



PACIFIC SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES **United Nations Member States**

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Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) **Statement on Energy**

at the **Fifth Session of the Open Working Group (OWG) on** **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

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New York

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Co-Chair,

I am speaking on behalf the Pacific troika members of the OWG on SDGs; namely Nauru, Palau and my own country Papua New Guinea as well as on behalf of the other 9 Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS), represented at the United Nations; namely, the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, the Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

With the exception of those of our members who are not members of the Group of 77 and China, we align ourselves with the Statement delivered by Fiji, on behalf of G77 and China. We also align ourselves with the Statement delivered by Nauru, on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS).

For those of us who are also members of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), we also associate ourselves with the Statement on energy that the Republic of Marshall Islands, as incumbent PIF Chair, will be delivering.

Co-Chair,

Pacific SIDS appreciates IRENA Director-General Mr Adnan Amin and panelist Professor Daniel Kamen and Professor Vijay Modi's useful briefing on energy issues as a salient element of sustainable development.

Likewise, we thank the Technical Support Team (TST) for the informative issues brief on energy prepared to guide our discussions.

Co-Chair,

What are the key messages on energy that Pacific SIDS bring to this forum?

Firstly, we are presently energy insecure; where access, affordability and sustainability also remain a significant challenge. The energy sector in our region is inherently weak and continues to adversely impact on all sectors of our economies, subsistence and the environment.

There is a significantly high dependence on imported fossil fuel in our region. This is also expensive to purchase and transport. Fossil fuel supplies are also irregular and subject to the volatility of the global energy market. Much of our foreign exchange is consumed by payments for fossil fuel. Domestic and foreign investment in renewable energy sources remains negligible and declining ODA levels and inadequate infrastructure, including in the energy sector that is often decimated by natural disasters, compounds these concerns.

Energy insecurity therefore negatively impacts on our economic competitiveness, decelerates employment creation and a major impediment to adequate, effective and efficient provision of basic services in health, education and other sectors to our communities. Increasing carbon emissions from fossil fuels are also contributing to environmental challenges such as climate change and ocean acidification that threaten our sovereignty and security.

Co-Chair,

Secondly, whilst we welcome the ongoing discussions at various levels and the different views, approaches and proposals on whether or not energy should be a stand-alone SDG, we however, agree with the TST report assessment and many of the speakers today that energy is indeed a critical enabler for sustainable development.

For our long-term sustainable development and its benefits to take a foothold in our countries and communities, Pacific SIDS recognizes that sustainable energy is a fundamental and key component.

It has the potential to underpin our long-term security and resilience to vulnerabilities and challenges posed by our unique and special SIDS characteristics.

Given energy's cross-cutting strong links with the economic, social and environmental dimensions, Pacific SIDS therefore underscores that sustainable energy deserves our serious consideration as a dedicated and clear SDG.

Co-Chair,

Thirdly, Pacific SIDS are not complacent about our energy insecurity and challenges. We are working at our respective national levels as well as collectively at the regional and global arena to transform the energy sector of our region away from vulnerability and fossil fuel dependency towards renewable sources of energy. This will further strengthen our resilience to the development challenges and vulnerabilities we are faced with as SIDS.

Initial modest progress in developing sustainable energy has been made but we recognize that much more work remains to be done.

We are committed to work with our development partners including through South-South cooperation and public-private-partnership and urge for genuine and durable partnerships to be forged in this critically important area.

We welcome and are supportive of a number of important initiatives for renewable energy including under the auspices of the UN Secretary-General's initiative of Sustainable Energy for All, IRENA, SIDS DOCK, the Barbados Declaration on Achieving Sustainable Energy for All and the Global Green Growth Initiative.

Co-Chair,

The majority of PSIDS members on 27 September 2013 formalized a partnership with Secretary-General's initiative of Sustainable Energy for All that fosters universal energy access, increased efficiency and renewable energy pursuit. This has been adapted to suit our regional context under the Pacific Regional Data Repository for Sustainable Energy For All.

This innovative mechanism is envisioned as a transnational online energy database of both raw data and processed information such as analytical reports and project documents provided by State parties and our development partners that is user-friendly, accurate and comprehensive.

It is intended to assist us overcome serious concerns and development challenges posed by lack of energy data, inadequate and unfair development support services by donors and expensive energy supplies whilst supporting our respective national and regional sustainable development efforts.

This facility, when fully operational, will provide us with:

- (i) Expedited process of energy project funding due to readily available baseline data;
- (ii) Facilitate resources for capacity building and energy hardware/infrastructure;
- (iii) Application of lessons learned and sharing of best practices as an integral part of South-South cooperation;
- (iv) Strengthened foundation for designing projects on sustainable energy for all, including efforts to increase affordability; and
- (v) Positive model for other developing countries facing data and information problems, especially SIDS and its sub-regions.

We hope to share this milestone achievement with our SIDS counterparts at the 2014 Samoa SIDS Third International Conference.

For Pacific SIDS, this is a step forward towards not only addressing energy insecurity in our region but also facilitate combating climate change and promotes sustainable development. We therefore encourage development partners in the global north and south and trilaterally to collaborate with us on this and other future similar projects.

Co-Chair,

Fourthly, it is vital for key strategies to be identified and set in place to pave the way for sustainable energy to be realized and contribute to sustainable development. Whilst we are supportive of most of the elements identified as basic building blocks for a sustainable energy goal in the TST presentation, we would suggest also to ensure that:

1. An integrated approach in national planning, political commitment, resource allocation and inclusive participation of all stakeholders is imperative to foster successful innovative national and regional sustainable energy sector development and management;

2. Promotion of research and development in energy efficient and environmentally-friendly technology such as ocean thermal energy conversion that is also transferable, affordable, practical and appropriate to the development needs of different countries;
3. Commitments made by development partners, including in financing, for the energy sector development are fulfilled for genuine and durable partnership to be forged;
4. Capacity and institutional building including particularly energy data repository is vital for sustainability of energy projects; and
5. Transformative and innovative measures including the means of implementation such as transfer of technology, finance and capacity building that provide access to affordable, modern energy services, including renewable energy are encouraged.

Co-Chair

In closing, we thank and commend both Co-Chairs stewardship, thus far, of the work of the OWG on SDGs. We also acknowledge the robust and constructive efforts we are collectively making since the inception of this inter-governmental process in defining what potentially could be the international community's new set of sustainable development agenda for the years ahead.

We would remind and urge that the special and unique development challenges and opportunities faced by Small Island Developing States (SIDS), like ours, are adequately considered and addressed in the final outcome of this process.

I thank you.