



# **SOLOMON ISLANDS**

**STATEMENT BY**

**HONOURABLE DANNY PHILIP  
PRIME MINISTER**

**BEFORE THE GENERAL DEBATE  
OF THE 66TH SESSION OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**24TH SEPTEMBER 2011, NEW YORK**

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Mr. President,

Solomon Islands with much pride thank our Secretary General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, for honouring my country with a historic visit early this month. He is the first Secretary-General of our august body to have set foot on a Pacific Small Islands Developing State with Least Developed Country status. His re-election for a second five-year term speaks of his strong conviction in advancing multilateralism and for being close to the challenges of all members including the vulnerable countries. We once again, pledge our support to the Secretary-General during his second term in office.

Mr. President,

Let me take this opportunity to acknowledge your predecessor His Excellency Mr. Joseph Deiss for his leadership and tireless work during the last session. I congratulate you Mr. President, on your election to this session. I am confident under your leadership you will strengthen the responsibility of the United Nations especially, at a time when there is nervousness within the world market, with the threat of a possible double dip recession becoming real every day. A period, when the world witnesses unrest in Asia, riots in Europe and famine in the Horn of Africa. A time when, narrow interests and ambition of some are being cycled within the United Nations system harming the principles this organization stands for.

In this respect, the theme for the 66<sup>th</sup> UNGA General debate “the role of mediation in the settlement of disputes through peaceful means” is fitting and timely. This organization was set up to preserve peace for all and not conditional peace for some. An honest international cooperation, built on the spirit of optimism and positivism. Interaction between states with a sense of duty and an awakened conscience to effect change. Multilateral diplomatic and political capitals need to take center stage over military solutions that may lead to long and protracted conflicts.

Mr. President,

The role of mediation in Solomon Islands is about creating a common voice amongst the 87 different languages within the country. The Government remains committed in building a multicultural cohesive society with equal opportunity for all. Solomon Islands Ministry of National Unity, Reconciliation and Peace, along with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is in its third year of continuing to build bridges between former conflicting parties, conveying a message of tolerance, respect, dialogue, and understanding amongst Solomon Islanders.

I am pleased to say my Government is reforming and improving our democratic system, setting the goal to continue national consultation on the Political Parties Integrity and Stability Bill introduced in 2009 by the previous Government. We are developing a comprehensive policy that identifies legislations that need reviewing and legislations that need enactment.

Mr. President,

Solomon Islands has progressively set itself ambitious goals within the various international frameworks. We can only achieve all this by having a focused relation with the United Nations. We feel that the United Nations needs to make a special outreach to countries with special needs especially those lagging furthest, to assist them in operationalizing outcomes of global agreements. To make a difference, the international community must honour their commitments and do so by giving sufficiently to ensure the economic transformation that needs to happen, takes place in LDCs and SIDS.

Mr. President,

Multilateralism has provided the basis for our foreign policy. We have opened a second Permanent Mission to the United Nations in Geneva in June 2011 and would like to see our action reciprocated with enhanced UN country presence in Solomon Islands. We have an over regionalized UN system that have seen problems grow in the Pacific. Small as we are, three of our Pacific countries have undergone conflict in the last two decades and five out of the twelve are listed as least developed countries.

Today, non-communicable diseases (NCD) claim six in every ten lives in the Pacific. Non communicable disease is pandemic in the region. Solomon Islands, has put in place NCD Strategic Plan 2011-2015. Prevention remains the cornerstone of our NCD policy and the development of our primary health coverage across the country. We will continue to need sustained external support in the short to medium term to implement our NCD programs.

Mr. President,

Solomon Islands as a Least Developed Country (LDC) applauds the adoption of the ten-year Istanbul Program of Action for LDCs in May 2011. The program provides an opportunity to lift 880 million people of the international community from poverty. The 48 LDCs have come forward with a program with ambitious targets of seeing half of the LDCs graduate by 2020. The program focuses on investing in productive sectors of LDCs to tackle our development challenges through triggering stable, sustained and inclusive economic growth. Partnership is critical to support investment in income generating activities, employment creation, infrastructure development, rural agricultural development and investment in small-holder farmers. Solomon Islands in reaching out to 85% of its population in the rural areas, is currently implementing two parallel reforms both sectoral and constitutional and land reform programs.

Mr. President,

Solomon Islands supports the call for the Secretary-General to conduct a structured discussion on a post 2015 MDG. As we all must realize and admit, we will fall short of achieving the MDGs come 2015. The review must examine the means of achieving the

social and development goals. That means looking at the MDGs from a sustainable development perspective. Solomon Islands looks forward to that discussion.

On climate change, we call on the Secretary-General to garner the necessary political will from our developed partners to adopt a second commitment period in Durban under the Kyoto protocol. This is to avoid a gap between the first and second commitment period, and is sufficient to ensure the survival of all vulnerable people and avoid the climate change impact from reaching irreversible levels.

Problems associated with climate change are growing challenges for our country. Among the practical measures we take, the government is planning the relocation of our national referral hospital to a higher ground. Efforts to build a resilience policy on food and water security are progressing under the adaptation program. Our climate change challenges is growing and fast track funds promised two years ago must be made available to vulnerable countries as a matter of real urgency.

Mr. President,

Solomon Islands is in the process of establishing economic growth centers throughout the country and are looking at powering these centers with renewal energy which we view as a necessity and condition for growth.

Solomon Islands is grateful for the growth of South-South cooperation and its policy engagement within the international community, especially, support from member countries like Cuba, India and Papua New Guinea. We also welcome new nontraditional partners to our region including support rendered by Luxembourg, Georgia, and Italy who are instrumental in complimenting support from our traditional partners, the EU, Australia, New Zealand, Republic of China and Japan.

Mr. President,

Solomon Islands as a post conflict country remains engaged with the Australia-led Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI), with support by New Zealand and other Pacific Islands Forum member countries. The Secretary-General had a bird's eye view on the achievements of RAMSI in the restoration of law and order and the reform of our economic and governance systems. My country remains grateful to all our Pacific neighbours for their support and reiterates that any wind down of RAMSI activities be done in a calculated and responsible manner. We continue to seek home grown solutions within the region. The Melanesian Spearhead Group agreed to establish a Melanesian Regional Police academy bringing together Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands discipline forces to respond to emerging needs from disasters to conflicts. Solomon Islands hopes to join Fiji, Vanuatu and Papua New Guinea in having its Police Force participate in UN Missions. Work is still in progress and we hope to conclude it soon.

Mr. President,

Within my region Solomon Islands continues to support the French Territory of New Caledonia's inscription on the United Nations decolonization list and will extend similar support to French Polynesia working with all stakeholders including the Administrator.

Mr. President,

The current international system has pushed us to the edge of our finite natural resources. Rio +20 next year will be another global opportunity to identify gaps within existing sustainable development frameworks, from Barbados Program of Action and the Mauritius Strategy, which recognize the special situation of Small Islands Developing States to the Istanbul Program of Action for LDCs. We need to honour our commitments.

Solomon Islands looks forward to the negotiations scheduled for late this year. Already, we are in the midst of preserving the last global stock of tuna by creating the world's first sustainable industrial fishing industries through a sub regional intergovernmental mechanism. Fisheries remains our source of food and income and we will need to maximize returns for the resources in a sustainable manner by bringing together three pillars of sustainable development on equal footing in a balanced and sustainable manner.

Solomon Islands is host to the regional Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency and we continue to register our interest to host UNCLOS Regional Marine Scientific and Technological Centre to advance marine scientific research in the Pacific region and to foster transfer of marine technology for development of our ocean and marine resources.

Mr. President,

Solomon Islands believes in dialogue and engagement with all countries of the world including Fiji. We do so within the confines of the United Nations Charter and Melanesian Spearhead Group principles. With mutual respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, mutual non aggression, non interference on each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit and peaceful co-existence of each other. We would like to encourage all to do likewise.

I am equally pleased to say that since my Government came into office some fourteen months ago, we have established relations with more than twenty-seven countries and will continue to reach out to all countries to ensure Solomon Islands remains connected in our interlinked world. On this note, I welcome a new member to our family of nations, South Sudan. We offer South Sudan our friendship and look forward to working with you on all issues of common concerns to our countries.

Mr. President,

The 51 year old economic blockade on Cuba remains an issue stuck in time. Solomon Islands with the spirit of friendship and in observation of the principle of good neighbourliness make a humble call to our partner and friend, the United States for the unconditional lifting of the economic blockade against the people of Cuba. We request that the two states renew, restore, revive, redeem and reclaim their friendship and respect for each other's sovereignty within the letter and spirit of the United Nations Charter.

Mr. President,

Solomon Islands will be hosting the 11<sup>th</sup> South Pacific Festival of Arts next year to celebrate and promote the unique indigenous diverse culture of the Pacific. It gives me an opportunity to maintain a sense of pride, awareness and recognition of the "Pacifness" amongst the isolated communities within the Pacific. To develop and preserve deep sense of solidarity and unity through our ancient music, body art, dances and languages. We look forward to receiving you in 2012.

Mr. President,

On the long standing conflict in the holy land, Solomon Islands supports the work of the quartet. We note more than two third of the UN members recognize Palestine as a State. Solomon Islands in the name of peace believes the international community must have the strength and stamina to act decisively and build on the two states solution and overcome the distrust that exists in the region multilaterally.

Mr. President,

On Security Council reform, Solomon Islands continues to support the intergovernmental negotiations for expansion in both permanent and non permanent seats of the Council. My delegation is mindful that the last Security Council reform occurred back in 1965. The world has changed since then. We need to streamline the current negotiating text within our informal intergovernmental negotiation process and would like to join other Small Islands Developing States in calling for a non-permanent seat in the Security Council explicitly for Small Islands Developing States.

Mr. President,

On the issue of Human Rights I am pleased to say Solomon Islands has submitted its national human rights report to the UN Human Rights Council. For a developing country, the right to development is the core of the country's policy. Putting people at the center of development, their meaningful participation and fair distribution of national wealth and benefits will bring peace to an angry man, feed a hungry child and empower our women folk.

Mr. President,

My delegation would like to acknowledge the change in nomenclature within the United Nations 53 member States of the Asian Group to Asia Pacific Small Islands Developing States. This is an important development and truly represents the diversity of membership that exists within the Asian Group. We applaud our Asian colleagues for taking such a decision.

On the issue of gender, Solomon Islands has huge gender challenges so much so that it will be seeking a regional seat within the Executive Board of the UN Women Entity. Solomon Islands is presenting its candidate as a Pacific Small Islands Developing States endorsed candidate and with the support of the Assembly it hopes to give an LDC and SIDS flavor in the Board.

Mr. President,

On Taiwan cross strait relations, my delegation continues to commend the ongoing dialogue between the Republic of China in Taiwan and the People's Republic of China. We note Taiwan's continuous contribution to the global health system in terms of a wide range of international development programs and welcome its participation as an observer to the World Health Assembly. We continue to call for such arrangements be extended to other UN treaty bodies including the United Nations Convention on Climate Change to ensure Taiwan and its people's meaningful participation in the affairs of the international community. Solomon Islands also acknowledges Republic of China, Taiwan's climate change mitigation programs and its renewable energy programs to developing countries and would like to see application of similar observer arrangement extended to Taiwan within the UNFCCC.

Let me conclude by expressing once again, Mr. President, my delegation's confidence in you, in translating our global agenda into action within the next twelve months, a lot of lives depend on that. On behalf of the Government and people of Solomon Islands, I assure you of our support and cooperation during your term in office.

Thank you Mr. President.