Statement by H.E. Wang Xuefeng  
Special Envoy for the China-Pacific Islands Forum Dialogue  
At the 31st Forum Dialogue Partners Meeting  

Funafuti, 16 August 2019

Distinguished Forum Leaders,  
Distinguished Representatives from Dialogue Partners,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Dear Friends,

It’s a great pleasure to represent the Chinese government to attend the Forum Dialogue Partners Meeting. This is the 31st consecutive year for the Chinese government to send delegation to this event, which fully demonstrates the importance China attaches to its relations with Pacific Island Countries and its sincerity to further strengthen dialogue and exchanges with Pacific Island Countries. We stand ready to work with Pacific Island Countries and other Dialogue Partners to make this Forum Dialogue Partners Meeting a full success.

Distinguished Guests,  
Dear Friends,

The year 2018 was a milestone for China’s relations with Pacific Island Countries. In November, President Xi Jinping paid a State Visit to Papua New Guinea and there met with leaders of the Pacific Island Countries that have diplomatic relations with China. Both sides agreed to elevate the bilateral and overall relations to a comprehensive strategic partnership of mutual respect and common development, thus opening a new chapter for China’s relations with Pacific Island Countries. As President Xi pointed out when expounding on China’s policies and positions on enhancing relations with Pacific Island Countries in the new era, no matter how the international situation evolves, China will always be a good friend, partner and brother of Pacific Island Countries for solidarity and mutual assistance. China believes that all countries, big or small, are equals. We respect the independent choices of development path by people of Pacific Island Countries, support Pacific Island Countries for greater regional cooperation and equal participation in international affairs, and stand ready to join hands with Pacific Island Countries to build a community with a shared future for mankind. President Xi announced a package plan to facilitate the economic and social development of Pacific Island Countries by supporting their infrastructure, agriculture, fishery, tourism and other industries in line with local conditions, and assisting them to increase their capacities in combating climate change.
After President Xi’s visit to Papua New Guinea, China and Pacific Island Countries have been working together to further our comprehensive strategic partnership under the guidance of the important consensus reached between the leaders. We enjoy more frequent visits at the top and other levels, and are making progress in practical cooperation in areas such as trade, agriculture, fishery, tourism and infrastructure. In May, Prime Minister Charlot Salwai of Vanuatu paid a successful official visit to China. In late April, more than ten important political figures from Pacific Island Countries, including the then Prime Minister Peter O’Neill of Papua New Guinea, visited China upon invitation for the second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation. In July, Vice Chairman of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference Yang Chuantang visited the Federated States of Micronesia for the presidential inauguration as Special Envoy of President Xi. In 2018, bilateral trade volume between China and the eight Pacific Island Countries that have diplomatic relations with China reached 4.32 billion US dollars, up by 26% year on year. After China and all the Pacific Island Countries having diplomatic relations with China signed cooperation documents on Belt and Road cooperation last year, in the first half of this year, China signed Belt and Road cooperation plans with Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu. In March, the China-Pacific Island Countries Agriculture Ministers Meeting was successfully held in Fiji. In April, the opening ceremony of China-Pacific Island Countries Year of Tourism 2019 was successfully held in Samoa. Phase Two of Road Rehabilitation and Construction Project in Tanna and Malekula, Vanuatu, the secondary road project in Pohnpei, Micronesia, the stadium in Samoa for the Pacific Games and other economic and technical cooperation projects were started or completed and handed over.

Distinguished Guests,
Dear Friends,

The year 2019 marks the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People’s Republic of China. In the past seven decades, under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, China achieved notable economic and social progress. China is now the second largest economy in the world. We have helped over 700 million people lift themselves out of poverty and have for many years contributed over 30% to the world economic growth, thus becoming a key anchor and engine of global economy. In the first half of 2019, China’s GDP grew by 6.3% year on year. Major macro economic indicators were kept within a proper range and the economic structure continued to be improved. In terms of economic growth rate, China is still a leader among major economies.

At the second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation held last
April, President Xi announced a series of major measures to boost high-quality opening-up, including expanding market access for foreign investment in more areas, intensifying efforts to enhance international cooperation in intellectual property protection, increasing the import of goods and services on an even larger scale, more effectively engaging in international macro-economic policy coordination, and working harder to ensure the implementation of opening-up related policies. Those measures will bring more development opportunities for Pacific Island Countries and other countries around the world.

Distinguished Guests,

Dear Friends,

Climate change is a challenge to all humanity that requires the cooperation of the international community. Developing countries all suffer from it. In particular, Pacific Island Countries and other small island countries bear the brunt of it. The Chinese government's effort to deal with climate change is not only driven by China's domestic needs for sustainable development, but also by its sense of responsibility of forging a community with a shared future for mankind. With such a strong sense of responsibility, China works for an equitable global climate governance regime that is cooperative and beneficial to all, and takes concrete policy measures to strengthen domestic efforts in combating climate change, thus becoming an important participant, contributor and torchbearer in the global endeavor for ecological improvement.

China actively follows a new development vision that features innovative, coordinated, green, open and shared development, and has made notable progress in combating climate change, energy conservation and emission reduction. In 2018, our CO2 emission per unit of GDP was 45.8% lower than that in 2005, thus achieving and exceeding in advance the goal of reducing carbon intensity by 40%-45% below the 2005 level by 2020; our non-fossil fuels accounted for 13.8% of primary energy consumption; our renewable energy installation capacity accounted for 30% of the world total; we completed the task ahead of 2030 in terms of newly increased forest stock; and the discharge of major pollutants saw a significant drop. All of those have led to continuous improvement of the ecological environment.

As the largest developing country in the world, China always attaches great importance to the special concerns and legitimate demands of small island countries in combating climate change. China believes that to better deal with climate change, we must strengthen the implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the full and effective implementation of the Paris Agreement. Developed countries should earnestly carry
out their obligations set in the Convention and the Agreement, including providing sufficient support in terms of finance, technology and capacity-building to small island countries and other developing countries to help them increase their capacities in combating climate change. China firmly upholds the principles and framework of the Convention, and remains committed to the principles of equity, "common but differentiated responsibilities" and respective capabilities. We are working with various sides to advance the follow-up negotiation on the details of the Paris Agreement, and for the full, effective and sustained implementation of the Convention and the Agreement.

Distinguished Guests,
Dear Friends,

Over the years, China has been providing assistance within its capacity to Pacific Island Countries through South-South cooperation to help them improve their capacities in combating climate change. In November 2018, at the meeting in Papua New Guinea with leaders from Pacific Island Countries, President Xi announced China's new measures to support Pacific Island Countries in dealing with climate change, which were widely welcomed by those countries. President Xi also announced that China will co-host with Pacific Island Countries the third China-Pacific Island Countries Economic Development and Cooperation Forum in the second half of this year. We have a preliminary plan of having sub-forums at that time on environmental protection and climate change to enhance dialogue and exchanges with Pacific Island Countries in these areas. China will also step up its efforts in South-South cooperation and do its best to make positive contribution to the sustainable and green development of Pacific Island Countries and jointly rekindle confidence in global cooperation against climate change.

First, mitigation and adaptation programs. In recent years, China has launched projects such as hydropower station, ecotype agriculture demonstration & cooperation, and bio-gas in the region. All together China has provided countries like Samoa and Tonga with 2,500 energy-efficient air conditioners, 46,000 energy-saving LED lamps, 1,500 solar streetlights, and other energy-efficient materials. Under the framework of South-South cooperation, China will continue to provide assistance in green energy and environmental protection, donate materials for combating climate change, support Pacific Island Countries in making relevant policy measures, and promote climate-friendly technologies, in order to help Pacific Island Countries increase their capacities in combating climate change.

Second, financial support. China has been donating to the Secretariat of Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) every year since 1998 for
relevant projects to deal with climate change. Here, I am delighted to announce that China will again donate 200,000 US dollars to SPREP in 2019.

Third, capacity building. Since 2011, China has held 36 training programs on South-South cooperation against climate change to help least developed countries, small island countries and African countries to increase their capacities in combating climate change. With these programs, we have helped Pacific Island Countries train dozens of officials and technical staff in the area of climate change. This year, we will hold two training programs on South-South cooperation against climate change that focus on Pacific Island Countries, to further improve those countries’ governance and technical capabilities in dealing with climate change.

Fourth, multilateral cooperation. China will strengthen its communication and coordination with Pacific Island Countries and other members of the international community and work for the success of this year’s United Nations Climate Change Action Summit. China is glad to be invited to lead the track of Nature-based Solutions of the Summit together with New Zealand. The idea of Nature-based Solutions itself is in line with China’s pursuit of ecological improvement and the idea of a community with a shared future for mankind. China stands ready to have closer cooperation with various sides in outcome design and event organization, and mobilize greater financial support for relevant practical activities.

Distinguished Guests,
Dear Friends,

The future of mankind has never been so closely linked, and the interests of countries have never been so deeply intertwined. At the same time, with the backlash against globalization and the rise of hegemony and power politics, the international community is faced with more and more new issues and challenges. Climate change is an issue that concerns the future of mankind. As a sincere friend and partner of Pacific Island Countries, China will always stand together with Pacific Island Countries and strengthen solidarity and cooperation with them as China remains committed to pursuing the greater good and shared interests and to the principle of sincerity, real results, amity and good faith. China will support Pacific Island Countries in advancing the Blue Pacific narrative and sending a strong Pacific voice on the international stage. This way, we will work together for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and a closer community with a shared future for China and Pacific Island Countries.

Thank you.