



**HONOURABLE JOSIA VOREQE BAINIMARAMA**  
PRIME MINISTER, REPUBLIC OF FIJI

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**STATEMENT ON THE OCCASION OF THE  
UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT**

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UNGA Hall  
UNHQ, New York

Sat.26 Sept, 2015  
3:00pm – 6:00pm

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Mr. President,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen

*Mr President,*

Our global community is at a fork in the road. Do we act wisely to preserve the resources of planet earth for generations to come, or do we continue to consume the earth's heritage as if there is no tomorrow?

Mr. President, We ALL need to assume responsibility for taking action to end poverty and hunger; to promote the wellbeing of all; to preserve the ocean and its precious resources; and to use our imagination to fuel innovations that will ultimately make our countries.

The 17 goals and 169 targets represent the forward thinking and compassionate nature of human beings, the principles of fairness and equality as applied to our global community. Regardless of whether you wake up in Suva or New York; Buenos Aires or Dhaka; Nairobi or Paris; London or Honiara; we are ALL in the same boat. All brothers and sisters on this oasis in the universe called earth; and we must act collectively.

These agreements to which we commit amount to our basic economic, political and social contracts with Mother Earth over the coming decades. They give us the chance to right the wrongs of the past.

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals that we have adopted at this Summit meeting constitute the road map of hope and transformation.

Mr. President, we can wait no longer to actually begin this journey; time is not on our side.

To accomplish these goals, we must take stock of the systemic issues that create the obstacles that are slowing us down. Many developing countries do not have the financial resources to do what is needed to fulfil the goals. Many countries have the ideas, the plans and the resolve to act; but do not have the financial backing they need.

If we can recognise that the lack of funding is what can hold many of us back, then it should be one of the key critical issues to be discussed in this summit. We have our goals. Now, how do we get there? We must make affordable financing for sustainable progress a reality.

Developing countries, in order to receive grants and loans, must prove themselves trustworthy. Governments must operate on the principle of transparency, and corruption must be stamped out and punished without exception. In Fiji, we are determined to eradicate the remnants of the past. My government is transparent for all to see. And the corruption that was endemic in previous governments is being weeded out by its roots.

My country is a small island nation. We're not rich. But we are doing what we can to work toward the Sustainable Development goals.

The action we are calling for has already begun in Fiji, where we are putting our own Green Growth Framework into practice. Fiji has a master plan and an economic model that links economic growth and environmental protection. Our goal is to build an economy that nurtures the interests of all our citizens, and establishes strict environmental

criteria for all development projects.

Mr. President, I think of the ocean I knew as a child... and wonder if my grandchildren will ever see it the way I saw it. Fiji is especially keen on Sustainable Development Goal 14 on the conservation and sustainable management of oceans and seas. Fiji has established a partnership with the Government of Sweden to establish the Triennial UN Conferences on Oceans & Seas, which we believe can bring accountability to an effort that will require cooperation among every nation in the world as well as all other non-state actors.

Mr President,

This new global agenda will succeed step by step, community by community and country by country but it will require patience, persistence, and single-minded commitment. It will require sure and steady programs of outreach and education to recruit the hearts and minds of every man, woman and child. It will require political and

national action to secure the participation of our largest cities and our most isolated villages and communities. It will require genuine strategic partnerships with the private sector, youth and women's groups, faith-based organisations, media, academia and civil society.

Mr. President, We have a chance to make change. To transform our world. To eradicate extreme poverty and hunger. And to bring all people into a future of hope.

And I believe we can. If we have political will and courage; and if we act with the leadership we were elected to show, together, we will reach our goals.

Mr President,

I join other world leaders in committing Fiji's full support toward the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at this UN Sustainable Development Summit.

Vinaka Vakalevu. I thank you.