



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

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### **Statement by H.E. Mr Robert G. Aisi, Permanent Representative of Papua New Guinea to the United Nations and Chair of the Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) to the United Nations**

at the

### **Open Working Group (OWG) on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Eleventh Session on Poverty Eradication, Building Shared Prosperity and Promoting Equality and Sustainable Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition**

**5 May 2014, New York**

"Check against delivery"

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Distinguished Co-Chairs,

My intervention will be on Focus Areas 1 and 2 of the Co-Chairs Revised Working Document..

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

We align ourselves with the Statement to be made by Nauru as AOSIS Chair. Except for those PSIDS who are non- members of G-77 and China, we also associate ourselves with the intervention on this cluster by Bolivia as the Chair of G77 and China.

Co-Chair,

We thank and commend both Co-Chairs for the bold and decisive leadership for the streamlined Working Document of sixteen Focus Areas, especially at this critical juncture of our work.

We also welcome the integration of the previous Focus Areas 10 on infrastructure; 11 on Employment and decent work for all; and 12 on Equality, into the revised Focus Areas 8 and 1, respectively.

In our consideration, many aspects of the issues under those three amalgamated Focus areas are captured also in the revised focus areas 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10 and 16. The focus area streamlining, in our view, is also consistent with the spirit and letter of paragraph 247 of the Rio-Plus 20 outcome document "The Future We Want."

Co-Chair,

Turning to Focus Area 1 on "Poverty eradication, building shared prosperity and promoting equality." We reiterate the fundamental importance of this issue, as affirmed in "The Future We Want" Common Vision paragraph 2 and subsequent paragraphs 105 to 107. It will underpin the success of the SDGs that we set. It is therefore imperative that we get this right.

Whilst we welcome the 6 sub-areas under this Focus area, which are key determinants of addressing poverty eradication, for PSIDS and many other island States we cannot eradicate poverty without ensuring the health of our ocean ecosystems that are essential for food security, livelihoods and economic development.

We would however, propose the following additional inputs for consideration.

- Firstly, we agree with the special emphasis on eradicating extreme poverty by 2030, as suggested under sub-area "a". Given that this is a universal agenda, it needs to be further strengthened by ensuring that the focus is not only on extreme poverty eradication but rather it be more inclusive in combating poverty in all its manifestation and for everyone. Lest we detract from adequately addressing relative poverty, which is also critical.
- Secondly, and in a similar vein, we would urge that under sub area "d" on resilience building against calamities and economic losses, this must be for all and not just for the poor but with special emphasis on the poor, the most vulnerable and the marginalized populations.
- Thirdly, under sub-area "e", we suggest "decent employment for all, including women and youth and with appropriate level of remuneration consistent with national laws and circumstances."
- Fourthly, under sub-area "f", this appears to merely speak to equal economic and social opportunity and access. We therefore propose the inclusion of equal opportunity and access to political resources for poverty alleviation.

Co-Chair,

To achieve poverty eradication, we note the absence of specific Means of Implementation in the Focus Area 1 and therefore would suggest the following proposals:

1. Ensure appropriate national policies, institutional structures, system and human resources capacity building and rule of law that supports poverty eradication efforts at all levels, including through public-private partnership;
2. Global partnership based on mutual trust and accountability underpinned by a just, fair, equitable global economic, financial and trade system; and

3. Promote equitable sharing of the benefits of economic growth at the international, national and sub-national levels.

Co-Chair,

In the context of Focus Area 2 on Sustainable Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition; we concur that its importance for sustainable development cannot be over-emphasized. We welcome the 8 sub-areas identified, particularly those targeting malnutrition and stunting and the right to adequate food and nutrition for all that is adequate and safe as well as drastically reduce food wastage through the food supply chain. These provides a good starting point for further discourse.

However, for the Pacific SIDS especially, and for many ocean or sea-locked countries and communities, we note with concern a glaring gap in the context of food security and nutrition under the proposed sub-areas.

The omission of the marine environment's support for food security and nutrition requires urgent attention.

For PSIDS and other island States, we cannot eradicate poverty without the economic benefits of sustainable fisheries, which in a real sense is our daily bread. They are every bit as critical to our food security, nutrition, and survival as sustainable agriculture. And we cannot achieve our full potential without recognizing the social dimension of oceans as a critical source of work, food, livelihood and culture.

We understand the nexus between the marine environment and sustainable development. The inter-linkages, for us, are axiomatic. This was recognized at Rio+20 by UN Member States, who stressed the crucial role of healthy marine ecosystems, sustainable fisheries, and sustainable aquaculture for food security, nutrition, and providing for livelihoods.

In closing, Co-Chair, we support climate-smart agriculture for food security, nutrition and resilience building but would add that appropriate support be provided for agriculture-science education especially in developing countries including SIDS and the use of local knowledge.

Thank you.