

SPEECH BY MR. EMILIO LOZADA, DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR  
BILATERAL AFFAIRS, AT THE 50<sup>TH</sup> PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM

August 12-16, 2019

Distinguished Secretary General of the Forum:

Distinguished Primer Minister of Tuvalu:

Excellencies:

I would like to thank the government and people of Tuvalu, specially Prime Minister Sopoaga, for the excellent hospitality we have enjoyed since our arrival in this sister nation and also to take this opportunity to congratulate the members of this Forum for the celebration of the 50th anniversary of this regional consultation mechanism that has helped to change the world's perception of the challenges faced by the small island States of the Pacific.

Let me express our appreciation to Ms. Dame Meg Taylor and her team in the General Secretariat of the Forum for the organization of this very important meeting.

Excellencies:

It is an honor to represent Cuba in the annual meeting of the Pacific Islands Forum, particularly this year that its inauguration coincided with the 93th anniversary of the historical leader of the Cuban Revolution, Fidel Castro Ruz, who so much did to promote solidarity with this part of the world and who was a forerunner of Cuba's collaboration on health care with the small island states of the Pacific, with the presence of Cuban medical brigades as well as with the training of human resources.

Excellencies:

For our countries, Small Island developing States, addressing climate change is a vital priority. Humanity faces the danger of disappearing unless urgent actions are taken as soon as possible. The main obstacle faced by our small island developing states is

precisely underdevelopment, inherited from an unjust international economic order and unsustainable production and consumption patterns. In view of this, an open and fair international cooperation as well as transfer of resources, technologies and knowledge without political conditions is urgently required in order to complement and develop our own national efforts and capacities.

The Paris Agreement --the result of more than 10 years of negotiations-- is not renegotiable and should be fully implemented without delay.

Let me assure you that Cuba fully shares and supports the views of small Pacific States on climate Change.

In 2017, the Government of the Republic Cuba adopted a multidisciplinary and scientifically based state plan called Task Force Life to address climate change, which special take into consideration vulnerable municipalities and coastal areas. We are also ready to share these modest experiences with the Pacific Islands.

Excellencies:

I deeply appreciate the unanimous support of the Pacific Islands to the Cuban resolution in the United Nations General Assembly condemning the US economic, commercial and financial blockade against Cuba, a genocidal practice that violates the international law and universally recognized international trade rules.

Despite the impact of the blockade on practically all areas, Cuba maintains its solidarity with the Pacific Islands developing a systematic collaboration in the field of health care with the presence of medical brigades in Nauru and Kiribati. Around 300 scholarships have been granted to young people in the Pacific to study medicine and more than 180 of them have already graduated.

Excellencies:

Cuba and the small island developing States share common visions and challenges regarding the main issues on the international agenda, with an emphasis on environmental issues. Such challenges can only be faced with supportive cooperation among our countries, on the basis of mutual respect, selfless assistance

and complementarity. Cuba ratifies its unconditional commitment towards strengthening its ties with the Pacific region and its nations.

Thank you very much.