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Prime Minister and Minister for iTaukei Affairs, Sugar Industry and Foreign
Affairs

INTERVENTION AT UNDESA AND OHRLLS BREAKFAST

Delegates Dining Room, West Terrace
UNHQ, New York

Thurs., 21 Sept. 2017
0730 hrs

The Under-Secretary General Department of Economic and
Social Affairs Liu Zhenmin,

The Under-Secretary High Representative - OHRLLS
Fekitamoeloa Katoa 'Utoikamanu

Excellencies,

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Welcome

1. Ni sa bula vinaka, and I extend to you on behalf of my Government and the People of Fiji our warmest greetings.

2. Fiji is the first Small Island Developing State to Chair a COP. As a vulnerable nation, Fiji intends to speak on behalf of all vulnerable nations. Mother Nature does not discriminate when she's angry.

3. COP23 and the Facilitative Dialogue that follows next year will be a forward-looking, inclusive and respectful dialogue focusing on bringing the Paris Agreement to life and dramatically increasing our collective ambition by getting all nations to become more ambitious in our NDCs. That includes making real progress on the implementation guidelines to position Poland for success next year.

4. I said in my speech to the General Assembly that 1.5 Celsius has to be the target. That is what the best science tells us is needed. That is what we must focus on achieving.

5. We also are building and empowering a Grand Coalition to support climate action because this crisis is too big for nation states alone to solve. We need leadership at every level of government, in civil society, and in the private sector.
6. We also need commitment from ordinary citizens from all corners of the world because we know that every human being does several things every day that can contribute to the crisis of climate change. And every human being has it in his or her power to do several things every day that will alleviate the burden we bear.
7. For the communities in this room, the vulnerable of the world, we also want to materially advance the Warsaw International Mechanism on Loss and Damage. We want to facilitate a broad engagement with both governments and the private insurance sector on increasing the size of climate-risk insurance for the most vulnerable communities and make it more accessible.

8. Let us not forget, holding to the 1.5 degree target in many ways is our best insurance policy, and the reason is simple: If we do not achieve it, many of the losses the vulnerable communities of the world will face simply will not be uninsurable.
9. As I also said to the General Assembly, we cannot escape the fact that climate change is as great a threat to global security as any source of conflict. Millions of people are already on the move because of it. And unless we deal with the underlying causes of climate change, we already know that some places will become unlivable and others will disappear altogether. What will happen then if nations begin to compete for safe land or have conflicts over the movements of climate refugees?
10. Friends, Fiji is an island nation. Some of you also represent island nations, others coastal nations, and others landlocked nations. But oceans affect us all. For those of us who live by the

sea, oceans provide livelihoods, but they increasingly are becoming our greatest threat.

That is thanks to climate change.

11. Fiji's Presidency is launching an Oceans Pathway to bring into the COP process much greater attention to the link between healthy Oceans and climate change. We are looking for partners to support this initiative as part a Coalition on Oceans and Climate Change, and will be counting many of you in this room as we move the Oceans Pathway forward.

12. This is why, my friends, we absolutely must harness the synergies between the implementation of the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda. It is simple: If we do not reduce the threat of climate change, most of the 2030 Agenda cannot be accomplished.

Vinaka vakalevu and thank you.

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