protesters, that it was unacceptable for a New Zealand team to visit Mururoa, were dishonest. There was a need to try to ascertain the dangers and the problems resulting from nuclear testing, in both the short and long term, and the New Zealand Government considered that an independent assessment was required. The New Zealand authorities had received assurances from the French Government that the terms being sought by New Zealand regarding a visit to Mururoa would be met. He indicated that, while New Zealand was interested in the Forum's views, New Zealand had decided that it would participate. New Zealand intended to make its findings public. Although conclusive findings might not be obtained, it would be an advance on the past. The New Zealand attitude would remain that neither France, nor any other country should undertake nuclear testing in the South Pacific.

36. The Prime Minister of Vanuatu stated that the French had also extended an invitation to the Vanuatu Government to visit Mururoa. It was Vanuatu's view that representatives of regional Governments should not visit the test site. If any country should decide to participate in the visit to Mururoa this decision should be seen as one by an independent state, rather than by a member of the Forum. There was a real need for this issue to be discussed and considered in the Forum before individual countries accepted the invitation of France. For its part, Vanuatu was not able to accept the invitation which it viewed as being politically wrong and environmentally dangerous. Vanuatu's stand was based on moral considerations rather than scientific ones.

37. The Premier of Niue said that his Government had already advised the French Embassy in Wellington that Niue would accept the French invitation. As Niue did not have scientists to contribute to the assessment, the New Zealand Government had been asked if the New Zealand scientists could represent Niue's interests. The Government of Niue supported the New Zealand approach on this issue.

38. The President of Nauru advised that, as Nauru had no scientists to send, his Government would not be represented in any visit to Mururoa. He had no difficulty with New Zealand's approach or Australia's and would hope to receive the information that might be obtained. Perhaps it could be agreed that while all Forum members would not be able to send representatives to Mururoa, the Forum could perhaps gain the benefit of the specialist advice of those scientists who did go.
39. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Tonga observed that invitations had been extended on a bilateral basis, and no invitation had been extended to the Forum as an organisation to be represented on any visit. Rather, it was for each Government to reply as it saw fit. The Minister wondered whether it was necessary to take a Forum position.

40. The Chairman agreed that invitations had been extended bilaterally. It would be useful, nevertheless, to hear the views of Forum members. Neither Australia nor New Zealand considered that in accepting the invitation they would be representing the Forum. Australia would be happy to share any information gained through a scientific visit with its Forum neighbours.

41. The Australian Minister noted that within the Forum there were only a few countries with staff trained in nuclear scientific matters. In seeking the Forum's views Australia had sought to avoid any public misunderstanding that if Australia accepted, it would somehow be representing the Forum and that the Forum would endorse the outcome. Australia had therefore considered a responsible approach to raise the matter to gauge the feelings of Forum members.

42. The Prime Minister of Fiji said that his Government was invited to participate in the mission to Mururoa. He said that Fiji had canvassed the views of Forum countries on this. In doing so Fiji had mentioned that the Government viewed nuclear testing as very much a regional issue and for protestations to have any effect they needed to be made on a concerted, regional basis. He said that his Government had advised the French that Fiji would not participate in the assessment due to the lack of appropriately trained personnel. It was up to the Forum whether those countries which did plan to attend would represent the others or whether they would go on a bilateral basis. He wondered whether it would have been appropriate for France to invite the Forum as a whole.

43. The Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea noted that his Government had consistently opposed nuclear testing in the Pacific. Papua New Guinea would be prepared to participate in a scientific assessment visit to the testing site at Mururoa.

44. The Prime Minister of Cook Islands said that ever since his country had achieved self-government the Cook Islands had opposed nuclear testing in the Pacific. The Cook Islands was nearest to the test site and was therefore very conscious of the dangers involved in nuclear testing and of the fears of the Tahitian people on this score. He had discussed this subject with the Vice-President of the Governing Council of French Polynesia who was also of the view that the tests should be stopped as soon as possible.
45. The Prime Minister continued that on a matter as important as this there was a need for Forum members to speak with one voice and to show a solid front. While individual protests were helpful, they would have greater strength if they came from a gathering such as the Forum. The Cook Islands Government was of the view that an inspection team should go to Mururoa atoll. Although the Cook Islands had not initially been invited to visit the test site, an invitation had been subsequently received and it was understood that the New Zealand Government's representatives would also act on behalf of the Cook Islands Government. The Cook Islands was totally opposed to nuclear testing and its acceptance of an invitation from the French did not in any way condone the actions by France. It was important to discover the situation at Mururoa and the position of the Cook Islands Government was similar to that of New Zealand.

46. The Prime Minister of Tuvalu said that his Government had been invited by the French to send a team to Mururoa atoll but had no expertise in nuclear scientific matters. Tuvalu supported New Zealand and Australian participation in order that they might obtain relevant information for the rest of the Forum members. When this information had been received, it could be examined in detail by the Forum as a whole.

47. The Prime Minister of Vanuatu stated whether a team visited Mururoa depended on each individual country. He believed that the tests would only cease when the French Government decide that they should stop, notwithstanding any representations from regional countries and despite any visit. He considered that the French Government would use an inspection visit for public relations purposes and that it would portray itself as the only nuclear power that had permitted independent experts to visit its installations. It was therefore appropriate that the Forum discuss this matter and develop a united stance. Unless the Forum could tackle basic issues such as this, past resolutions would be meaningless and the value of the Forum addressing such issues could be called in question. Previous Forum resolutions on this matter had proved ineffective since no apparent notice had been taken of the Forum's views by France.

48. The Chairman commented that no one country had a monopoly of principle and honesty. Each country was entitled to its view. There was a unanimous view that French testing should cease and no one had indicated that acceptance of the invitation meant abandonment of this opposition. A number of members had indicated their wish to accept the French invitation, either directly or through representation by others and the general view appeared to be that it was not inappropriate for members to visit the test site if they wished. If scientific representatives from Australia and New Zealand were to visit Mururoa, it would not seem to be against the view of the majority of Forum members.
49. The Prime Minister of Solomon Islands said that his Government had also been invited to send a representative to Mururoa atoll but had no scientists to send. His Government's strong opposition to nuclear pollution and testing in the Pacific was well known. There might be a risk that, if the Forum took a collective decision to attend, it might be seen as condoning testing, but Solomon Islands had no objection if individual countries wanted to go on a bilateral basis. Others might benefit from the information gained. The Prime Minister suggested that the result of a visit could be of relevance to the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme and could contribute to the need for a long-term program of environmental management.

50. The Chairman suggested that this point be taken up under sub-item 4 (iii) and that the discussion might move to sub-item (ii) on which he invited comments from the Australian Minister.

51. The Australian Foreign Minister commented that as this item was linked with 4(iv) it would be best to examine the two items together. He referred to working paper SPEC(83)F.13. The Minister noted that the Forum had in the past carried many resolutions against nuclear testing in the Pacific specifically directed at the French. A South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone had been proposed in 1975 but the language was considered by some to be too rigid and was seen as being in conflict with commitments under ANZUS. Australia as a member of ANZUS considered that, unless its allies could rely on port access there would be little enthusiasm for the treaty.

52. The Minister noted that to date the Forum's stand on nuclear issues had made little impact outside the region and that little progress had been made over the last few years. The value of the approach was being called in question. If the proposal contained on pages 12-13 of the Working Paper was adopted by the Forum it would have the effect of putting in place the principles for a Nuclear Free Zone. It would express commitment to a test ban treaty and to the concept of non-proliferation. It would reflect grave concern at the arms race, particularly the nuclear arms race. It was self-evident that a nuclear exchange could not be confined to any one part of the world. Its after-effects would be felt for a considerable time as had been the case with Hiroshima. Once a declaration was in place it would be possible for the Pacific to look at broadening the approach perhaps along the lines of the Treaty of Tlatelolco in force in South America and showed that a regional treaty was possible. If the concept of a Nuclear Free Zone were accepted it could be taken up in the United Nations and provide a rallying point for opposition to French testing. It could not be said that the proposed course of
action was unacceptable as the Forum had adopted this approach in 1975 and it had been endorsed subsequently by the United Nations in a resolution of 11 December 1975.

53. The Minister said that it was important to note what the proposal did not refer to. It was not a proposal relating to uranium mining or export. Uranium had many uses, most of which were for peaceful purposes, although it could also be used for weapons. Australia applied stringent safeguards to its uranium exports in conjunction with safeguards applied by the IAEA. Nor was the proposal one dealing with the regulation of nuclear power generation or other peaceful uses. Instead the proposal concentrated on nuclear armaments. He drew the Forum's attention to pages 12 and 13 which referred to the proposed prohibitions and which read as follows:

"The Forum Leaders declared that a Nuclear-Free Zone in the South Pacific should include prohibitions on:

The development, manufacture, acquisition, testing and/or use of nuclear weapons and nuclear explosive devices;

The receipt, storage, stationing, or control of nuclear weapons or nuclear explosive devices."

54. The Minister referred to the question of the sovereign rights of the member states and how these might be affected by the proposals outlined in the draft declaration. Under international law countries had the right to free passage on the high seas and overflight. These would not be impeded by the draft proposal. The proposal also allowed specific exceptions in relation to port access and transit to allow ANZUS commitments to be met. In that context the security needs of the South Pacific had to be safeguarded.

55. In concluding the Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs referred to possible follow-up action. He suggested that bilateral discussions could be held between the member states on the development of the nuclear free zone and that the 1984 Forum would be a suitable opportunity to review progress in the implementation of the proposal. The matter could be referred to the U.N. Secretary-General. He noted that Australia was prepared to hold bilateral discussions with Forum member states and that Australia's newly appointed Ambassador for Disarmament would be available to explain his work on disarmament to member countries.
The Minister said he hoped shortly to be able to visit other regional countries to discuss nuclear and other issues with member states. In answer to those who said that the proposed declaration did not go far enough, his reply was that it was better to achieve some advance than to aim for the stars and not get off the ground. Progress might be slow but nevertheless the implementation of the proposal would represent a substantial advance on the control of nuclear arms and testing in the region and internationally.

56. The Prime Minister of Western Samoa noted that since 1971 the South Pacific countries had voiced their objections to France about its nuclear testing program but the French had ignored their protests. In 1979 the Pacific leaders strongly objected to the United States proposal that the islands of Midway, Wake and Palmyra be used as dumping grounds for nuclear waste. Since then Japan had initiated a proposal for dumping in the north Pacific. Western Samoa may not always have been as vociferous in its individual condemnations of nuclear testing as it felt that protests could best be made on a multilateral basis. Hence it had turned to organisations such as the South Pacific Forum and the United Nations to express its views. The Australian proposal for a nuclear free zone was an advance on earlier proposals and was supported by Western Samoa, provided the disposal of nuclear waste was incorporated in the prohibition.

57. The Prime Minister concluded by referring to the proposed invitation by the French for Pacific states to visit Mururoa Atoll and said that Western Samoa believed it was the prerogative of each member state of the Forum to decide for itself whether it should accept the invitation.

58. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Tonga suggested that the draft Australian proposal should be amended slightly by including a reference to "forces" after the word "airfields" in the paragraph beginning "Uphold principles of freedom of navigation". This would reinforce the concept of sovereignty. He also referred to paragraph 13 which, he said, had strategic implications. Tonga's view was that the storage and stationing of nuclear weapons was within the sovereign rights of each country.

59. In response, the Australian Foreign Minister said that to delete the prohibitions in paragraph 13 would be incompatible with the concept of a Nuclear Free Zone. The granting of temporary exemptions for ships in transit could not be equated with the more permanent stationing or storage of nuclear weapons. For the security of the region, ships were required to travel between countries, but if storage of nuclear weapons by member countries were permitted, there could be no nuclear weapons free South Pacific.
60. The Foreign Minister of Tonga responded that, if no nuclear weapons were stationed in the region, it would be logical to assume that the final option for ANZUS members could only be to encourage the use of ICBMs, there being no lesser nuclear response available. It therefore appeared that Pacific countries would be inviting the USSR and USA to effect such an exchange over their heads in defence of their freedom. This would be to mortgage the future to the nuclear option. He noted that there was a growing discrepancy between the conventional forces available to Pacific countries and those possessed by the USSR. Unless ANZUS was prepared to make a commitment to raise the level of conventional forces existing conventional responses were so limited that ANZUS could be forced to take up the nuclear option before the USSR.

61. In response, the Australian Foreign Minister commented that while he appreciated the point he queried the extent to which the Pacific should be drawn into strategic nuclear weaponry developments. Such a move could convert an area presently outside the nuclear target zone into a nuclear target. Indeed once nuclear weapons began to arrive in the region, competition in this field would be encouraged. In this scenario, the proposal for a nuclear weapons free Pacific became very important. There would only be an exchange of nuclear weaponry if the superpowers were in major conflict between themselves and both superpowers presently have the capability for the deployment of nuclear weaponry in the Pacific via submarines. At that level, therefore, immunisation of the Pacific from nuclear weaponry could have a beneficial effect.

62. At a lower level, in the ANZUS context, the Australian Government did not see Australia or the Pacific Islands as a realistic target for assault. There was, however, the danger of horizontal proliferation and the acquisition of nuclear weaponry by an increasing number of countries. It would be desirable to conclude treaties to prevent such proliferation. At an even lower level conventional force attacks on the South Pacific were also most unlikely given the military and industrial requirements to mount them. Thus any prospects of a country in the region developing a nuclear capability or providing host facilities for nuclear weapons could alter the present situation radically and make the region much more vulnerable than it presently was. The declaration of a nuclear free zone therefore had great significance.

63. The Tongan Foreign Minister said that if it was not possible to amend the declaration as he had suggested he could only emphasise the sovereign right of all countries to make their own decisions regarding their own strategic perceptions. Tonga would have no objection to a nuclear weapons free Pacific, providing that the independent sovereignty of individual countries was preserved.
64. The Australian Foreign Minister noted that he would not want to see the declaration undermined. There was a need to make certain concessions towards sovereignty, for example, in the transit of shipping, but a ban on the storage or stationing of nuclear weapons was an essential part of a nuclear weapons free zone.

65. In response to a query from the Tongan Foreign Minister as to whether the commitment could be non-binding, the Chairman noted that the exercise of a nation's treaty-making power involved a certain derogation of sovereignty in order to pursue that country's own perceived interests.

66. The Prime Minister of the Cook Islands commended the Australian initiative which his Government supported. He noted that the Forum had been in support of the objective for some time but the proposed declaration would spell it out more forcefully. While differences might remain concerning specific points, the time was appropriate to pursue the concept. He noted that, should any Pacific country accept nuclear weapons on its territory, it would immediately become a nuclear target. There was therefore a real need for Forum members to conclude the agreement which would place the Forum in the vanguard of nuclear disarmament.

67. The Prime Minister of New Zealand said that his Government could not accept the statement that the declaration was a great leap forward in comparison to previous Forum discussions on nuclear issues and he would feel obliged to say so publicly. The only new element would be sending the text to the Secretary-General of the United Nations. As long as the declaration contained paragraphs upholding the principles of freedom of navigation and overflight and recognising the sovereign right of Governments to make decisions on access to their ports and airfields by the vessels and aircraft of other countries, it would be wrong to say that there was a nuclear free zone. The New Zealand Government was not prepared to do other than permit such visits in accordance with its ANZUS commitments. Thus while New Zealand could go along with the declaration it could not accept that it represented a great leap forward.

68. The President of Kiribati thought that there was no difference in opinion on nuclear dumping and nuclear testing yet every year the Forum discussed the issue to little effect. Now a declaration was proposed, it should be asked whether it would be binding on the people most concerned - the Japanese with their dumping and the French testing their devices. A new approach was sought each year and in spite of all the resolutions, he was beginning to question their value. Kiribati had attended a meeting of the London Dumping Convention (LDC), an international body which regulated nuclear dumping. The Japanese justified
horizontal proliferation and the acquisition of nuclear weaponry by an increasing number of countries. It would be desirable to conclude treaties to prevent such proliferation. At an even lower level conventional force attacks on the South Pacific were also most unlikely given the military and industrial requirements to mount them. Thus any prospects of a country in the region developing a nuclear capability or providing host facilities for nuclear weapons could alter the present situation radically and make the region much more vulnerable than it presently was. The declaration of a nuclear free zone therefore had great significance.

69. The President of Nauru supported the view put forward by his colleague from Kiribati that there was a need to assess what other countries in the world were trying to do in regard to preventing nuclear dumping and storage. He had also attended the London meeting where Australia had been an observer and New Zealand was an active member. He asked if it would be possible to co-ordinate the aims of the proposed declaration with those of the international bodies involved to strengthen or augment the Pacific's views on nuclear matters.

70. The President said that a definition was needed to cover member countries such as the Nauru, Kiribati and the Federated States of Micronesia which being to a greater or lesser extent north of the equator could be excluded under the present definition. Nauru supported the declaration. Though it was not as neat as was desirable, it was an advance on the status quo. He requested the Australian Minister to explain whether or not the geographical area of the declaration could be enlarged to cover all Forum member countries.

71. The Prime Minister of Solomon Islands suggested that the meeting should examine the declaration clause by clause. It would be desirable to identify amendments which could affect the sovereignty of countries. A country such as Solomon Islands, which prohibited the entry of vessels carrying nuclear devices, would need to examine the declaration carefully. However, Australia and New Zealand were exempted by virtue of their being parties to the ANZUS agreement. Some allowance should also be given for the utilisation of nuclear energy for domestic purposes.

72. The Foreign Minister of Tonga intervened to say that he might have given the wrong impression earlier. He wished to state that Australia and Tonga were in complete agreement concerning a nuclear weapons free Pacific but might differ slightly on the results to be achieved.
73. The Prime Minister of Fiji noted with concern that the media reporting did not accurately reflect Fiji's stand. Reference was made specifically to the "Financial Review" of 30 August which attempted to link Fiji's position on denuclearization and New Caledonia with Fiji's sugar marketing strategy. Such innuendoes had surfaced at the Rotorua Forum following his visit to Paris. During his discussions in Paris he took all possible steps on behalf of the Forum yet the media speculated that Fiji did not do all it could because of fear of economic reprisals. This was an unkind cut which challenged his honour and integrity in regard to that particular mission. Fiji was a founder member of the Lome Convention and there was no scope for the application of pressure through that arrangement by France or others. Fiji's policies on any issue would never be based on fear or threat of reprisals from any country and he appealed to members to discountenance such propaganda when they came across it.

74. The Prime Minister of Vanuatu re-affirmed his Government's support and commitment to the South Pacific Regional Environment Program. The completion and adoption of a SPREP Convention would be a major step towards a nuclear weapons free zone in the Pacific. In Vanuatu's view, the proposed Convention must include areas of the high seas beyond the 200 nautical mile zones of countries in the area of the South Pacific Commission. He supported the language of Articles 10 and 11 in the draft Convention concerning the storage and dumping of radio-active wastes and the testing of devices within the Convention area. It was the view of Vanuatu that de-nuclearization could not become a reality until such time as all colonial territories became independent and colonial powers no longer had direct colonial and nuclear interests to protect.

75. The Prime Minister continued that he considered the Australian proposal for a nuclear weapons free zone as a long term goal for both the region and its peoples. The Australian initiative was commended by Vanuatu as a significant step towards a nuclear weapons free zone for the Pacific. He recognised that the Australian proposal was an attempt to accommodate the interests and views of all Forum countries. The Prime Minister suggested that for a nuclear weapons free zone to be meaningful, there would have to be a total prohibition of all nuclear activities within the Pacific area. Nuclearization was a reflection of super power dominance and rivalry which must be opposed as immoral. He asked that Forum members be allowed more time to consider the Australian proposal. Vanuatu for its part would find it difficult to support the proposal at this early stage for four reasons:

(1) the Forum had mandated SPREP to undertake an examination of environmental issues;
(2) the negotiation of the SPREP Convention on the Protection and Development of Environmental Resources, which addressed nuclear matters, should not be pre-empted;

(3) some territories which were affected by nuclear activities were not members of the Forum and these territories should have the opportunity to express their views;

(4) the area to be encompassed by the proposal needed examination as it should not be restricted to the area affected by current nuclear activity.

In summing up, the Prime Minister considered that some time was needed for consideration of the Australian proposal. Vanuatu would find it difficult to participate in a consensus on this subject at this stage.

76. The Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea expressed his country's desire to see the cessation of nuclear testing. Papua New Guinea supported the proposal put forward by Australia. Like Australia and Fiji, Papua New Guinea wished to see the Forum voice strong opposition to nuclear testing. The Prime Minister continued that one problem faced by the Forum was that Japan, the USA and France either dumped nuclear waste, stored nuclear waste, or detonated nuclear devices within their territories in the Pacific. It was therefore necessary for each Forum member to consider what action should be taken. The Prime Minister commented that the issue of nuclear testing in the Pacific had been discussed frequently within the Forum, but there had been no discernible French response. He wondered, therefore, about the effectiveness of the Forum's approach on the Zone proposal as it would affect French nuclear testing.

77. The Prime Minister of the Cook Islands suggested that the apparent intransigence of France should not discourage Forum members from making further representations to the French. Although the French had seemingly ignored protests by the Forum since 1965, the matter should not be allowed to rest. Before too long, the French would be forced to take notice of the Forum voice, and Forum members would deserve full credit when French testing ceased. In particular, mention should be made of the role of the Prime Minister of Fiji who had been a strong opponent of nuclear testing. It was heartening that the French had already made some concessions resulting from the visit to France by the Prime Minister of New Zealand and had subsequently issued invitations to certain Forum members to visit the test site at Mururoa atoll. The Prime Minister noted that the President of France had advised the Prime Minister of New Zealand that there existed a time scale within which nuclear testing would cease. This was a further reason not to be discouraged by the intransigence of France. In this respect he was inclined to agree with the Australian proposal.
78. The Prime Minister of Fiji sought clarification of a point made by the Vanuatu Prime Minister on whether the Forum had mandated SPREP to draw conclusions on nuclear issues for the Pacific. He was concerned that if this was the case, and this Forum concluded without making a declaration, then it could be interpreted that the Forum was no longer interested in the issue.

79. The Prime Minister of Vanuatu in response indicated that although he was not sure whether such a mandate existed he believed it was an important question. He referred to the question asked by the President of Nauru and sought clarification on whether Nauru was included in the proposed Australian declaration.

80. The Australian Foreign Minister indicated that geographical boundaries were not a problem. The proposal was expected to be initiated in general terms with the precise details being formulated as the proposal was put in place. The Treaty concluded in South America was finalised in such a way. He indicated that if the preferred wording was for a declaration by the South Pacific Forum on a "Nuclear Free Zone" instead of on a "South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone", and it would reduce the opposition, then he was sure that Australia would be happy with such wording.

81. The Chairman indicated that the Australian delegation had confirmed its willingness to accommodate the proposal that the Free Zone be extended to include countries such as Nauru, noting that Nauru had supported the proposal and therefore such support should be accommodated if at all possible.

82. The President of Nauru referred the Forum to the Australian draft on the Nuclear Free Zone and questioned whether in the third paragraph the reference to the South Western Pacific would exclude a French testing site in the South East Pacific.

83. The Australian Foreign Minister responded by indicating that the ultimate objective would be to include the whole region in such a zone. What was important at this point in time was an agreement in principle and then the details could be adjusted as it was in place.

84. The Prime Minister of Vanuatu commented that his difficulty was not one of general support for the concept of a Nuclear Free Zone, but an internal matter in that the Vanuatu's stand would have to be considered by the Vanuaku Pati's National Congress.
85. The Prime Minister of Solomon Islands accepted the concept of a declaration of the South Pacific as a Nuclear Free Zone, but was also inclined to the Vanuatu view that further clarification was required. It was also necessary for the declaration to be in line with commitments made in SPREP. He referred to SPEC (83)F.14 which included a brief report on SPREP and noted that a full report would be presented to the Forum in 1984. He believed that before a definitive decision was taken on the Australian resolution, this report should be considered. In a further reference to the SPEC document he noted the recommendations that the Forum:

a) reaffirm the importance it attaches to SPREP and the need for Government contributions to carry out the programme;

b) endorse the importance of the draft convention presently being negotiated as a potentially significant step in the region's efforts to prevent nuclear and other pollution, including dumping.

86. With respect to recommendation (a) he confirmed that Solomon Islands would be prepared to make a contribution to the programme. He indicated that recommendation (b) was very important because in his view it was necessary that a declaration of a Nuclear Free Zone be only made once the convention had been negotiated and a full report was available. The Forum could then decide on the basis of this report and its recommendations. The findings could be merged with the overall principles included in the Australian draft declaration to make the final outcome more effective and allow for better monitoring.

87. The Australian Foreign Minister then clarified a number of points which had been made under this item. He indicated that the issues of environment, waste disposal and dumping and the concept of a Nuclear Free Zone should be considered separately. There was no dispute over the environmental concern nor over the Nuclear Free Zone concept. However, some delegations had difficulties with proceeding at this juncture.

88. The Minister strongly supported the views expressed by the Prime Minister of Fiji that it was necessary for the Forum to express its view on the nuclear issue at the conclusion of the meeting. Otherwise it would appear that nothing had been agreed upon and that the Forum had changed its position on opposition to testing and dumping since it met in Rotorua. France would rejoice that it had broken the back of the Forum's opposition. He proposed, therefore, that a position paper be prepared for consideration.
89. The Minister noted that the over-riding concern was the effect that such a Forum position would have on the French. He therefore believed that it was necessary for Australia to collaborate on a bilateral basis with Forum countries to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion.

90. At the request of the Prime Minister of New Zealand the Australian Foreign Minister indicated that a reference to ANZUS considerations would be included in the proposed Forum position paper.

91. The Prime Minister of Vanuatu indicated his support for the proposal made by the Australian Foreign Minister.

92. The Forum adopted the following statement:

- "The Forum Leaders recalled that in the communiques issued following Meetings over several years, they had taken a strong stand in opposition to nuclear testing and proposals for storage and dumping of nuclear waste material in the Pacific. Despite these unanimous expressions of view of independent and self-governing South Pacific countries, nuclear practices abhorrent to Forum countries continued.

- The Forum Leaders reiterated they would continue to make the strongest protests and condemnations so long as nuclear testing by France or any other country continued in the South Pacific region. They also reaffirmed their opposition to proposals for the dumping and storage of nuclear waste in the Pacific area.

- The Australian initiative in reviving consideration of the concept of a nuclear free zone among the Forum members. They expressed appreciation of the Australian working document which had provided the basis for their discussions and which made a valuable contribution to establishing the objectives which a zone concept would seek to achieve."
Several of the Forum leaders expressed the need for more time to consider the implications of the proposal and to carry out consultations on it. The Foreign Minister of Australia undertook to continue consultations on a bilateral basis to encourage further development of the zone concept both within the framework of the Forum and more widely. He undertook to provide the Forum countries with background on nuclear free zone concepts in other parts of the world.

The Forum noted that there had been a wide agreement on the general principles of the concept as submitted by Australia. It affirmed that in further addressing the zone proposal it would be important to uphold the principles of freedom of navigation and overflight as provided in international law and in the Treaty obligations of some Forum members. It recognised the sovereign right of Governments to make their own decisions on their alliance and defence requirements including access to their ports and airfields by the vessels and aircraft of other countries.

The Forum leaders also expressed their commitment to advancing the cause of general disarmament; supporting the negotiation and conclusion of an effective Treaty which would outlaw all forms of nuclear testing by all States in all environments; and preventing the spread of nuclear weapons and nuclear explosive devices particularly through support for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

The Forum decided to place the question on the Agenda of its 1984 Session to provide further opportunity for consideration and examination of the concept of a nuclear free zone."

AGENDA ITEM 5 - SINGLE REGIONAL ORGANISATION

93. The Chairman invited the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea to speak on Item 5.

94. The Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea noted that the issue of a Single Regional Organisation was not new to the Forum. In 1976 the Forum had established an aid review Task Force to look at aid co-ordination and planning in the region and that Task Force had recommended the formation of a Single Regional Organisation.
95. In 1979 the Forum and the South Pacific Commission set up a joint committee to examine SPEC and SPC activities. That Committee had also recommended the establishment of a single comprehensive organisation based on the merger and reorganisation of SPC and SPEC and had proposed that the new organisation become operational in 1983.

96. Again, in 1981 at the Vanuatu meeting, the Forum had commended the desirability of a single effective regional organisation and had asked that the SPEC Committee come up with recommendations covering the political, economic and financial implications of the establishment of a Single Regional Organisation. The SPEC Committee made its report to the Rotorua Forum last year. The Committee recommended that:

(a) a Single Regional Organisation which carried out all the present work done by SPEC and SPC would be more economical;

(b) a Single Regional Organisation would be most effective and efficient;

(c) a Single Regional Organisation could operate more effectively and bring about a better use of valuable regional resources.

97. However, the SPEC Committee considered that the political, constitutional and legal implications of the establishment of a single organisation would require the views of France, Britain and the United States to be taken into account and that this should be further considered by the Forum leaders.

98. At the pre-Forum SPEC Committee meeting Papua New Guinea had proposed that a Committee of Foreign Affairs Ministers be established to look at the political, constitutional and legal implications of establishing a Single Regional Organisation and that discussions be held with France, Britain and the United States on the implications of the Single Regional Organisation and that these views should be reported to the 1984 Forum.

99. The Prime Minister noted that there was general agreement on the desirability of an effective Single Regional Organisation. However, its establishment required further work and planning. He expressed the view that the South Pacific Conference was not the right body to take the lead on this subject; instead the Forum should take the lead. In 1971 a decision had been taken to establish the Forum where important political and other issues could be discussed. A decision to establish a Single Regional Organisation would have the same significance and would strengthen the Forum.
100. The Prime Minister concluded by saying that the proposal to establish a Committee of Foreign Ministers would help countries to consult more closely with each other on this issue and would enable the Forum to be in a better position to take a firm decision in the future.

101. In response to a question from the Prime Minister of Fiji, the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea agreed that the financial implications of a SRO should be examined by the Committee.

102. The Prime Minister of New Zealand said that New Zealand had no real objection to the proposal. However, it did have some reservations about the final result. He noted that the SPC had not performed as well as it should have. The Forum States were faced with a dilemma in that they wanted the Forum to be the voice of the South Pacific and did not want European and North American voices coming over the top, but there were good practical reasons why the Pacific should retain the interests of the former and current colonial powers in the South Pacific.

103. He noted that New Zealand in its bilateral discussions with these countries had been endeavouring to encourage them to maintain their interests in the South Pacific. France had retained an interest; the United Kingdom, in the Prime Minister's opinion, would not be unhappy if its contribution to the South Pacific and its former colonies diminished; the United States had made an entirely inadequate input into the South Pacific despite its interests in the region and its colonial relationship with American Samoa. He would like to see the United States adopt a more generous approach to the South Pacific and New Zealand had conveyed this view in private discussions with the United States. He would also like to see Britain maintain its interest and other European countries to take a greater interest in the South Pacific. This should be done bilaterally. One way of retaining the present degree of interest was through the SPC. The Forum should consider carefully whether by setting up a SRO it could be giving at least two of the former colonial powers a way out. He also said that he would not want to see the SPC's method of operation infiltrate SPEC, which had established itself as a lean and efficient organisation in contrast to the SPC. In going into a SRO, the Forum's eyes should be open to the possible consequences.

104. The Prime Minister of Vanuatu said that his Government was committed to the concept of a Single Regional Organisation and commended the Papua New Guinea delegation on its paper. Previous studies had recognised difficulties in establishing a single organisation. The Papua New Guinea draft proposed a means of finding solutions to these difficulties.
105. The Prime Minister of Fiji commented that he used to have reservations about the establishment of a single organisation due to the impracticality of merging the two present organisations. The question of bringing in the metropolitan powers had to be addressed. Moreover, the presence of the Federated States of Micronesia at the Forum perhaps offered the solution to the political problem. The Federated States of Micronesia had attended the Forum as observers in the past two years with a view to joining in due course. He also observed that American Samoa could sit in. Then there remained the financial implications which could be a stumbling block towards the establishment of the proposed organisation. He concluded by noting that Fiji's reservations were not as formidable as previously and Fiji would go along with the Papua New Guinea proposal for the establishment of a Committee of Ministers of Foreign Affairs.

106. The Prime Minister of the Cook Islands expressed his support for the proposal to establish a Committee but suggested that it also look into the broad question of whether any regional organisation was necessary. His views might be seen as iconoclastic, but while SPEC might be considered efficient and SPC inefficient it was clear to him that too much money was being spent on the organisational and administrative aspects of these organisations. As a result, funds provided to recipient countries were less than intended. He noted that the Australian aid program had shown a sharp decline in bilateral assistance with the exception of that provided to Papua New Guinea. Instead, an increasing proportion of the aid program was being directed toward multi-lateral assistance. He queried whether this was the right direction for the dispersal of aid and suggested that aid should be on a government-to-government basis rather than through intermediary organizations.

107. The Prime Minister noted that while previously the assistance of organisations such as SPEC and SPC was required, over the course of time most countries in the region had established themselves and were now capable of administering aid programs. For example, he saw no reason why the Forum could not decide that the Pacific Forum Line could be administered by New Zealand, or the Forum Fisheries Agency by Solomon Islands, or another program by Fiji. There could be greater emphasis on individual countries administering aid programs. The example of the United Nations, which had shown itself to be a classic waste of financial resources, was a salutary reminder.

108. The Chairman drew the attention of the Forum to paragraph 7 of the resolution proposed by Papua New Guinea and said that he had been advised that the state of funds available under the Short Term Advisory Services Project was not very healthy and that this might limit the implementation of the resolution.
109. The Prime Minister of Western Samoa indicated that despite his Government's support for the proposal and the appreciation for Papua New Guinea's motivation in putting forward the draft resolution, they were concerned that the position of the dependent countries in the region should not be affected by the implementation of a Single Regional Organisation. In particular, the position of American Samoa needed to be clarified because under the present arrangements they were unable to participate in the Forum. Unless the position of the dependent states of the Pacific was made clear, then their concerns within the region would go unheard as there would be no fora within which they could record their views. Nevertheless the Prime Minister indicated that he would support the proposals to undertake further study with the possibility of reaching a conclusion some time in the future.

110. The Chairman summarised the views of the Forum, noting that the resolution as proposed by Papua New Guinea was acceptable subject to the availability of funds. The Forum adopted the following resolution:

The Forum

Recalling its decision at the Vanuatu Forum Meeting to commend the desirability of a single effective regional organisation;

Recognising that a SRO to be effective and to meet the needs of the region, should:

i) have the basic goal of furthering the objectives of the Forum countries in assisting all Pacific Island countries and territories in their development efforts, either individually or collectively;

ii) ensure the continued participation and contributions of those developed countries, including those outside the region, who have to date played an important role in assisting regional development, on the basis of mutual respect and constructive partnership among the Forum countries, the Island territories and the metropolitan countries;

iii) recognise the position of the Forum as the supreme authority on issues of regional concern;
iv) be more cost effective in the long run than existing arrangements;

v) maintain close relations with other regional institutions and organisations and with international agencies operating within the region, channelling wherever possible their activities through the single regional organisation, with a view to developing greater co-ordination of their activities to the benefit of regional countries.

Agreed that greater emphasis should be given towards attaining the objective of a SRO for the Pacific with a view to establishing in the region a new and lasting relationship among developed and developing countries and territories to promote regional development;

Decided to appoint a Committee of Ministers of Foreign Affairs from 4 countries to:

(a) consider the political, legal, constitutional and financial implications of a Single Regional Organisation;

(b) undertake consultations with the governments of France, U.S.A. and the United Kingdom, as well as those island territories not members of the Forum and SPEC, to inform them of the Forum's views and to ascertain from them their views on their participation in a Single Regional Organisation; and

(c) recommend to the Fifteenth South Pacific Forum a set of proposals on the Single Regional Organisation based on the foregoing.

Requested the Chairman of the Fourteenth South Pacific Forum to convey to the governments of France, the U.S.A. and the United Kingdom as well as their Pacific territories the Forum's decision to initiate consultations with them on a Single Regional Organisation;

Decided that funding for the Committee be arranged by SPEC through the Short-Term Advisory Services Project.
111. The Australian Foreign Minister indicated that if necessary Australian aid funds could be used to assist with the study. This generous offer was accepted by the Forum.

112. Following discussions on which countries would be included in the Study team, it was agreed that the Papua New Guinea Prime Minister would consult with the Director of SPEC and they then would consult bilaterally with Governments.

B. ECONOMIC

AGENDA ITEM 6 - TRADE AND INDUSTRY

(al) Regional Committee on Trade

113. The Chairman asked the Director to introduce SPEC(83)F.4. Before speaking on the paper the Director expressed to the Forum on behalf of himself and his staff his deep appreciation and gratitude to the Leaders for the very kind words said in relation to the work of SPEC.

114. He noted that SPEC(83)F.4 was mainly an information paper. Article XI of the SPARTECA Agreement required the Regional Committee on Trade to report annually to the Forum through the Director of SPEC. The Committee had held its third meeting in July this year and its report was attached to document SPEC(83)F.4. The Committee had noted that all Forum Island Countries were now parties to SPARTECA and that SPARTECA was generally working well, but that there were a number of areas where continuing assistance was necessary for Forum Island Countries to be able to take full advantage of SPARTECA. These related particularly to (a) the Rules of Origin and (b) the Australian special quota for apparel in 1984. Forum Island Countries had requested 260,000 units, but the apparel quota was limited to 66,000 units. The Director further noted that Australia and New Zealand had offered assistance towards SPARTECA related activities in the areas of market advisory services and training. The Forum was invited to note the report of the Regional Committee on Trade.

115. The President of Kiribati commented that a number of projects which had been agreed to by the Forum aimed at assisting Pacific Island Countries, such as SPARTECA and the South Pacific Trade Commission, did not really benefit his country. He hoped
that these activities could be geared towards helping smaller island countries more and he fully endorsed and reinforced SPEC's proposals to this end.

116. The Prime Minister of Western Samoa and the Minister for Finance, Commerce, Industry and Tourism of Vanuatu expressed satisfaction with the operation of SPARTECA and the Regional Committee on Trade.

117. The Vanuatu Minister noted that SPARTECA's Rules of Origin should be further considered in the light of the Lome Convention's Rules of Origin, which were more generous. Vanuatu also considered that the current Australian special quota on apparel was insufficient, with applications from Forum countries for 260,000 units when the quota was only 66,000 units. He requested an increase to 500,000 units.

118. The Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs noted that it was often difficult for the smaller Island countries to achieve the required added value for their product. However, given the present state of the Australian economy he did not see any realistic opportunity to increase the quota. He said adjustment of tariff-levels in sensitive industries was very difficult. He said Australia already had an unemployment rate of 10% and to get this down would be difficult as the workforce was increasing at the rate of 2% p.a. It was also noted that Forum Island Countries already enjoy a favourable margin of preference of 40% over imported apparels from other developing countries and a margin of 50% over developed countries. The Foreign Minister said Australia would be prepared to review the quota situation given a recovery in the state of the economy. However, he did not want to encourage false hopes.

119. The Forum then noted the report of the Chairman of the Regional Committee on Trade.

(ii) Closer Economic Co-operation Among Forum Island Countries

120. At the invitation of the Chairman, the Director introduced SPEC(83)F.5 and noted that the undertaking of the Closer Economic Co-operation Study had been approved by the 1980 Forum in Tarawa. He said that the main recommendation of the Study, which was completed last year, was that Forum Island Countries should negotiate product-specific free trade arrangements (rather than pursue a general Free Trade Agreement at this stage). He advised the Forum that the third RCT meeting in July this year endorsed this approach and the pre-Forum session of the SPEC Committee noted that SPEC was pursuing the proposal.
121. The Director noted that now SPARTECA was working well, SPEC believed that renewed and increased efforts should be made to promote closer economic relations among Forum Island Countries. The Forum was therefore asked to endorse the desirability of taking concrete steps in this direction.

122. The Director indicated that because tariff barriers were at present a major constraint to trade, product-specific trade agreements would be an important means of promoting closer economic relations. He said the exercise would need to focus on the consequential effects on revenue if import barriers were lowered. If Leaders could agree in principle to the lowering of tariff barriers between FICs then the details could be worked out later.

123. The Prime Minister of Solomon Islands commended the activities of SPEC in the trade area and noted that the subject under discussion was of great interest to his country. He endorsed the remarks made by the Director regarding the points of substance of the study. Solomon Islands encouraged trade amongst the island countries, for instance, it already traded with Papua New Guinea and Fiji. Trade with Australia continued to be one-sided.

124. The Prime Minister noted that the problem was not the encouragement of trade among the island countries but the need to identify measures to promote such trade. For instance, he said private enterprise representatives should be encouraged to visit their counterparts in other island countries to establish contacts and make arrangements which would enable them to trade with one another. He thanked Australia and New Zealand for their assistance in trade promotion activities and looked forward to further assistance in this area.

125. The Forum endorsed the desirability of taking concrete steps to promote closer economic relations between Forum Island countries and noted that further work would be pursued by the Secretariat as outlined in SPEC(83)F.5.

AGENDA ITEM 7 - TRANSPORT & COMMUNICATIONS

(i) Pacific Forum Line: Financial Situation

126. The Chairman asked the Prime Minister of New Zealand if he would wish to speak on the item.
127. The Prime Minister of New Zealand suggested that the Forum might invite the Chairman of the Pacific Forum Line to address the meeting and answer questions. The Forum agreed to this suggestion.

128. The Chairman of the Pacific Forum Line explained developments in PFL's operations over the last year. Targets had been achieved up to September 1982, but a drastic drop in trade had then occurred of the order of 49% for the Forum New Zealand, and 15% for the other two vessels, Forum Samoa and Fua Kavenga. The depression in the world economy, inroads by competitors and a fall-off in bulk trade both northbound and southbound had contributed to this downturn. The management of the Line had taken a number of operational steps to counteract this situation, including the carriage of New Zealand cargo westbound to Australia via Papua New Guinea; the carriage of Australian cargo via New Zealand to the Melanesian countries; the commencement of a LCL service; and the commencement of a cargo consolidation service from the South Island of New Zealand.

129. The Chairman noted that overhead management costs had been lowered yet again, interest rates on the overdraft had been negotiated downwards, and the Sydney office had been closed with a substantial saving. Other measures included the negotiation of a reduced charter rate for the Forum New Zealand and approaches to the Governments of Tonga and Western Samoa to seek deferment of capital repayments to the West German Government on the loans for their two vessels.

130. In recent months trade had picked up dramatically on two of the PFL's routes. With the completion of the EIB loan, containers would begin entering the system and make a substantial impact on the Line's finances. The Chairman referred to the delays which had occurred in finalising the loan and the fact that the financial commitments at the Rotorua Forum, apart from those of Australia and New Zealand, had not yet been carried out.

131. The Chairman believed that the PFL now gave the finest shipping service that the region had known, serving eleven countries including Australia and New Zealand. The management was lean and efficient and with the continued support of Governments as agreed at the Rotorua Forum, plus some additional assistance to overcome the problem caused by the downturn in trade, the PFL would fulfil the hopes of member countries. He believed it would be a drastic mistake to let the Line wind up at this stage when it was poised to turn the corner.
132. In response to a question from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Tonga, the Chairman confirmed that a request had been made through the Tongan Director of the Line for deferment of principal on the West German loan.

133. The Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea said that his Government would be in a position to fulfil its financial commitment agreed at Rotorua in this year's budget.

134. The Chairman of the Pacific Forum Line stated that his comments had not been intended in a critical spirit but the fact was that PFL had not received the promised capital. He appreciated that there had been changes in Government and other factors, but the PFL had had to operate under adverse circumstances.

135. The Minister for Economic Affairs of Western Samoa, speaking on behalf of his Prime Minister, said that his Government continued to support the PFL and would like to see it achieve a self-sustaining basis. He noted that the Line had made positive contributions to the stability of regional trade and had obviously influenced shipping schedules. Western Samoa's obligations to the PFL as agreed at the Rotorua Forum would be honoured. As regards the Secretariat proposal for a sub-committee to implement effectively the decisions of the Forum, his Government was of the view that the Regional Shipping Council of Ministers and the PFL management ought to be strengthened rather than creating new institutions with uncertain cost implications. He was of the view that there should be far more regular audits of the PFL with management reports placed before the Council of Ministers to check the effectiveness of management. The Council could also meet more often than annually. The Minister indicated that Western Samoa had approached the West German Government for a moratorium of the Forum Samoa loan but to date no response had been received. He suggested that if the matter was approached on a regional level it might stand more chance of success.

136. In response to a query from the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, the Chairman of PFL said it was for the PFL Shipping Line shareholders to advise management of what was required. New Zealand had kept the Line alive until now, but he could not see this continuing for long without assistance from other Governments. While 50% of the additional requirements had been underwritten by the New Zealand Government, there was a remaining 50% to be met. At Rotorua, Australia had agreed to the diversion
of bilateral aid but so far no money had come through. He hoped that the Australian Government would be able to help further as rapid action was required to salvage the PFL. While he was committed to making the Line work, he would need appropriate assistance to carry the PFL through a difficult period. New Zealand had played an important part and member nations had been doing what they could, and he hoped that Australia could assist further.

137. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia indicated that if Pacific countries wished Australian aid funds allocated to other priorities to be made available to the Line, this could be done. However, Australia could not do better than that; there was no other source of funds. Australia was also committed to discharging its undertaking at the Rotorua Forum of providing $1.3 million in 1982 and $1 million in 1983/1984. Australian assistance to PFL formed 8.7% of the Australian aid allocation to the Pacific and if additional assistance was provided as suggested, it would amount to 15.8%, a very significant increase. His Government was prepared to agree to countries channeling funds to the PFL if that was what was wanted. While Australian assistance to the Pacific amounted to 0.5% of the Gross Domestic Product, New Zealand's stood at 0.3% and if New Zealand was to pick up the additional requirements, its assistance to the Pacific would still fall below Australia's commitment. He did not believe that Australia had been taking a back seat. Australia had supported a feeder service to Kiribati and Tuvalu and would be prepared to extend support to 1987 if desired. He noted that the SPEC/UNDP Regional Transport Survey was imminent and he would not wish to prejudge the conclusions. However, if a decision was made to redirect funds Australia was prepared to co-operate but it would involve a sacrifice of such projects as the extension of SPEC Headquarters, regional telecommunications development programme, extra-budgetary funding for SPEC and so on. He re-emphasised that any funds to be channelled to the Line, must be made at the expense of other funds already committed.

138. The Chairman of the PFL in taking note of the points made by the Australian Foreign Minister, said he did not believe that the management had let the interests of the PFL shareholders down. He was of the view that the Line had never been correctly funded and it had therefore struggled from hand-to-mouth. The present financial requirements stood at $3.5 million apart from the New Zealand undertaking plus the Rotorua commitments; with this, and reasonable trading conditions, the Line would succeed. He commended Kiribati for the position it had taken in regard to cargo carried by the "Moana Raoi" as against other ships plying the region. In addition, the affairs of the PFL had been thoroughly investigated and vetted and all the studies had concluded that the Line could not operate efficiently without the necessary capital. He concluded that Australia was the only hope for assistance to the Line.
139. The Australian Foreign Minister reiterates that any money for PFL would have to come from the aid budget and that would require a re-ordering of priorities.

140. The New Zealand Prime Minister said that it seemed to him that discussions had now reached a position where the Forum was not going to make any progress on the issue. It was therefore necessary for the meeting to address itself to the winding up of the Line before it concluded its business. New Zealand was not going to continue to carry the Line indefinitely. He added that suggestions from Australian sources that New Zealand had funded the Line because it was getting trade out of it were untrue; nothing could compensate New Zealand for what it had put into the PFL. New Zealand had felt that regular transport was vital to the Pacific and the response from Island states had testified to this, but it appeared that the Forum now had to consider winding it up.

141. The Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea considered that it would be a sad thing to see the winding up of the PFL. In previous Forums, Pacific leaders had talked of providing shipping services to Island countries. Papua New Guinea was well-served by trunk lines. However, the Forum had a duty to its smaller members in the Pacific and he was sure that the Forum leaders could put their heads together to solve some of PFL's problems. Papua New Guinea had made a commitment in Rotorua of $1.2 million kina (US$1.44 million) and this would be included in the November budget. He suggested that PFL might consider borrowing funds from outside sources if this was agreeable to member countries. On Papua New Guinea's part he reiterates that they were well-served but that the Forum had a commitment to the Smaller Island Countries and to regional co-operation.

142. The President of Kiribati said that while whatever he said would not affect the decision on the PFL, he was unable to understand why the Kiribati contribution to the PFL had not been made. At the Rotorua Forum, Kiribati had pledged a contribution, subject to the agreement of the Australian Government that the funds would be diverted from bilateral aid. Kiribati's position had not changed. The same amount would again be made available and the Government was awaiting agreement from Australia for this action. The President expressed considerable satisfaction with the feeder service between Suva and Tarawa and he thanked Australia and New Zealand for their assistance with the PFL.

143. The Prime Minister of the Cook Islands explained that his country was not a direct beneficiary from the PFL. However, he was concerned that the Forum not abandon the principle of regional cooperation. The PFL had now reached a crisis point due to financial difficulties. These problem areas had been identified and a solution was almost at hand. He hoped that the
PFL could continue and he commended the action of the New Zealand Government through its injection of funds into the PFL to give the Line a chance. Although the Cook Islands was a poor country, his Government was prepared to commit itself to a contribution of $20,000 towards the survival of the PFL and he hoped that this example would be followed by those with larger resources. He invited the Australian Government to reconsider its position. The PFL linked producers and consumers and was also a real example of regional cooperation. Only Australia was in a position to match New Zealand's contribution and he hoped that Australia would review its stance.

144. The Premier of Niue expressed disappointment at the situation in which the PFL found itself. Many conferences and meetings had been convened concerning the PFL at which regional cooperation had been preached. This was an opportunity for Forum members to show their brotherhood through their actions. The Niue Government had recently discussed the question of the PFL and had agreed to make a contribution to assist the Line. This contribution was not related to the question of whether Niue would benefit from the PFL, but was in recognition of the need for regional cooperation. The amount to be contributed by Niue would be determined shortly.

145. The Prime Minister of Vanuatu noted that his country was not a shareholder of the PFL. While Vanuatu was in a difficult financial situation, following the concern expressed by Forum members benefitting from the PFL, a contribution by his Government to the PFL could be reviewed prior to the next Forum meeting. As an interim gesture, the Government of Vanuatu was prepared to make a contribution of $US30,000 towards the PFL. His Government would also review its position next year with respect to the possibility of taking up shares in the PFL, should reports justify such an investment. The Prime Minister also stressed the need for a spirit of cooperation in considering this matter.

146. The Prime Minister of Solomon Islands said that he supported the proposal for a PFL controlling group. He wished to formally apprise the Forum of Solomon Islands' withdrawal from the Line for reasons which had been provided, including the lack of sufficient information available to Forum countries concerning the PFL and the need for operational improvements. Solomon Islands considered PFL to be a commercial venture and assessed it on that basis. The Prime Minister reiterated his earlier expressed views concerning Solomon Islands' support for regional cooperation, but this should not be confused with a commercial venture such as the PFL.
147. The Prime Minister said that the withdrawal by Solomon Islands from the PPL was therefore conditional. If there was an improvement in the operations of PPL, Solomon Islands would re-examine its position as a possible shareholder. He hoped that PPL ships would continue to call at Solomon Islands and for its part his Government would ensure that the ships would be fully loaded for outgoing ports. Solomon Islands did not share the view that valuable aid money from Australia and New Zealand should be devoted to a project which was not likely to be viable for a number of years. The Prime Minister suggested that the Forum might wish to consider a resolution prohibiting foreign ships from northern countries entering Forum ports, or imposing a licensing procedure, in order to assist the PPL. He also noted that the lack of success by Forum members in stimulating trade between Forum countries had not assisted the PPL's operations. Solomon Islands would continue to support the PPL in principle; if future reports by PPL Directors were satisfactory, Solomon Islands might re-apply for a shareholding.

148. The Prime Minister continued that his Government had already paid $50,000 to the PPL and the same amount was outstanding. There were two options facing his Government: (1) the $50,000 balance outstanding could be made available to the PPL for operational funding; (2) alternatively, shares to this amount could be advertised and purchased by other PPL members.

149. The Prime Minister stressed the difficult economic position of Solomon Islands following Independence. Given the tight global economy, Solomon Islands needed to gain economic breathing space, and this was a further reason for the decision to withdraw from the PPL. Like many countries in the region, Solomon Islands was looking to Asia for trade and the acquisition of rural technology. His Government was also encouraging foreign capital to fill the gaps left by the withdrawal of British aid. The Prime Minister hoped that his Government's withdrawal from the PPL would not be viewed as a move against regional cooperation, but rather as a reflection of the disadvantageous economic situation in Solomon Islands.

150. The Prime Minister of Tuvalu described the feeder service by the PPL to his country as being most satisfactory. His Government therefore wished the PPL service to continue if possible. At the Rotorua Forum, the Government of Tuvalu had reserved its position regarding the PPL due to the difficulty of the decision being faced. However, once this decision had been taken by Tuvalu, it was committed to abide by it. Tuvalu was willing to pay its contributions towards the PPL, and requested Australia to permit the diversion of aid to meet them.
151. The Prime Minister expressed disappointment that Forum members had lost confidence in the management of the PFL. In the view of Tuvalu, the PFL management seemed confident that the worst was over and that an upturn would soon occur. Perhaps the PFL could be given a further chance for a year or two. If the Line's performance did not improve, the decision could then be taken to terminate its operations.

152. The Prime Minister of Western Samoa noted that his Government had already announced its commitment to contributing to the PFL and could accept the recommended allocations contained in the SPEC paper. He wished to express his sincere thanks for the support and co-operation which other Forum delegations had shown earlier and expressed the view that if this support were maintained the Forum line would be able to avert collapse. He asked whether the Director of SPEC could explain to the Forum the background to his proposal for a three-man committee to be formed to oversee the implementation of Forum decisions.

153. The Director commenced by confirming that he had received written confirmation from the Government of Solomon Islands that it proposed to withdraw from the PFL. The decision by Solomon Islands had been conveyed to all Forum Members. He recommended that Governments examine the letter circulated as it contained interesting comments regarding the operations of PFL and the reservations held by Solomon Islands towards the Line.

154. The Director said that he was encouraged to hear the Prime Minister advise the Forum that, subject to the problems associated with the Line being sorted out, Solomon Islands would return to PFL.

155. Regarding the suggestion to establish a Committee of three Forum leaders to serve as a controlling or a supervisory body and thereby ensure implementation of Forum decisions, the Director noted that in the last few months considerable correspondence had passed between Governments regarding the PFL and its future. The Forum had also heard from the Chairman of the PFL. He recalled that when Forum leaders at Rotorua had agreed on the terms of a financial package to assist the Line there had been a feeling that at long last a solution to the problems which had plagued the Line every year had been found. However, those hopes had not been fulfilled. In examining the reasons for the Line's lack of success he noted that they were not simply financial problems but also problems arising from the failure to implement Forum decisions.
156. The Chairman said he wished to clarify Australia's position towards the Line. The previous Government had made a commitment of $2.3 million to the PFL of which $1.3 million had been provided. A further $1 million was conditionally available on the basis that other Forum members would give $4 million towards the Line. For various reasons, this amount had not been provided. Australia stood ready to meet its commitment on the same conditions. With regard to the question of the feeder service costs which were shared with New Zealand, Australia was prepared to support its operation up until the end of 1987. The suggestion to establish a committee of three was a sensible one. Perhaps it was best for the Forum members to leave the matter on the understanding that Australian assistance would continue to be available on the conditions outlined. Further discussions could be held regarding the outstanding commitment of $4 million.

157. The New Zealand Prime Minister regretted that Australia's position on assistance would not be enough to save the Line. The Chairman of the PFL had advised the meeting earlier that the Line was running out of money. It would therefore have to close. It would be improper for the PFL's Board to continue to operate when it did not know where its money was coming from. He was impressed by the statements of Pacific Island leaders supporting the PFL and regional co-operation. New Zealand was not, however, prepared to continue to bank-roll the Line. There had been no move by the Australian Government whatsoever. He took exception to the Australian Foreign Minister's earlier comparison of New Zealand's aid programme with that of Australia. If one excluded Australia's assistance to Papua New Guinea, New Zealand's aid to the Pacific was in a ratio of 1:1 or 1:2 to Australia's and Australia was a much bigger country. New Zealand had more than done its share, particularly in regard to the PFL. The PFL would not receive further funds from the New Zealand taxpayer unless there was a more forthcoming attitude from Australia. There were no other options. Although it would be a sad day for the Line the Directors could not be asked to continue when they did not know where funds were coming from.

158. The Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea noted that he had already made his feelings known regarding the PFL. Papua New Guinea had in its own small way already made its commitment. He asked whether it would be possible to look at other ways of assisting the Line and suggested that the question of guarantees be considered and that the Line operate as a commercial venture rather than relying on funds from Governments. The Director of SPEC could be asked to examine this suggestion. He noted that as Papua New Guinea, Fiji and some others were members of the ACP it might be possible to negotiate a 5-10 year soft loan from traditional lenders. As the Line became more profitable it could repay the loan. He expressed appreciation for the commitments made by New Zealand, the Cook Islands and other countries.
159. The Australian Foreign Minister reminded the Forum that Australia was not a shareholder in the Line. This decision had been taken by the previous Government and in his view it was a sound one. The earlier statements by the Prime Minister of Solomon Islands had provided an insight into the problems facing the Line. The facts had to be faced that the Line was in difficulty. Its losses were mounting year by year. Last year it lost $6 million. This year Australia estimated that it would lose a similar amount. Even if a loan was taken out to assist the Line, soft loans from institutions such as the IDA required a rate of interest of 8-9%. The Line could not repay at these terms. Moreover the IDA would require an economic assessment of the Line to be carried out before it provided a loan. As the Prime Minister of Solomon Islands had indicated, the current financial condition of the Line did not place it in an ideal position to borrow funds.

160. The Minister reiterated that aid was aid and that the argument about comparisons was not relevant. Australia had already made a commitment to provide A$300 million in aid to the Pacific over the next five years. $50 million would be provided this year. $6 million would be provided for the PFL. The Australian Government on coming to office had found itself with a deficit of nearly $10,000 million. It was a priority of the Government to reduce this deficit. As a result it was not possible to allocate additional funds for aid purposes and it was up to the Pacific aid recipients to determine among themselves how the aid funds would be spent. If Australia continued to provide assistance to the Line and the Line continued to make substantial losses each year then the Australian Government would be exposed to criticism from the Australian taxpayer. Diversion of aid, which was accepted by Australia in this instance, would probably not be an acceptable approach again in view of this.

161. The Minister concluded by saying that it was the responsibility of the shareholders to reach a decision regarding the future of the Line. Australia was not a shareholder and had exercised its right in reaching that decision.

162. The Prime Minister of New Zealand said that he did not wish to enter into an argument with the Australian Foreign Minister over aid figures. He had made his position regarding the Line clear. The decision to close down the Line would be a blow to the Forum as it was the largest project the Forum had undertaken. He did not wish to point the finger at Australia but it was well-known that Australian officials had opposed the establishment of the Line from the first and obstructed it ever since and it looked as though they would win. The New Zealand
Prime Minister noted that the same Australian officials had no doubt recommended that Australian patrol boats be made available to Pacific Island States to boost the Australian ship-building industry, but would Australia be prepared to replace the offer of the patrol boats with a financial contribution to the Forum Line if the Island Governments so wished? The Prime Minister said that it was imperative for the Forum to agree on how the PFL could be wound up. It was not only immoral but illegal for the Board to continue to operate under the present circumstances.

163. The Chairman commented that the legal position was clear. It was the responsibility of the shareholders to meet to consider the winding up of the Line. A decision could not be made by the non-shareholders. Australia had offered to maintain its commitment to assist the Line on the condition that others also met their commitments. It might be valuable to ask the shareholders to meet to examine whether the offers made by the Forum leaders could allow it to continue to function.

164. The New Zealand Prime Minister commented that this seemed the only course open.

165. The President of Nauru noted that Nauru was a shareholder but was unable to provide a further cash input to the Line. Nevertheless it was prepared to provide shipping services which could either expand the PFL's operating routes or be set off against existing routes thereby reducing the need for the present vessels. Nauru was prepared to divert vessels on its north/south operations to provide services if requested. In addition, in view of the critical situation facing the Line, Nauru could seek more money from lending sources at the cheapest commercial rates if the shareholders would provide guarantees in a strictly commercial sense. In fact Nauru was already providing a subsidised loan to the PFL.

166. In summing up, the Chairman said it would seem appropriate to ask the PFL shareholding members of the Forum to meet in the light of discussions which had taken place. In meeting, they could take account of suggestions made by the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea and the President of Nauru amongst others, the several offers for financial assistance made, Australia's position in the matter, and try to arrive at conclusions on what they would wish to do on the future operations of the Line.
(ii) Civil Aviation

167. The Forum did not discuss this item of the Agenda.

(iii) Telecommunications

(a) Proposed South Pacific Telecommunications Development Programme

168. The Chairman noted that as reported in document SPEC(83)F.8 the Regional Ministerial Meeting on Telecommunications had requested the Forum to consider a number of recommendations concerning the proposed South Pacific Telecommunications Development Programme. Australia was prepared to provide A$300,000 towards the administrative costs and also to examine whether Australia's second generation satellite could be used to meet South Pacific telecommunications needs in the late 1980s.

169. The Forum then adopted the following recommendations:

(a) that a regional co-operative approach to many of the requirements of South Pacific national telecommunications is highly desirable, in view of the benefits offered by such an approach;

(b) that the proposed South Pacific Telecommunications Development Programme be established as a means to achieve national and regional objectives in accordance with countries' wishes and priorities;

(c) that the proposed institutional arrangements be endorsed on the basis that the Director of SPEC is responsible to the South Pacific Forum for the co-ordination of the Programme through the Programme Management Group comprising participating countries;
47.

(d) that South Pacific Forum members acknowledge the assurances of financial and technical support already offered by the Governments of Australia and New Zealand and that SPEC be mandated to seek from appropriate aid donors and funding agencies support for both the institutional arrangements and the technical elements of the Programme on the basis that such funds be in addition to existing project commitments;

(e) that the establishment of the Programme be pursued as a matter of priority with emphasis on the appointment of a Programme Controller and the commencement of Programme planning.

(b) Satellite Options

170. The Forum noted paper SPEC(83)F.9.

AGENDA ITEM 8 - AID CO-ORDINATION

(i) Relations with Regional and International Organisations

171. This item was not considered by the Forum.

(ii) Disaster Co-ordination

172. The Chairman introduced paper SPEC(83)F.12 and F.12 Add.1.

173. The Foreign Minister of Tonga expressed gratitude for the generous help from all Forum countries following the cyclone which had devastated his country in 1982. Concerning the proposal that a disaster expert be located at SPEC Headquarters, the Foreign Minister wondered what such a person would do and what qualifications he would need.

174. The Director said that over the years SPEC had been involved in a number of seminars and studies relating to disaster preparedness. At present, the SPEC Disaster Relief Fund had a balance of just over half a million dollars. In establishing the Fund the Forum had not specified any further role for SPEC in this area. At a seminar in early 1983, Australia had indicated that it would be prepared to fund a position of Disaster Relief Coordinator based at SPEC. He took the view that while it could be a useful step, he was not sure that there was enough work for the person and there were difficulties in providing office space. He suggested that representatives of Australia and SPEC might discuss the details further and report back.
175. The Foreign Minister of Australia noted that the proposal was for a person specifically designated as Disaster Relief Adviser. For the first three years, Australia was prepared to fund this position. After that the costs would be borne by the SPEC budget. The Australian offer had resulted from proposals made intermittently by Forum members, but Australia did not wish to push the proposal one way or the other.

176. The Prime Minister of the Cook Islands suggested that the question needed further discussion. He considered that the position should not become a direct responsibility of SPEC but could be selected, appointed and paid for by ADAB on behalf of Forum countries.

177. Following a recommendation by the Chairman, the meeting agreed that further discussions should take place, without prejudice, between representatives of SPEC and the Australian Government.

(iii) Pacific Islands Fund

178. The Chairman referred to document SPEC(83)F.11 and sought comments on the subject of the proposed Pacific Islands Fund. He said that progress to date had not been encouraging and noted the recommendation that a different approach might be more effective.

179. At the invitation of the Chairman, the Director explained that an approach similar to that employed with the Disaster Relief Fund might be suitable. In that case Forum members had contributed small amounts which were allowed to accrue to become a sizeable fund. The Pacific Islands Fund had been discussed many times and, in his view, outside contributions could be attracted if members displayed their commitment through nominal contributions.

180. The Prime Minister of Fiji proposed that the Pacific Islands Fund idea be wound up. The fund, or similar proposals, had been discussed over a number of years. The present proposal had no clear objective, and nobody wanted to contribute.

181. In response to a question from the Prime Minister of Western Samoa, the Director advised that, notwithstanding the request at the 13th Forum at Rotorua, the Secretariat had limited its action to the circulation of letters from the former Director of SPEC and the Secretary-General of the South Pacific Commission. He regretted that no guidelines had been provided and undertook to be more active in the pursuit of contributions if it was decided to go ahead.
182. The Prime Minister of Fiji emphasised that his Government was not in a position to make any aid contribution towards a Pacific Islands Fund. Present needs were overwhelming and there was no cash for a rainy day. It would be inappropriate to use aid funds for this purpose. He noted that the ACP Pacific Group would be unlikely to distribute its remaining allocation of about ECU 15 million from the current five year program during the next year.

183. The Director drew a distinction between the proposed fund and the SPEC allocation. The Pacific Island Fund would be a long-term venture. He did not believe that the way it had been approached was the right one and that it should be possible to attract additional funds to the region through such an approach.

184. The Prime Ministers of Vanuatu and the Cook Islands supported the Fiji proposal that the subject of the Pacific Islands Fund not be pursued.

185. The Forum agreed that the Pacific Island Fund proposal should not be pursued.

AGENDA ITEM 9 - REPORTS

(a) SPEC Committee

186. The Chairman drew attention to paper SPEC(83)F.15 which advised that, on 25 August 1983, the Chairman of the SPEC Committee had officially transmitted the Agreed Record SPEC(83)12 of the pre-Forum SPEC Committee Meeting to the Chairman of the Forum.

187. The Forum accepted the Agreed Record of the SPEC Committee.

(b) Director of SPEC

188. The Chairman drew attention to paper SPEC(83)F.16, under cover of which was presented the Director's Annual Report 1982/83 SPEC(83)9 and Updated Statement SPEC(83)SCC.4. He noted that the Report and Updated Statement had been endorsed by the SPEC Committee at its pre-Forum meeting.

189. The Forum accepted the Director's Annual Report for 1982/83 and Updated Statement.

(c) Director of Forum Fisheries Agency

190. The Chairman introduced paper SPEC(83)F.17 which presented the 1982/83 Annual Report of the Director of the Forum Fisheries Agency and the Agency's Budget and Work Programme for 1983/84 as required by Article VI(5) of the Forum Fisheries Agency Convention. The documents had been approved by the Forum Fisheries Committee at its meeting in Apia from 2-5 May 1983.
191. The Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea said he wished to highlight the question of conservation of the tuna stocks in the Forum region. A paper had been presented by the SPC Co-ordinator of the Tuna programme to FFA which dealt not only with current research but also referred to the question of conservation generally. The Prime Minister said that it was clear that there was a significant lack of information in FFA members' knowledge of the tuna resource and this could lead to a situation where certain tuna species were being overfished.

192. The Prime Minister said that his Government had always taken a very serious view of the lack of research into the tuna stocks. At the last Forum Meeting, Papua New Guinea raised this matter and proposed a meeting of Forum States, Distant Water Fishing Nations and other interested States and parties to further consider the question. The concerns expressed by the Co-ordinator's paper caused Papua New Guinea to speak again on the question of conservation at the recent South Pacific Commission's 15th Regional Technical Meeting on Fisheries in New Caledonia. The recommendations of that meeting to SPC included the convening of the kind of broadly based meeting that Papua New Guinea had proposed in the past.

193. The Prime Minister made it clear that his Government was strongly committed to the idea that the Forum Fisheries Agency was the only body which should be empowered by Island countries to exercise fisheries management responsibilities in the region. Turning to research, however, Papua New Guinea recognised that it was necessary for Distant Water Fishing Nations to be closely involved with Island countries because without them the available research information would always be incomplete.

194. The Prime Minister concluded that the Coastal States must be in a position to make informed decisions on the management of the tuna resource and this necessarily required research into that resource. He urged all Coastal States to identify conservation of the tuna resource as a priority issue within their general domestic fisheries policies.


(d) Vice-Chancellor of the University of the South Pacific

196. The Chairman referred to paper SPEC(83)F.18 concerning the 1983 Annual Report of the Vice-Chancellor of the University of the South Pacific.
197. The Forum noted the Annual Report of the Vice-Chancellor.

- Pacific Regional Identity Card

198. The Chairman introduced paper SPEC(83)P.19 which presented a USP proposal for a Pacific Regional Identity Card.

199. The Prime Minister of New Zealand said that he could not endorse the proposal as New Zealand would still require visas.

200. The Foreign Minister of Australia considered the issuing of visas to be best handled by national immigration authorities.

201. The Vanuatu Prime Minister supported the proposal provided it did not give leave to work or reside.

202. The Prime Ministers of Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands opposed the proposal.

203. The Forum declined to agree to the proposal regarding the issuing of a Pacific Regional Identity Card to facilitate easier movement of the University of the South Pacific staff among the member countries of the region.

AGENDA ITEM 10 - 1983 SPEC BUDGET

204. The Chairman introduced paper SPEC(83)P.20 presenting the 1983 SPEC Budget which had been recommended to the Forum for approval by the 1982 SPEC Committee Budget Session as required by Article IX of the SPEC Agreement.

205. The Forum approved the 1983 SPEC Budget.

AGENDA ITEM 11 - OTHER BUSINESS

206. The Director noted that at the Twelfth Forum in Vanuatu in August 1981, the Forum endorsed the recommendation of the SPEC Committee for the publication by SPEC of a Commemorative Booklet focussing on the Forum's achievements in the first decade, 1971-1981. Delays occurred in the production of the booklet and after consultations SPEC proposed to Governments that the focus of the booklet be altered to cover the first 15 years of the Forum, 1971-1986. A number of Governments, Fiji, Kiribati, Niue,
Solomon Islands and Tuvalu, had indicated that this approach was acceptable. SPEC would be grateful for the Forum's collective endorsement of this proposal to issue a booklet in 1986 covering the first 15 years of achievement. Arrangements would then be made to undertake the task in good time.

207. The Forum agreed with this course of action.

AGENDA ITEM 12 - DATE AND VENUE FOR NEXT FORUM MEETING

208. The Chairman referred to paper SPEC(83)F.21 which invited Forum consideration of the date and venue for the next Forum meeting.

209. The Prime Minister of Tuvalu said he would like to offer to host the next Forum Meeting. Although facilities would be limited, Tuvalu's welcome would be warm. He said Tuvalu would consider it a great honour if the meeting accepted the offer.

210. The Chairman took it that the Forum would wish to accept the Tuvalu offer. He noted that there had been discussions with Tuvalu about possible Australian assistance.

211. The Forum welcomed Tuvalu's offer to host the Fifteenth South Pacific Forum in 1984.

212. The Prime Minister of the Cook Islands said he would like to indicate his Government's desire to host the 1985 Forum. The Cook Islands would like two years to prepare for the Meeting. As the South Pacific Mini-Games would be held in the Cook Islands in 1985 it would be an opportune time to host the Forum.

213. The Minister for Works and Community Services from Nauru suggested that the meeting accept the offer by the Cook Islands.

214. The Prime Minister of Fiji said that he would be prepared to exchange Fiji's turn, which would come after Tuvalu, with the Cook Islands.

215. The Forum agreed to accept the Cook Islands' offer on that basis.

216. The Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, on behalf of the Forum delegations, expressed his appreciation for the hospitality provided by the Australian Government and people.
217. In reply the Chairman thanked the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea on behalf of the Australian delegation. He noted the wide range of important subjects which had been covered during the meeting, the frank exchange of views, and the atmosphere of friendship which had prevailed throughout the meeting. The Forum had provided the Australian Government with an opportunity to establish new friendships with its near neighbours.

218. The Chairman thanked the Director of SPEC and the SPEC Secretariat for their work. He also thanked the members of the Australian Task Force led by Mr Les Pyke. He looked forward to seeing the Forum members again at next year's meeting in Tuvalu.

AGENDA ITEM 13 - ADOPTION OF FORUM RECORD AND COMMUNIQUE

219. The Forum considered and adopted the Forum communiqué which appears as Annex 3.

220. The Chairman referred to the draft record prepared by the Drafting Committee and requested that any amendments be communicated to the Director of SPEC. The summary record would then be finalised and distributed to Governments.

221. The Chairman then declared the Forum session closed.

Canberra
30 August 1983
LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

AUSTRALIA

Hon. R.J.L. Hawke, A.C., M.P.
Prime Minister

Hon. Bill Hayden, M.P.
Minister for Foreign Affairs

Sir Geoffrey Yeend
Secretary
Department of the Prime Minister & Cabinet

Mr P.G.F. Henderson
Secretary
Department of Foreign Affairs

Mr C.F. Teese
Deputy Secretary
Department of Trade

Mr J. Bowan
Adviser (International Relations)
Prime Minister's Office

Mr M. Costello
Senior Private Secretary
Office of the Minister for Foreign Affairs

Dr R.B.M. Dun
Director
Australian Development Assistance Bureau

Mr D.G. Nutter
First Assistant Secretary
Department of Foreign Affairs

Mr C. Conybeare
Acting First Assistant Secretary
Department of the Prime Minister & Cabinet

Mr J.H.A. Hoyle
Assistant Secretary
Department of Foreign Affairs

Mr R. Irwin
Special Adviser
Department of the Prime Minister & Cabinet
55.

Mr G. Urwin
Head, South Pacific Regional Section
Department of Foreign Affairs

Mr B. Ely
Senior Adviser
Department of the Prime Minister & Cabinet

**COOK ISLANDS**

Hon. Geoffrey A. Henry
Prime Minister

Mr John Scott
Secretary
Prime Minister's Department

Mr Colin Brown
Acting Director
External Affairs

Mr Jon Jonassen
External Affairs Officer (Regional)

Mr Dirk Blink
Secretary
Department of Development Planning

Mr Roy Spratt
Cook Islands Representative, Australia

**FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA**

H.E. Tosiwo Nakayama
President

Hon. Erhart Aten
Governor of Truk State

Mr Asterio Takesy
Deputy Secretary of External Affairs

Mr Jesse Raglmar
Chief of Multilateral Affairs

Mr Kasio Mida
Special Assistant to the President

**FIJI**

Rt. Hon. Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara, K.B.E., G.C.M.G.
Prime Minister

Hon. Mosese Qionibaravi, C.M.G.
Minister for Foreign Affairs & Tourism
Mr Filipe N. Bole, C.B.E.
Permanent Secretary for Foreign Affairs & Tourism

H.E. Mr Faiz Sherani
High Commissioner to Australia

Mr Aryoday Lal
Principal Assistant Secretary (Political)
Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Tourism

Mr Kishore Lal
Senior Assistant Secretary (Trade, Regional Affairs & Aid)
Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Tourism

Mr Walter Thomas
Principal Information Officer
Ministry of Information

KIRIBATTI

H.E. Ieremia T. Tabai, C.M.G.
President

H.E. Atanraoi Baiteke, O.B.E.
Secretary for Foreign Affairs & Ambassador at Large

Mr Teraku Tekanene
Senior Assistant Secretary
Ministry of Trade, Industry & Labour

Mr Baraniko Baaro
Assistant Secretary for Finance
Ministry of Finance

Mr Natan Brechtelfeld
Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs and Decentralisation

NAURU

H.E. Hammer DeRoburt, G.C.M.G., O.B.E., M.P.
President

Hon. R.B. Detudamo, M.P.
Minister for Works & Community Services and
Minister Assisting the President

Mr T.W. Star
Chief Secretary & Acting Secretary for External Affairs

Mr T.C. Moses
Consul-General, Melbourne
Mr L. Keke
Secretary for Island Development & Industry

NEW ZEALAND

Prime Minister

Mr Gerald C. Hensley
Permanent Head
Prime Minister's Department

Mr Malcolm J.C. Templeton
Deputy Secretary
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

H.E. Lindsay J. Watt
High Commissioner to Fiji

Mr Gordon W. Shroff
Head, South Pacific Division
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Miss Frances M.C. Lee
Director, Trade Policy
Trade & Industry Department

Mr Wade M.V. Armstrong
Counsellor
New Zealand High Commission, Canberra

Mr Tim Groser
Special Adviser
Prime Minister's Department

Mr Malcolm Fearn
Private Secretary to Prime Minister

Miss Pamela Alderton
Advisory Officer, Treasury

Mr Sefita Hauoli
Press Officer

NIUE

Hon. Robert Rex, C.M.G., O.B.E.
Premier

Mr Terry Chapman
Secretary to Government

Mr Liva Tukutama
Personal Assistant to Secretary to Government
PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Rt. Hon. Michael Somare, C.G., M.P.
Prime Minister

Hon. Rabbie Namaliu
Minister for Foreign Affairs & Trade

Dr Alkan Tololo
High Commissioner to Australia

Mr Andrew Yauieb
Secretary
Department of Prime Minister

Mr Paulias Matane, C.M.G., O.B.E
Secretary
Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade

Dr Alan Wilkinson
First Assistant Secretary
Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade

Mr John Templeton
Director
Office of the Prime Minister

Mr Robert Igara
Counsellor
Papua New Guinea High Commission, Canberra

Mr Dennis Kepore
Counsellor
Papua New Guinea High Commission, Suva

Mr Bernard Kaspou
Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade

Mr John Harangu
Press Officer

SOLOMON ISLANDS

Hon. Solomon Māmaloni, M.P.
Prime Minister

Hon. Denis Carlos Lulei, M.P.
Minister for Foreign Affairs & International Trade

Hon. Bart Ulafa'alu
Minister for Finance

Mr Wilson Ifunaoa
Secretary to Cabinet & Public Service
Mr Frank J. Saemala
Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Foreign Affairs & International Trade
and High Commissioner Designate to Australia

Mr John Rofeta
Permanent Secretary
National Planning Office

Mr Edward Kingmele
Special Secretary to the Prime Minister

Mr Patterson J. Oti
South Pacific Desk Officer
Ministry of Foreign Affairs & International Trade

Mr Simon Papage
Press Secretary
Prime Minister's Office

TONGA

H.R.H. Crown Prince Tupouto'a
Minister for Foreign Affairs & Defence

Hon. Cecil Cocker
Minister for Finance

Mr Taniela Tufui
Secretary to Government

Mrs Akosita Fineanganofo
Assistant Secretary
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

TUVALU

Rt. Hon. Dr Tomasi Puapua, M.P.
Prime Minister

Mr Ionatana Ionatana, C.V.O., O.B.E.
Secretary to Government

Mr Angus McDonald, O.B.E.
Special Adviser

Mr Kelese Kolone
Assistant Secretary
Prime Minister's Department

Mr Uatimani Maalo
High Commission, Suva
VANUATU

Hon. Father Walter H. Lini, C.B.E., M.P.
Prime Minister

Hon. Kalpokor Kalsakau
Minister for Finance, Commerce, Industry & Tourism

Mr Nikenike Vurobaravu
Secretary for Foreign Affairs

Mr Joe Natuman
Deputy Secretary
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

WESTERN SAMOA

Hon. Tofilau Eti Alesana, M.P.
Prime Minister

Hon. Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi
Minister Assisting the Minister for Finance and
Minister for Economic Affairs & Transport

Hon. Atiifale Fiso Sua
Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Assembly

Dr Kirifoti Eteuati
Head, Legal Department
Prime Minister's Department

Mr Simon Potoi
Private Secretary to the Prime Minister

SPEC

Mr Mahe Tupouniua
Director

Dr Peter Adams
Deputy Director

Mr Gyan Singh, O.B.E.
Administration Officer

Mr Garry Wiseman
Project Officer

Mrs Phyllis Buksh
Project Officer

Mr Frank Miro
Project Officer

Mrs Andra Vailate
Conference Officer
AGENDA

1. Official Opening
2. Adoption of Agenda and Working Procedures: Appointment of Drafting Committee and Press Spokesman

A. POLITICAL
3. Decolonisation
4. Regional Nuclear Matters
   (i) Nuclear Testing
   (ii) Nuclear Waste Disposal & Storage
   (iii) South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)
   (iv) Proposal by Australia for Establishment of Nuclear Free Zone

5. Single Regional Organisation

B. ECONOMIC
6. Trade and Industry
   (i) Regional Committee on Trade
   (ii) Closer Economic Co-operation Among Forum Island Countries

7. Transport and Communications
   (i) Shipping
   (ii) Civil Aviation
   (iii) Telecommunications
      (a) Proposed South Pacific Telecommunications Development Programme
      (b) Satellite Options
8. Aid Co-ordination
   (i) Relations with Regional and International Organisations
   (ii) Disaster Co-ordination
   (iii) Pacific Islands Fund

C. REPORTS
9. (a) SPEC Committee
   (b) Director of SPEC
   (c) Director for Forum Fisheries Agency
   (d) Vice Chancellor of the University of the South Pacific
     Pacific Regional Identity Card

D. BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
10. 1983 SPEC Budget
11. Other Business
12. Date and Venue for Next Forum Meeting
13. Adoption of Forum Record and Communique
Annex 3

FORUM COMMUNIQUE

The Fourteenth South Pacific Forum was held in Canberra, Australia, from 29-30 August 1983. The meeting was attended by Heads of Governments from Australia, the Cook Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia (as an observer), Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and Western Samoa. Tonga was represented by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defence. The Prime Minister of Australia, the Hon. R.J.L. Hawke, chaired the meeting and the Minister for Foreign Affairs assumed the Australian seat.

The main issues discussed were:

Decolonisation

The Forum reviewed developments since its previous meeting in relation to New Caledonia and adopted the following resolution:

The Fourteenth South Pacific Forum:

Reconfirming its belief that the principles of self-determination and independence apply to non-self-governing Pacific territories;

Recognizing that a colonial situation exists in New Caledonia;

Acknowledging the continued efforts of the Kanak people in New Caledonia towards the attainment of self-determination and independence by peaceful means;

Taking note of progress which has been made by the French Government in relation to political evolution in New Caledonia;

Recognizing the legitimacy of the Kanak people of New Caledonia having an inherent and active right to self-determination and independence;

Welcoming the recognition by the Kanak representatives at the round-table talks of the rights of other groups resident in the territory to participate in an act of self-determination;
Declares support for independence in New Caledonia determined in accordance with the expressed wishes of its people;

Welcomes as a concrete step towards independence the French Government's intention to move to an act of self-determination in which the option of independence is included;

Urges the French Government to continue to carry out its responsibility in guaranteeing that New Caledonia's independence be achieved in a peaceful manner;

Further urges all the political and community groups in New Caledonia to work closely together and with the French Government towards the achievement of independence by peaceful means;

Requests the French Government, in drawing up the proposed new statute of autonomy, to transfer, at an early date, more political and administrative powers to appropriate authorities in New Caledonia, especially full control of the internal affairs of the colony;

Declares that the establishment by the French Government of the internal autonomy statute should be transitional and include a precise calendar leading to independence;

Urges the French Government, in conducting any act of self-determination to take account of the desirability of excluding from the franchise those who are short-term or nonpermanent residents in New Caledonia;

Proposes that the French Government consider inviting a representative Forum mission to visit New Caledonia to observe developments;

Decides to review the situation in New Caledonia at its 15th meeting and in light of this, to consider the desirability of reinscription of New Caledonia on the United Nations list of non-self-governing territories.
Regional Nuclear Matters

The Forum considered the questions of continued nuclear testing in the South Pacific, the invitation of the French Government to Forum countries for scientists to visit and assess the situation at the nuclear test site at Mururoa, nuclear waste disposal and dumping, the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme, and the Australian proposal for a Declaration of a South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone. The Forum recognised that the French Government's invitation had been made on a bilateral basis and that it was a matter for Governments to respond as they wished. The Forum adopted the following statement of its position on nuclear matters.

The Fourteenth South Pacific Forum:

Recalled that in the communiques issued following meetings over several years, they had taken a strong stand in opposition to nuclear testing and proposals for storage and dumping of nuclear waste material in the Pacific. Despite these unanimous expressions of view of independent and self-governing South Pacific countries, nuclear practices abhorrent to Forum countries continued;

Reiterated they would continue to make the strongest protests and condemnations so long as nuclear testing by France or any other country continued in the South Pacific region. They also reaffirmed their opposition to proposals for the dumping and storage of nuclear waste in the Pacific area.

Commended the Australian initiative in reviving consideration of the concept of a nuclear free zone among the Forum members. They expressed appreciation of the Australian working document which had provided the basis for their discussions and which made a valuable contribution to establishing the objectives which a zone concept would seek to achieve.

Expressed the need for more time to consider the implications of the proposal and to carry out consultations on it. The Foreign Minister of Australia undertook to continue consultations on a bilateral basis to encourage further development of the zone concept both within the framework of the Forum and more widely. He undertook to provide the Forum countries with background on nuclear free zone concepts in other parts of the world.
Noted that there had been a wide agreement on the general principles of the concept as submitted by Australia. It affirmed that in further addressing the zone proposal it would be important to uphold the principles of freedom of navigation and overflight as provided in international law and in the Treaty obligations of some Forum members. It recognised the sovereign right of Governments to make their own decisions on their alliance and defence requirements including access to their ports and airfields by the vessels and aircraft of other countries.

Expressed their commitment to advancing the cause of general disarmament; supporting the negotiation and conclusion of an effective Treaty which would outlaw all forms of nuclear testing by all States in all environments; and preventing the spread of nuclear weapons and nuclear explosive devices particularly through support for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Decided to place the question on the Agenda of its 1984 Session to provide further opportunity for consideration and examination of the concept of a nuclear free zone.

Single Regional Organisation

The Forum considered the question of a Single Regional Organisation and adopted the following resolution:

The Fourteenth South Pacific Forum

Recalling its decision at the Vanuatu Forum Meeting to commend the desirability of a single effective regional organisation;

Recognizing that a Single Regional Organisation to be effective and to meet the needs of the region, should:

i) have the basic goal of furthering the objectives of the Forum countries in assisting all Pacific Island countries and territories in their development efforts, either individually or collectively;

ii) ensure the continued participation and contributions of those developed countries, including those outside the region, who have to date played an important role in assisting regional development, on the basis of mutual respect and constructive partnership among
the Forum countries, the Island territories and the metropolitan countries;

iii) recognize the position of the Forum as the supreme authority on issues of regional concern;

iv) be more cost effective in the long run than existing arrangements;

v) maintain close relations with other regional institutions and organisations and with international agencies operating within the region, channelling wherever possible their activities through the Single Regional Organisation, with a view to developing greater co-ordination of their activities to the benefit of regional countries.

Agreed that greater emphasis should be given towards attaining the objective of a Single Regional Organisation for the Pacific with a view to establishing in the region a new and lasting relationship among developed and developing countries and territories to promote regional development;

Decided to appoint a Committee of Ministers of Foreign Affairs from four countries to:

a) consider the political, legal constitutional and financial implications of a Single Regional Organisation;

b) undertake consultations with the Governments of France, U.S.A. and the United Kingdom, as well as those Island territories not members of the Forum and SPEC, to inform them of the Forum's views and to ascertain from them their views on their participation in a Single Regional Organisation; and

c) recommend to the Fifteenth South Pacific Forum a set of proposals on the Single Regional Organisation based on the foregoing.

Requested the Chairman of the Fourteenth South Forum to convey to the Governments of France, the U.S.A. and the United Kingdom as well as their Pacific territories the Forum's decision to initiate consultations with them on a Single Regional Organisation.
Decided that funding for the Committee be arranged by SPEC through the Short-Term Advisory Services Project.

Australia undertook to provide financial assistance. The composition of the Committee would be finalised after consultations.

Regional Trade

The Forum noted the report of the Third Meeting of the Regional Committee on Trade and that the SPARTECA Agreement was generally working well although there were a number of areas where continuing assistance was necessary for Forum Island Countries to take full advantage of the various provisions of the Agreement.

The Forum, in noting the recommendations of the 1982 Study on Closer Economic Co-operation, endorsed the desirability of taking concrete steps to promote closer economic relations between Forum Island Countries and endorsed in principle the lowering of tariff barriers to promote regional trade.

Pacific Forum Line

The Forum considered a number of papers and reports and also received a verbal report from the Chairman of the Pacific Forum Line on the Line's financial situation. A number of countries expressed their strong support including financial commitments for the continuation of the Line's operations, but the Forum concluded that the Line's financial situation should be reviewed by the shareholders of the Line at the earliest opportunity. The Pacific Forum Line shareholders would examine the viability of the Line in its present situation and take decisions about the future of its operations.

Telecommunications

The Forum adopted a programme for the long-term development of rural and outer Island telecommunications in Forum Island Countries. The programme is designed to provide a regional co-operative approach and a framework within which external assistance for development in this area can be co-ordinated. The offers by Australia of A$300,000 and New Zealand of NZ$250,000 towards developmental costs of the programme were accepted with appreciation.

Pacific Islands Fund

The Forum decided not to proceed with the proposal to
establish a Pacific Islands Fund.

**Reports**

The Forum accepted the reports of the pre-Forum SPEC Committee, the Director of SPEC's Annual Report for 1982/83, the Report of the Director of the Forum Fisheries Agency; and the Report of the Vice-Chancellor of the University of the South Pacific.

**Next Forum Session**

The Forum accepted the invitation of the Prime Minister of Tuvalu to host the next Forum with dates to be decided in consultation with the Government of Tuvalu.