

TWENTIETH SOUTH PACIFIC FORUM**TARAWA, KIRIBATI****10 - 11 JULY 1989****FORUM COMMUNIQUE**

The Twentieth South Pacific Forum was held in Tarawa, Kiribati, from 10-11 July, 1989. The Forum was attended by Heads of Governments of Australia, the Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, New Zealand, Nauru, Niue, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands were represented by their Deputy Prime Ministers, Tonga by its Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defence and Western Samoa by its Minister for Justice and Associate Minister for Foreign Affairs. The Beretitenti of Kiribati, His Excellency Ieremia Tabai GCMG, chaired the meeting.

DIALOGUE**Forum/Dialogue Partners Meeting**

2. In accordance with the decision taken at the 1988 South Pacific Forum, a number of selected non-regional governments with a demonstrated and constructive interest in the South Pacific were invited to participate in a post-Forum Dialogue with a representative panel of Forum leaders. The Forum welcomed the attendance at the inaugural Dialogue of:

Canada

Hon. Pat Carney
Personal Representative of the Secretary
of State for External Affairs

France

HE Ambassador Philippe Baude
Permanent Secretary for the Pacific

Japan

HE Ambassador Toshio Isogai
Japanese Ambassador to Fiji

United Kingdom

Lord Glenarthur
Minister of State
Foreign & Commonwealth Office

United States

Mr C. Edward Dillery
Assistant Secretary, Director of Management Policy
Department of State

Although accepting an invitation to participate in the Dialogue, the People's Republic of China was unable to attend.

3. Forum leaders highlighted a number of issues which they wished to discuss with the Dialogue Partners, both individually and collectively. These included driftnetting and other fisheries concerns, environmental and nuclear issues, New Caledonia, trade and investment, regional transportation, development assistance and the need to improve the productive and marketing capabilities of Forum island Countries.

Dialogue with Non-member Donors

4. The Forum welcomed increased donor involvement in the region and their continued interest in the development of South Pacific countries. In light of the newly introduced dialogue arrangements, the Forum agreed that major consultations with those donor governments and organisations that are invited to participate in the Post-Forum Dialogue will be in the Dialogue. The Forum noted with particular appreciation the valuable cooperation arrangements developing with Canada, Japan, the United Kingdom, the United States and the European Community.

Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN)

5. The Forum considered that new efforts should be made to develop a more comprehensive relationship with ASEAN.

ECONOMIC ISSUES

6. Regional fisheries issues and the inaugural post-Forum Dialogue were the main focus of the 20th Forum, although a range of economic issues was discussed.

Reports of the Committee on Regional Economic Issues and the Regional Committee on Trade

7. The Forum considered Reports from the Committee on Regional Economic Issues and the Regional Committee on Trade, which addressed a broad range of economic and development matters of concern to member countries. The Forum agreed there was a need for member Governments to explore new trade and investment policy initiatives to promote national development. It recognised the importance of the GATT/Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations. The Prime Minister of Australia advised the Forum of developments in proposals for closer economic cooperation amongst Asia/Pacific countries, and indicated that he would discuss with representatives of those governments involved the possibility of the Forum being invited to observe the meeting proposed to be held in Canberra. The Forum agreed that if such an invitation were issued it should be represented by the Secretary General.

8. The Forum agreed that meetings of Forum trade and economic Ministers be held to address specific economic issues and concerns. It expressed satisfaction with the strengthening of the Secretariat's capacity to provide economic analysis and advice since the Nuku'alofa Forum in 1988. It directed that the Committee on Regional Economic Issues and the Regional Committee on Trade continue to meet in tandem to address economic and trade issues.

Telecommunications

9. The Forum noted with gratitude the reconfirmation by the Prime Minister of Australia of the offer of A\$2.6m as assistance for the Pacific Area Cooperative Telecommunications Network (PACT) which was made at the 19th South Pacific Forum in Nuku'alofa. As requested by governments interested in participating in the network, these funds will be used to modify national earth stations in participating Forum Island Countries.

Fisheries Issues - Driftnets

10. The Forum expressed its profound concern that the damage now being done by pelagic drift net fishing to the economy and environment of the South Pacific region. Given the catastrophic effects of this fishing technique on the lives of the peoples of the South Pacific, the Forum adopted the Tarawa Declaration. Through the Declaration the Forum:

- *resolved for the sake of this and succeeding generations of Pacific peoples to seek the establishment of a regime for the management of albacore tuna in the South Pacific that would ban drift net fishing from the region; such a ban might then be a first step to a comprehensive ban on such fishing;*
- *determined, to this end, to convene an urgent meeting of regional diplomatic, legal and fisheries experts, to develop a Convention to give effect to its common resolve to create a zone free of drift net fishing;*
- *called on the international community to support, and cooperate in, the urgent conclusion of a Convention establishing the zone;*
- *resolved that individual member states of the South Pacific Forum will take all possible measures in the interim to prevent drift net fishing within their waters, and to otherwise actively discourage operations of drift net fishers;*

- *further resolved that member states acting individually and collectively will take what action they can within relevant international organisations to contribute to the cessation of this harmful form of fishing;*
 - *commended the Republic of Korea for its decision to cease drift net fishing in the region; and*
 - *called on Japan and Taiwan to follow this example, and abandon immediately their damaging drift net operations.*
11. The Forum accepted the generous offer of the New Zealand Government to host the meeting of experts to develop the drift net Convention.
12. The Forum recognised the urgent need for closer cooperation among all Forum members in order to protect and preserve their fishery and other marine resources as effectively and cost-efficiently as possible. The Forum therefore directed the Forum Fisheries Agency to investigate, promote and implement the design and development of an Integrated Programme of Regional Fisheries Surveillance.
13. The Forum was pleased that Japan had agreed to begin discussion with Forum Fisheries Agency member countries on a multilateral fisheries arrangement, but disappointed that no progress had otherwise been made on the issue. It renewed its mandate to the Director of FFA to continue negotiations with a view to early agreement on a multilateral fisheries arrangement.

Pacific Economic Cooperation Conference (PECC)

14. The Forum supported the development of cooperation with the PECC, through a PECC Task Force, which will consider measures for developing business opportunities in Forum Island countries and explore mechanisms for strengthening PECC activities in the region. It noted the importance for Forum/PECC links of the PECC meeting to be held in New Zealand in November, 1989.

POLITICAL, SECURITY ISSUES AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Decolonisation - New Caledonia

15. The Forum reviewed recent developments affecting New Caledonia since the last Forum. It expressed its deep sadness at the assassination of FLNKS leaders Jean-Marie Tjibaou and Yeiwene Yeiwene, and urged all parties to promote reconciliation and to refrain from acts of violence.

16. The Forum welcomed the positive measures being pursued by the French Government, in cooperation with the people of New Caledonia, to promote political, economic and social development in the Territory. The Forum expressed its continuing support for the agreements concluded in Paris in June and August, 1988 as a framework for New Caledonia's peaceful progress to self-determination. It noted the progress made by the Government of Prime Minister Rocard to implement the agreements, including the recent elections leading to devolution of powers to provincial assemblies and a territorial congress in the Territory. It urged all parties to continue to work for the successful implementation of the agreements in a spirit of constructive dialogue and reconciliation.

17. The Forum expressed the hope that consideration of New Caledonia by the United Nations Committee on Decolonisation (C24) and the United Nations General Assembly would continue to be characterised by the consensus approach adopted in 1988.

18. Forum Governments reiterated their willingness, collectively and individually, to contribute to the process of reconciliation and to the training process for New Caledonians in the lead up to the act of self-determination in 1998.

19. The Forum restated its strong support for an act of self-determination consistent with the established decolonisation practices and principles of the United Nations, in which all options, including independence, would be open, and which would lead to a settlement that safeguards the rights of the indigenous Kanaks and all New Caledonians in a multiracial society.

(2) Climatic Changes and Sea Levels

20. The Forum expressed concern about the possible effects on island countries of rising sea levels resulting from global warming, and emphasised the importance of a regional approach to environmental matters. It agreed that Forum members should take decisive action to draw world attention to the way the environmental problem affected the South Pacific, and to represent regional views at appropriate international gatherings, possibly including by way of a resolution in the United Nations General Assembly. The Forum supported the candidature of New Zealand to the Governing Council of the United Nations Environmental Programme as one means of achieving this.

21. The Forum welcomed confirmation by the Prime Minister of Australia that his Government would fund a core project over the next five years to establish a network of monitoring stations in the region to research such areas as changes in sea levels, atmospheric pressures, and rainfall patterns. The total cost, including the design phase, will be A\$6.25m, with implementation to begin early in 1990. The Prime Minister emphasised that the results of this research would be available to all Forum members and suggested that this be done in the context of a programme of information exchange. He emphasised also Australia's commitment to a long-term programme in this area.

(3) South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty

22. The Forum noted with appreciation the ratification of the Treaty by Solomon Islands, making that country the tenth Party to the Treaty, and the ratification of Protocols 2 and 3 by the People's Republic of China. It called upon those nuclear weapon states, which had not acceded to the Protocols, to do so as soon as possible. It also authorised the Secretariat to engage in cooperation and information exchange with the Organisation for the Prohibition of Nuclear Arms in Latin America (OPANAL).

23. The Forum recorded its deep concern at continuing nuclear testing in the region by France. A reduction in the number of tests was not what was sought. The Forum again called upon France to cease immediately all nuclear testing in the region.

(4) South Pacific Regional Environment Programme

24. The Forum reaffirmed its strong support for the SPREP Convention and welcomed the active steps taken by several Forum countries to ratify this Convention. It urged the rest of the Forum countries to make their best endeavours to ratify the SPREP Convention and bring it into force at the earliest opportunity.

INSTITUTIONAL ISSUES

South Pacific Organisations Coordinating Committee (SPOCC)

25. The Forum welcomed and recognised the importance of SPOCC in ensuring cooperation and coordination of activities among the various regional institutions. The first meeting of SPOCC was held successfully in March 1989.

FORUM COUNTRY INITIATIVES

26. The Forum endorsed initiatives by the Prime Minister of Australia on action to eliminate all forms of Chemical Weapons, the convening of a meeting of regional officials to discuss greater law enforcement cooperation, and a joint United Nations/Australia sponsored Seminar on the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. It also endorsed the forthcoming Seminar in Canberra on Security Issues in Oceania organised by the Australian National University.

27. The Forum agreed that while there was a need for fair and accurate reporting in regional media, there was clear support for the principle of freedom of the press and that nothing should be done which could be interpreted as limiting that freedom. The Forum authorised the Secretariat to investigate the possibility of funding and convening a workshop for interested government and media representatives to consider measures to encourage well-informed and balanced reporting by regional media.

FORUM SECRETARIAT

28. The Forum commended the Secretary General and his staff on their achievements since the last Forum. It emphasised the successful arrangements that had been put in place for the first Dialogue meetings, the increased activity by the Secretariat in projecting the region internationally, and the increased cooperation which was evident with other organisations in the region.

FORUM FISHERIES AGENCY

29. The Forum congratulated the Director of the Forum Fisheries Agency on the many valuable activities undertaken by his organisation for the benefit of the region. It welcomed the concept of the forthcoming Conference to mark the tenth anniversary of the Agency, at which its past programmes would be reviewed, and plans would be discussed for its activities over the next decade. The Forum noted with appreciation that Tonga had ratified the US Multilateral Fisheries Treaty, which meant that all Pacific Island Countries were now parties to the Treaty and its benefits.

CCOP/SOPAC

30. The Forum noted with appreciation the various programme activities that were being administered by the Coordinating Committee for Mineral Prospecting in South Pacific Offshore Areas, CCOP/SOPAC, to assist the Island member countries in identifying, assessing and managing the mineral, energy and other non-living marine resource potential of their respective exclusive economic zones. It also acknowledged the generous contribution and assistance of donor countries and agencies, both within and outside the South Pacific region, in supporting the work of CCOP/SOPAC. The Forum noted the need for appropriate legislation to protect the region's marine and mining resources in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC

31. The Forum expressed its satisfaction with the increasing contribution the University of the South Pacific had been able to make to development and education in the Island countries, and its hope that ways could be formed to increase its resources accordingly. It noted also the telecommunications and postal difficulties faced by the University in spreading educational services throughout the region.

PACIFIC ISLANDS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

32. The Forum thanked the Director of the Pacific Islands Development Programme, who had been invited to address the Forum following the establishment of SPOCC, for his organisation's work in the region

OTHER BUSINESS

Proposal by Nauru to be Accorded Small Island Country Status

33. The Forum accepted a proposal by Nauru to be accorded Small Island Country status within the Forum.

21ST SOUTH PACIFIC FORUM

34. The Forum accepted with pleasure the invitation by the Prime Minister of Vanuatu to host the 21st South Pacific Forum. It noted the generous offer of Federated States of Micronesia to host the 22nd South Pacific Forum in 1991.

Forum Secretariat, Tarawa

11 July 1989



20th South Pacific Forum

Conference Centre - Otintaai Hotel

Tarawa Kiribati

10 - 11 July, 1989.

TARAWA DECLARATION

The South Pacific Forum meeting at Tarawa on 10-11 July 1989

recognising the crucial dependence of the Pacific Island peoples on marine resources;

profoundly concerned at the damage now being done by pelagic drift net fishing to the economy and environment of the South Pacific region;

convinced that this indiscriminate, irresponsible and destructive fishing technique threatens the survival of the albacore tuna resource, and so the economic well-being of Forum Island Countries;

deeply regretting that Japan and Taiwan have failed to respond to the concerns of regional countries about this most serious issue;

noting that it is in the mutual interest of the major fishing nations active in the region, and the Forum, to conserve fisheries stocks;

noting that all countries inside and outside the region are affected by the mismanagement of the resources of the world's oceans, by the environmental dangers of drift net fishing and by the threat to safe navigation;

recalling the relevant provisions of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and in particular Articles 63, 64, 87, 116, 117, 118 and 119;

recognising that the use of drift nets as presently employed in the Southern Pacific Albacore Tuna Fishery is not consistent with international legal requirements in relation to rights and obligations of high seas fisheries conservation and management and environmental principles;

resolves for the sake of this and succeeding generations of Pacific peoples to seek the establishment of a regime for the management of albacore tuna in the South Pacific that would ban drift net fishing from the region; such a ban might then be a first step to a comprehensive ban on such fishing;

determines, to this end, to convene an urgent meeting of regional diplomatic, legal and fisheries experts to develop a Convention to give effect to its common resolve to create a zone free of drift net fishing;

calls on the international community to support, and cooperate in, the urgent conclusion of a Convention establishing the zone;

resolves that individual member states of the South Pacific Forum will take all possible measures in the interim to prevent drift net fishing within their waters, and otherwise actively to discourage the operations of drift net fishers;

further resolves that member states acting individually and collectively will take what action they can within relevant international organisations to contribute to the cessation of this harmful form of fishing;

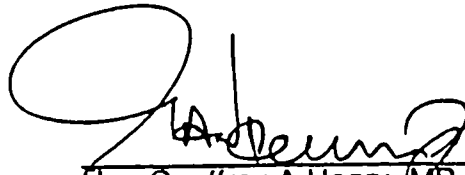
commends the Republic of Korea for its decision to cease drift net fishing in the region;

calls on Japan and Taiwan to follow this example, and abandon immediately their damaging drift net operations.

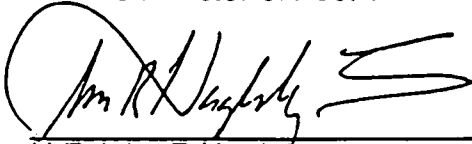
SIGNED AT TARAWA, KIRIBATI ON THE ELEVENTH DAY OF JULY, 1989



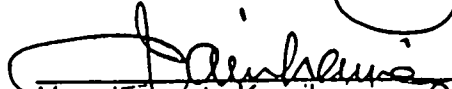
Hon Bob Hawke, AC, MP
Prime Minister of Australia



Hon Geoffrey A Henry, MP
Prime Minister of the Cook Islands




H E John R Hagelgam
President of the Federated States of
Micronesia



Hon Josevata Kamikamica, CMG
Minister for Finance of Fiji



H E Jeremia T. Tabai, GCMG
Beretitenti of Kiribati




H E Mr Hammer DeRoburt, GCMG, OBE, MP
President of Nauru



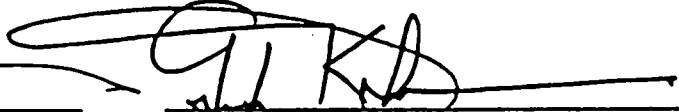
Rt Hon David Lange, MP
Prime Minister of New Zealand



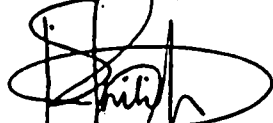
Hon Sir Robert Rex, KBE, CMG, OBE
Premier of Niue



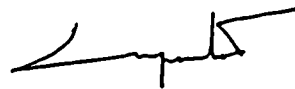
Hon Akoka Doi, CMG
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for
Public Services of Papua New Guinea



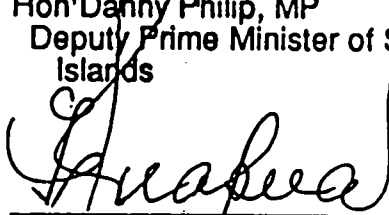
H E Mr Amata Kabua
President of the Republic of the Marshall
Islands



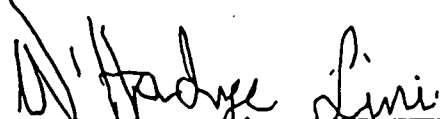
Hon Danny Philip, MP
Deputy Prime Minister of Solomon
Islands



HRH Crown Prince Tupouto'a
Minister for Foreign Affairs and
Defence of Tonga



Rt Hon Dr Tomasi Puapua, MP
Prime Minister of Tuvalu



Hon Fr Walter Hadye Lini, CBE, MP
Prime Minister of Vanuatu



Hon Leiatua Vaiao
Minister for Justice and Associate
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Western Samoa