

MSI+5 ROUNDTABLE II: Enhancing International Support for the SIDS

**Statement by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
Secretary General, Mr Tuiloma Neroni Slade
North Lawn Building, Conference Room 2
UN Headquarters, New York
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Excellencies, Co-Chairs, Distinguished Delegates,

1. There was much said yesterday that we in the Pacific Islands Forum region, would support and agree with. So. I will confine myself to a few additional thoughts and by way of emphasis.
2. We believe that international support, particularly through multilaterals like the UN and World Bank, **needs to be tailored** through modalities of assistance commensurate with the particular situations of Small Island Developing States (SIDS).
3. There are workable and promising examples with the Global Fund on HIV/AIDS being able to accommodate Pacific regional conditions and the Pacific Alliance on Sustainability with the Global Environment Facility (GEF-PAS)
4. Such international support should be applicable to all sectors, but particularly relevant when it comes to Climate Change. Forum Island Leaders have directed our regional organizations to provide concrete options on how to improve **access to and management of Climate Change resources** in anticipation of the flow of resources as promised in Copenhagen. Pacific Forum Economic Ministers and Ministers of Finance will deliberate on this issue late next month.
5. It is most important that in delivering these resources, **SIDS own national and regional mechanisms be considered for disbursement and management**. Global mechanisms, such as the World Bank categorization of SME for example, are not always able to change the scale and conditionality's in which they normally operate, for the requirements of SIDS. High compliance for relatively small amounts of money is not optimal for small administrations.
6. We have good examples of **pooled funding mechanisms and facilities**, like the EU/European Development Fund (EDF) and the Micronesian Challenge in the region, which highlight how to apply in practice, a reduction of aid fragmentation and reduced conditionality in accessing resources.

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7. **Predictability and flexibility of resources** is key for the sustainability of implementation at the country level. **Direct budgetary support** where ever possible presents the most preferred mechanism for development assistance. This budget support is primarily targeted at sector priorities where regular development partner and country dialogue on donor harmonisation, country ownership and aid effectiveness good practice occurs.

8. Donors have indicated their strong support for introducing budget support at sectoral level, primarily in sectors of demonstrated achievement and capacity to effectively administer, implement and monitor utilization of resources. .

9. This is a welcomed expression of confidence in the capacities of Pacific countries to receive budgetary support as the preferred mode of assistance and we are happy with this trend in as much as we believe the groundwork of standards and systems have been established to support and, we expect, to sustain such confidence.

10. Through the implementation of the **Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination**, the Pacific Islands Forum has embarked on a significant programme of work to support:

- a. the strengthening of Pacific Island Countries **planning processes and financial systems**
- b. fostering **donor harmonization, aid effectiveness and mutual accountability**
- c. providing support towards the development of **effective whole of government and non-government** sector Partnerships
- d. establishing an open and interactive high level dialogue between Forum Leaders and the private sector in the region.

11. We have heard in the course of this week of the need for holding countries accountable to **measurable progress**. This **requires robust monitoring and evaluation systems** at the national level and is an area in need of nurturing and support from development partners.

12. The Foreign Minister of Australia yesterday highlighted the importance of developing **appropriate indicators for SIDS** and ensuring the UN System accommodates this in its collection and analysis of data. This is a critical issue for our region and I should think for all SIDS.

13. Of particular importance is the application of such appropriate indicators to localising MDGs targets, which reinforces the centrality of the alignment of progress indicators from

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regional and international frameworks to the national level targets as couched in the National Development Plan,

14. We believe the acknowledgement of **vulnerability would need to be quantified and taken into account in the development indices** used globally to fully reflect the situation of SIDS and thus develop appropriate support mechanisms. As the distinguished High Representative has noted, there is a need for fair and meaningful recognition in the global trade arrangements for the acknowledged vulnerable conditions of SIDS.

15. The Barbados Plan of Action is about the acceptance of the responsibility for sustainable development. All SIDS accept this responsibility, seriously and conscientiously. But the support and partnership of the international community is critical, for all the reasons that we know.

16. This Roundtable and the one yesterday laid out a range of specific and needed tasks for all to take. Our Secretariat looks forward to working with SIDS in our Pacific region, and in other regions, and with all development partners. We need to go forward at the next MSI Review with an even better achievement tale to pronounce to the world.