



SOLOMON ISLANDS
STATEMENT BY
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OF
SOLOMON ISLANDS

AT THE
DEBATE OF THE 79th SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

THEME: “LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND: ACTING TOGETHER FOR
THE ADVANCEMENT OF PEACE, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
AND HUMAN DIGNITY FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE
GENERATIONS”

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Mr. President,

It is an honor and privilege to address this 79th session of the General Assembly. I bring warm greetings from the Government and people of Solomon Islands.

Mr. President,

We extend our warm and sincere congratulations to His Excellency Philemon Yang as the President of the 79th Session of this august Assembly. Rest assured of Solomon Islands support during your tenure in office. We thank His Excellency Ambassador Dennis Francis for his sterling leadership in the last session.

The theme for this General Assembly calls for global solidarity and collective actions for the advancement of peace, sustainable development and human dignity for present and future generations. 'Leaving No One Behind'.

Mr. President,

Changing International System

We live in a fast changing environment that is shifting towards a multipolar world. We must seek a multilateral rules-based world order that is equal, inclusive and free from power politics and geopolitical tensions. We also seek an international system that respects international law and recognizes the special situation of Small Islands Developing States.

The growing economic inequality between states, pronouncement of climate emergencies around the world, poverty, hunger, disease, social injustices and racism, hegemonic interests, militarization and nuclear posturing is dividing the world and creating tensions and fear. The rich and powerful are spending some two point four trillion dollars on arms that should be invested in the

2030 Agenda and fighting the biggest enemy of humanity, which is climate change.

Mr. President,

It is our shared and solemn duty to commit to bold collective action in protecting the health of our planet. We must hold ourselves to account and secure the future of our people by unlocking the opportunities of prosperity and plant seeds of peace. In this connection, we call for the reform of the Bretton Woods Institution to ensure it is fair, democratic and represents the rise of the global south including the multidimensional and complex challenges facing the Small Islands Developing States.

Reform of the International Financial Architecture

We call for global and regional financial institutions to scale up grant support for Small Islands Developing States. We reiterate our support for the United Nations Secretary General's SDG Stimulus of five hundred billion annually to support developing countries and to get the SDGs back on track.

In the same vein, we re-echo our call for the establishment of a SIDS permanent seat in decision making within the international financial architecture to ensure inclusivity in the spirit of leaving no one behind. The slogan used by the disability rights activist, James Charlton speaks to this call very well, that there can be – 'Nothing About Us Without Us'.

Enhance UN – Country Presence

Mr. President,

Solomon Islands was elected this year to serve in the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS. We are indeed grateful for the support given and

will work to position the UN Programme and Agencies closer to those that need it most.

As the third largest Pacific country, with LDC status, Solomon Islands calls for an enhanced UN country presence. In last forty-six (46) years, the UN conducted its relations with Solomon Islands from a distance.

Diplomatic Relations

In living up to our Charter obligation, Solomon Islands formalized relations this week with the Republic of Rwanda and Colombia. As a testament of our foreign policy of “friends to all and enemy to none” we uphold the respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of all 133 countries we have formalized relationship with, including the respect for the one China Principle in the case of the People’s Republic of China.

Security Council Reform

Mr. President,

On Security council reforms, the world continues to witness the limits and failures of the Security Council to prevent deadly conflicts with the use of the veto. Fostering international peace demands an expanded Council with equitable geographical representation, that is democratic and equipped with a revised working method. We urge during this session we shift into text-based negotiations and make the reform happen.

Security Council Candidate

Solomon Islands aspires to be a candidate for the regional seat of the Security Council in 2032. As a peace-loving country, we reiterate our standing position of condemning all wars around the world and call for a diplomatic solution.

Palestine

On the conflict in Palestine, Solomon Islands condemns all the violence and carnage from all parties including the terror attack on Israel by Hamas. The suffering and collective punishment on the Gaza population by Israel has claimed more than 41,000 Palestinian lives in less than a year. This is unacceptable. The disregard for international law and humanitarian law have seen the matter referred to the International Court of Justice. We hope those with influence do more for peace and not fan the flame of the expanding conflict into Lebanon.

Solomon Islands reiterates its long-standing position on the Palestine conflict and support the global push for a two-state solution with Israel and Palestine living side by side with secured borders in a just, permanent and complete peace.

Decolonization

Colonialism has no place in this day and age. Solomon Islands supports the implementation of the UN Fourth Decade for the eradication of colonialism. We also recognize the inalienable right of self-determination of all Non-Self Governing and Trust Territories including New Caledonia and French Polynesia to choose their political future within Chapter 11 of the UN Charter and General Assembly Resolution 1514(15).

New Caledonia

The recent brutal violence in New Caledonia calls for a new political solution within the spirit of 1998 Noumea Accord. We call on the UN to do more to calm and stabilize the situation in New Caledonia [Kanakya].

Solomon Islands welcome the constructive discussion between France and the New Caledonia government to facilitate a Pacific Islands Forum Fact Finding Mission to New Caledonia.

Ocean

As a large ocean state, 98% of its territory is covered by the ocean. The Pacific occupies 20% of the world's surface and provides 1.5 million tons of annual catch of tuna which is around a third of the world's supply. Our approach to the ocean is premised on achieving a healthy, resilient, secure and productive ocean that supports sustainable use and development for the benefit of the people of Solomon Islands now and into the future.

Honiara Summit

As stated last year, Solomon Islands will be co-hosting a Honiara Summit on SDG 14.4 with the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency, UN Secretary General's Special Envoy for the Ocean and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. The Summit aims to examine status on SDG 14.4 at global, regional, and national levels, share knowledge and experience on the management of tuna stock, provide policy and strategic actions that will feed into the third UN Conference (UNO3) in 2025 in France.

Pollution

On the matter of pollution and waste management, Solomon Islands looks forward to the finalization of negotiations on the Treaty to end plastic pollution, including in the marine environment in November this year. We have already banned 'single-use plastics. We are also reforming waste management in partnership with Japan, Australia and ADB.

Continental Shelf

As stewards of the ocean, Solomon Islands values the work of the UN Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf and will continue to address outstanding continental shelf claims.

Solomon Islands upholds its obligations to United Nation Convention on the Law of the Sea and will domesticate the recently signed United Nations Agreement on Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction.

Nuclear

In response to the discharge of treated radio active contaminated water into the ocean by Japan, the lack of national and regional scientific knowledge on understanding the intergenerational impact and the transboundary nature of the discharge continues to cause uneasiness and anxiety. UN specialized agencies including the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) must continue to build bridges of trust with states and support states capacity to read and understand IAEA's report and monitor the discharge of treated radio-active contaminated water into the ocean.

Our concern is connected to the sad history of our region being used to test, store and dump nuclear weapons and wastes.

Mr. President,

Solomon Islands remains a nuclear weapon free state under the 1985 Rarotonga Treaty. This week we signed and ratified the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). This is a message of peace to all our friends not to engage in military nuclear projects and to free the world of nuclear weapons.

Cuba

Mr. President,

Education empowers the nation, let me thank Cuba for the training of Solomon Islands medical students. Cuba has done this despite enduring more than six decades of United States of America economic, commercial and financial embargo, a relic of the past that should now be discarded.

Once again, we call on our friend and partner the United States of America to end the embargo. The United Nations stands for good neighbourly relations, and peaceful co-existence. The world will benefit from Cuba - United States of America's improved relations.

Policing and Security

Following the conclusion of the Solomon Islands International Assistance Force (SIAF) in August, our priority now is to strengthen our police capability and capacity. We will work with all partners to achieve this goal. We thank all our partners and once again appeal to the UN to provide space for Solomon Islands to participate in Peace Keeping Missions.

Mr. President,

South – South Cooperation

Solomon Islands welcome the power of south - south cooperation, and acknowledge the People's Republic of China's various development initiatives such as the Belt and Road Initiative, Global Development Initiative, Global Security Initiative and Global Civilization Initiative in supporting Solomon Islands development aspiration including the 2030 Agenda.

In education and health. We thank China for its commitment to establish an Ocean Research Center, and acknowledge ongoing construction of Solomon Islands National Referral Hospital Comprehensive Health Center. We also welcome India's Pharmacopeial cooperation and Japan's commitment to construct a Fisheries Research Center.

Mr. President,

On the international trade front, Solomon Islands acknowledge China as the first major economy to offer zero tariff treatment for 100% tariff lines to all LDCs. We call on all our Partners to follow suit.

Development Partners

China has become Solomon Islands largest infrastructure partner and is currently supporting Solomon Islands digital transformation with the ongoing installation of 161 communication towers across the country. Already we are witnessing more of our rural population now connected to the digital age.

Our inter-island connectivity has been improved with the completion of two all-weather airfields in two of Solomon Islands Provinces, Taro and Seghe. We thank New Zealand and Australia for their support. We would also like to acknowledge Japan, ADB and the World Bank for their ongoing support in improving our infrastructure connectivity. Nevertheless, as a geographically fragmented country, we need more infrastructure to meaningfully deliver on our SDGs.

Solomon Islands value the contribution of all our development partners and calls for partnerships that is country owned, led and driven. We seek partnerships that is genuine, meaningful, durable and free from onerous conditions.

Climate Change

Mr. President,

Climate change is no longer a threat but a crisis. Solomon Islands is located in a hotspot where the impact of climate change is three times the global average. Science tells us we are on a 2.5 degrees Celsius trajectory. The Paris Agreement is failing humanity. We need a stronger legally binding framework that will put us on a 1.5 pathway. The voluntary approach under the Paris Agreement has failed miserably.

The changing narrative on climate change is unacceptable. Diversion away from talking about ambitious climate action, survival or the construction of safe Islands is replaced by discussion on sinking and migration. We need to give hope to our people on the frontline of climate change..

The G20 is responsible for 80% of global emissions, the group must take a stronger leadership role in the fight against climate change.

SDG and VNR

Solomon Islands in July presented its second Voluntary National Report (VNR) at the High-Level Political Forum in July. The report revealed uneven progress. The review however has allowed the country to re-strategize and prioritized four key interconnected and people centered pillars, namely – 1. Economic Transformation, 2. Good Governance, 3. National Unity and Stability 4. Human Capital Development.

Our economic transformation agenda is centered on enhancing transport infrastructure connectivity, boost investments in agriculture, fisheries and tourism, improve private sector investment environment for indigenous Solomon Islanders and reduce cost of doing business in the country. Over the

past 3 months, the Government has been socializing these priorities through several targeted national forums including our development partners.

LDC – Graduation

The Government is leading the preparation of our smooth transition strategy to graduate out of our LDC status. The strategy will not only look at what needs to be done before 2027 and but also in the next 5-10 years post 2027, including the implementation of critical economic and social investments to prevent regression.

DOHA – Program of Action

We reaffirm our commitment to the implementation of the Doha Program of Action, and support the call for the General Assembly to review existing resolutions on smooth transition to ensure the graduation framework is better, fit for purpose, resilient and irreversible.

SIDS Framework - (ABAS)

Solomon Islands welcome the adoption of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States (ABAS) which offers immense opportunities to access adequate and affordable funds to drive economic growth and prosperity of SIDS.

Solomon Islands also welcome the adoption of the Multidimensional Vulnerability Index (MVI) and we look forward to its early implementation.

Mr President,

We pledge our commitment to the Pact for the Future, a forward-looking framework that places the health of our planet, people, prosperity and peace at the center of our agenda, supported by a reformed financing architecture that will turbo charge sustainable development and guarantee a better tomorrow for all and leaves no one behind.

Thank you.