

# **PIF Readout of Meeting between the Pacific Islands Forum High-Level Delegation and Japan Prime Minister**

**Tuesday 7 February 2023**

On 7 February 2023, a High-Level Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) Delegation met in Tokyo with the Prime Minister of Japan, the Honourable Fumio Kishida. The PIF Delegation was led by the Prime Minister of the Cook Islands and Incoming Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum, the Honourable Mark Brown, and supported by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Honourable Kitlang Kabua, and the Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum, Henry Puna.

Prime Minister Brown highlighted the long partnership shared through the PIF between Pacific Islands and Japan, and welcomed further opportunities for strengthened engagement based on trust and friendship.

In this context, and in the spirit of honest dialogue, Prime Minister Brown conveyed the concerns and requests of Pacific Leaders for deferral of Japan's plans to discharge over a million tonnes of treated nuclear wastewater from Fukushima into the Pacific. This was also in pursuit of PALM9 commitments and the strong concerns by PIF Leaders at their 51st PIF Meeting regarding the significance of the potential threat of nuclear contamination to the health and security of the Blue Pacific, its people and prospects.

Foreign Minister Kabua emphasised that nuclear contamination continues to be a real and grave threat to the Pacific, one which the Pacific takes seriously and is legally bound to prevent. Transboundary harm and intergenerational impacts remain serious concerns, particularly for small islands that depend on the ocean for their livelihoods.

Foreign Minister Kabua highlighted the continuing realities of nuclear contamination, and the intergenerational nature and permanent impacts on Marshallese homes and on Marshallese peoples' health and livelihoods.

Highlighting the importance of the ocean to the livelihoods of Pacific peoples, Prime Minister Brown, while respecting the decision of Japan, reiterated the PIF's concern with the implications of such a decision beyond Japan's maritime space and into the maritime space of other states including PIF states.

Recalling commitments at the PALM9, Prime Minister Brown emphasised the independent scientific assessments and advice that PIF have undertaken on the data.

After extensive work, including exchanges with Japan and IAEA experts, the PIF panel of independent experts advise that the quantity and quality of the data is insufficient and incomplete to support an assessment of safety, and a decision to release the TEPCO tank waters into the Pacific.

Prime Minister Brown reaffirmed PIF requests for more time and data to enable the PIF independent panel to complete its assessment and provide advice to Forum Leaders on the safety or otherwise of the ocean discharge proposal.

Prime Minister Brown stressed that PIF was seeking a common solution to safeguard the future of the Blue Pacific Ocean and One Blue Planet for all humanity. In this UN

Decade of the Ocean, Japan can show global leadership in protecting our ocean for generations to come.

Prime Minister Brown and Prime Minister Kishida agreed on the need for further intensive dialogue both at the scientific and political level, particularly facilitated exchange of information and dialogue between Japan and PIF experts, and the importance of science and data to guide the political decision on the discharge. As part of these intensive dialogue, PIF also sought Japan support for IAEA experts to meet with the PIF panel of experts.

The PIF Delegation welcomed Prime Minister Kishida's assurance that Japan will not discharge the ALPS treated nuclear wastewater until such time that that it is verifiably safe to do so and based on a relationship built of trust and in the spirit of friendship.

Prime Minister Brown emphasised that this matter will be discussed at the upcoming Special Session of PIF Leaders.

Prime Minister Brown congratulated the Government of Japan on its planned announcement of support for the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' *Declaration on Preserving Maritime Zones in the face of Climate Change-related Sea-level rise*, recognising the permanency of maritime zones under the 1982 *UN Convention on the Law of the Sea*.

Both Leaders looked forward to the PALM 10 meeting in 2024, and to further discussing issues of mutual interests.--ENDS