



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 PSIDS Chair

On behalf of the Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) Troika

at the

Open Working Group (OWG) on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Eleventh Session on Focus Area 5 on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment and Focus Area 6 on Water and Sanitation

6 May 2014, New York

"Check against delivery"

Co-Chair,

- I. I am making this intervention on Focus Areas 5 and 6 on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment and Water and Sanitation, respectively, on behalf of the Pacific Troika in the OWG, namely, Nauru, Palau and my own country, Papua New Guinea. This statement is also representative of 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 are pleased to be joined by Timor-Leste in this intervention.
- II. Except for the PSIDS members who are non-members of G-77 and China, the rest of us align ourselves with the intervention on these clusters delivered by Bolivia, as the Chair G77 and China.

Co-Chair,

- III. I will start with Focus Area 6, we recognize that water and sanitation are multidimensional issues. They are also key drivers of food security, public health, human rights, sustainable economic growth and critical to sound environmental management.
- IV. Whilst we welcome and are supportive of the suggested targets, it is our view that for a sustainable future for humanity, it is highly imperative that any potential water and sanitation goal must also address the root causes of water insecurity and poor sanitation.

V. These must include:

- Firstly, reducing carbon emissions in the atmosphere to below 1.5 degrees Parts Per Million;
- Secondly, strengthen mitigation and adaptation measures such as controlling pollution and waste management in our waterways, sub-soil and the oceans;
- Thirdly, build human and institutional capacity through education, training and technical assistance and public-private partnerships to address the issue;
- Fourthly, share knowledge, skills and transfer appropriate and affordable technology for sustainable water management and sanitation;
- Fifthly, strengthen governance and the rule of law to ensure accountability and transparency in providing and fostering access to quality and safe drinking water and promote sanitation; and
- Sixthly, reduce and eliminate harmful practices in the patterns of production and consumption.

Co-Chair,

- VI. On Focus Area 5, women and girls constitute half the world's population but remain largely as unequal partners with men and boys in all facets of life. This yoke of inequality and injustice is undeserving and needs to be banished and this is an ideal opportunity to further rally the call to action. We note that there is a broad swath of support from the international community that clearly recognizes gender equality and women and girls empowerment goal and targets.
- VII. We are supportive of this focus area in the post-2015 development agenda framework and therefore welcome the 10 proposed targets, which are a step in the right direction.
- VIII. On the title of the suggested Target we would suggest an amendment to it and for this to read as follows, "Attain gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls."
- IX. On proposed target "a", we would prefer this to read "by 2030 end all forms of discrimination against all women and girls". Mere reference to women alone in our view is inadequate.
- X. Under suggested target "b", we would suggest that "by 2030 universalize the ending of all forms of violence against women and girls and provide necessary support services to victims of gender-based violence."

- XI. For target "c" we propose an amendment to further strengthen it. This should therefore read as follow; "by 2030 ensure the promotion and protection of women and girls right to education at all levels on the basis of equal opportunity, access and non-discrimination with special emphasis on marginalized and vulnerable women and girls.
- XII. On target "e", we would amend it to read as follows, "by 2030 eliminate structural unequal power relations between women and men to facilitate women's equal participation and leadership in decision-making at all levels"
- XIII. Under target "g" we advocate a revision and this will read; "by 2030 eliminate harmful practices against women and girls, especially child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation."
- XIV. In closing, Co-Chair, we would also propose as a new target, which in our view is critical but is currently missing from the suggested targets. That is, "by 2030 engage 50 percent of men and boys, including community leaders, as strategic partners and allies in combating all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls."

Thank you.