Permanent Mission of Solomon Islands to the United Nation

Statement

by

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At the UN General Assembly 65th Plenary Meeting on
Report of the International Court of Justice [Item 70]: Draft Resolution
A/77/L.58

New York, 29 March 2023, 10:00am
Solomon Islands aligns itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Tonga on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum States; and the Federated States of Micronesia on behalf of Pacific Small Islands Developing States;

I have the honour to deliver this statement in my national capacity.

Mr. President,
Solomon Islands supports the adoption of Resolution A/77/L.58 requesting advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice on the obligations of States under International law in respect of climate change. The number of co-sponsors to this landmark resolution and the adoption by consensus send an important message that restored faith to multilateralism in addressing climate change.

We congratulate our closest neighbour, the Republic of Vanuatu, for their instrumental leadership in this initiative and bringing this Resolution before the General Assembly. We also thanked members of the core group for actively engaging the UN membership and ensuring meaningful and a transparent process ensued. On this note too, we would like to recognize contributions made by our young people from the Pacific Islands for whom has taken the first step of this whole process.

Mr. President, climate change is a single greatest threat to the livelihood, welfare and security of the blue Pacific including Solomon Islands. Last year our country experienced a devastating earthquake causing damages to government buildings and other important infrastructures. Our country remains under threat from cyclones, tidal waves, flash floodings and sea level rise. The recent report from the IPCC shows that the current commitments under the Paris Agreement is insufficient but put us to a pathway to a 3 degrees Celsius world – we need stronger ambitious climate action now.

Mr. President,
Solomon Islands notes that the Resolution adopted today characterises climate change to be an unprecedented challenge of civilisational proportions. Accordingly, we believe that international courts and tribunals, and the International Court of Justice in particular, should not be silent bystanders in the formulation and implementation of responses to climate change.

Solomon Islands believes that international law advances our shared goals of security, peace, prosperity, human rights, and environmental protection most effectively, when it operates as integrated system.
We therefore welcome consideration by the International Court of Justice of the international treaties and principles of international law cited in the Resolution in respect of their implications upon the obligations of States in responding to the climate crisis.

Mr. President,
Solomon Islands emphasises our view that such consideration will complement and enhance the goals and the processes of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement\(^1\).

We recall and reiterate our statement upon the adoption of the Paris Agreement at which time we declared: -

*That no provision of the Paris Agreement can be interpreted as derogating from principles of general international law as they apply to climate change; That our acceptance of the Paris Agreement in no way constituted a renunciation of any rights under international law concerning State responsibility for the adverse effects of climate change, and That failure to stabilize global temperature to a safe level of below 1.5 degrees of warming will severely undermine our efforts to achieve sustainable development.*

Mr. President,
We note in conclusion that the historic Resolution adopted today seeks to ensure the well-being of future generations more importantly for our people in the blue pacific. We thus express hope that the International Court’s attention will be keenly focused upon the interests of our future generations, that the perspectives of our most vulnerable to climate change - be given voice within the proceedings and its outcomes.

I thank you Mr. President.