

## OFFICIAL STATEMENT ITALY

### **31 th Leaders Session with Forum Dialogue Partners, Tuvalu, 16 August 2019 “Building a Strong Pacific – strengthening regional security to ensure safety and wellbeing for all”**

Italy, which is an active member of the Post Forum Dialogue since 2007, fully agrees with the Pacific Small Islands Developing States view that climate change is the single greatest threat of our time. For this reason, Italy strongly advocates the full and swift implementation of the Paris Agreement, the SAMOA Pathway and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals and constantly underlined the priority of the climate change issues within the UN, the EU, the G7 and in all other international fora.

The forthcoming UN Climate Action Summit will provide a unique opportunity to set new ambitious targets. In fact, a strong global and regional action is needed on combating climate change, ensuring the protection and sustainable management of the oceans and to promote a more rapid transition to the use of clean and renewable energies.

We must secure the future survival of the Blue Pacific and the PSIDS, by reducing their vulnerability against the adverse impacts of climate change. This can be achieved by limiting global warming to below 1,5C °, by enhancing the adoption of ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions and by scaling up climate finance. The International Community has a moral obligation to support the PSIDS in strengthening their regional security and resilience by tackling more effectively the climate change and disaster risks

Italy has always believed that the most powerful tool for achieving success in international cooperation is the Partnership. For this reason, Italy established the Partnership with the PSIDS, now widely recognized as a best practice for development cooperation. The Partnership, which involves four donors ( Italy , Spain, Austria and Luxembourg) and fourteen Pacific SIDS, is based on the principles of national ownership, equality, mutual trust and transparency.

All decisions are made by consensus since all projects are approved by a Joint Committee which meets annually in New York with the participation of all Parties. The Program is mainly related on bilateral projects financed by the Italian Ministry of Environment and carried out directly by the PSIDS.

The Program, worth about 23,5 MUS dollars since 2015, became a model of cooperation achieving concrete results with the approval of so far 42 bilateral

projects, mainly related to the promotion of renewable energies and countering of climate change, but also to food and water security, risk reduction, sustainable fisheries, tourism and agriculture, protection of marine and coastal ecosystems, capacity and institution building. Besides, Italy announced a new contribution to IUCN (700.000USD ) for the promotion of the renewable energies in the Pacific Region.

At the last meeting of the Joint Committee this year Italy has announced a new package of 15MUSD for the forthcoming 5 years to implement new bilateral projects.

An important amount of the Italian development aid to the PSIDS is channelled through the European Union that is one of the main donors in the Pacific region. In fact, Italy is the 3rd largest contributor within the EU with a share of about 12,5 % in the EDF and other European funds ( approximately 89,7 MUSD). Our Government strongly encourages a further strengthening of the EU-Pacific cooperation in the framework of the new post Cotonou Agreement and a rapid implementation of the 11th EDF (European Development Fund Program).

Italy has been also active at multilateral level. In the framework of the universal exhibition that took place in Milan in 2015, the Italian Government organized a conference (850.000 USD through UNDESA) on enhancing food security and climate adaptations in the Small Island Developing States. In 2016 Italy organized a conference in Rome dedicated to the creation of protected Marine Areas and meeting the target to implement SDG 14 target 5 aimed at protecting at least 10% of the marine and coastal areas of our planet by 2020.

As a follow up of the symposium Italy had given contributions to UNEP (1,3 ME) for the conservation of the protected marine areas and to scientific projects funded by the Ocean Sanctuary Alliance( 240.000USD). At the first High Level Conference of the UN on the Oceans in 2017 Italy being Co -chair with Paul in the Partnership Dialogue on Marine Protected Areas announced a new voluntary commitment ( 6,6M USD ) for actions in the sector and organized specific side events. At the COP 23 Italy announced new financial contributions to UNFCCC (2ME), the launch of a new fellowship program ( 2,5 ME) aimed at strengthening the institutional capacity of the Small Island Developing States ( SIDS) and the Least Developed Countries ( LDC's) to respond to the challenges of climate change, a new contribution to the Adaptation Fund ( 7ME) and through the Green Climate Fund . Italy also gave a contribution to FAO (1ME) to finance the second phase of a program aimed for the preservation and sustainable management of mountain forests in Papua New Guinea.

Moreover, Italy has actively participated in many emergency programs related to climate change disasters in the Pacific Region. During the last years Italy has given contributions to the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery ( GFDRR) of the World Bank (2,5 MUSD), which have been earmarked in favor of Vanuatu for the

management of flood risks and Solomon Islands to bring school buildings up to safety, to build up a response plan to the El Nino consequences in Fiji , Marshall Islands and Solomon Islands (550.000 USD through UNICEF) and Palau (100.000USD through FICROSS) and after cyclones Winston (100.000 Euro to Fiji through FICROSS) , PAM (300.000 USD for Vanuatu through FICROSS) and Gyta (100.000 Euro for Tonga through FICROSS).

Italy is also a main contributor to the main global finance funds such as the Green Climate Fund (commitment of 250 ME in the period 2015-2018 ), the Global Environmental Fund and the Adaption Fund and is also involved in the programs carried out in the Pacific region by the World Bank, the Asian Development, the EIB and the EBRD. Besides, Italy has given a contribution ( 0,7 ME) to the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) aimed at strengthening the statistical capacity of the SIDS States. Our Government also has approved a contribution (523.000 USD to the UN Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (OHRLLS) for helping to organize the meetings of the Focal Points of the SIDS for a midterm review of the SAMOA Pathway. Besides, our Government has supported the SAMOA Pathway with a contribution through UNDESA (225.942USD). Italy has also given contributions to the Alliance of Small Islands States (AOSIS) for fellowships programs on climate change (842.000 USD in 2017-2018 and 864.800 Euro in 2019-2020 ) and for a capacity development and technical support program ( 438.00 Euro).

The Italian Government is firmly committed to continue its support to the Small Pacific Islands in the forthcoming years. To confirm our increasing interest to the Pacific Region the Italian Government has appointed in 2018 a Special Envoy for the Pacific Region who has the task to further strengthen the already excellent bilateral cooperation and Partnership with the Small Pacific countries in all sectors.