



*Check Against Delivery*

**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF PALAU TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**Statement by His Excellency Dr. Caleb Otto  
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**On behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum on the Stocktaking Session,  
Intergovernmental Negotiations on the Post-2015 Development Agenda:  
Follow Up and Review**

**New York, Wednesday, 21 January 2015**

Co-Facilitators,

I have the honor to speak as the current chair of the Pacific Islands Forum on this important topic.

Last year, our Leaders agreed to recast the *Pacific Plan for Regional Cooperation and Integration* as the *Framework for Pacific Regionalism*. The Framework sets out the vision, values and strategic objectives for Pacific regionalism, which are consistent with the aspirations and objectives of the post-2015 agenda and SDGs, including the outcomes of the Third International Conference of Small Island Developing States – the Samoa Pathway.

Our Pacific Vision is for a region of peace, harmony, security, social inclusion, and prosperity, so that all Pacific people can lead free, healthy, and productive lives. We value our oceans, our culture, good governance, peaceful societies, inclusivity and equality, genuine and durable partnerships. Our regional objectives cover sustainable development, inclusive and equitable economic growth, strengthened governance and security.

The Framework also specifies a robust process for high-level priority setting and progress monitoring. It thus provides a broad structure under which Pacific regional organisations and development partners can work together in support of countries to deliver on the post-2015 agenda and SDGs, including the Samoa Pathway.

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Let me now turn to the *Forum Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination*, a key regional tool for reporting, monitoring and accountability.

Agreed to by our Leaders in 2009, the Compact responds to Leaders' concerns that, despite continued high levels of development assistance over many years, the Pacific's progress towards the MDGs is slow and uneven.

The Forum Compact encourages Forum Island Countries to systematically examine and improve how national plans and budgets, public financial management systems, development partner coordination, monitoring and evaluation of results, and engagement between governments, parliamentarians, private sector and non-state actors, contribute to overall national and regional sustainable development efforts.

The Forum Compact sets out three key approaches designed to strengthen coordination and the effective use of all development resources in the Pacific:

- Firstly, monitoring development outcomes, in terms of tracking our region's progress towards the MDGs. To this end, the Pacific Islands Forum have contextualised the global MDGs assessment framework to the regional context, also relying largely on nationally-provided data.
- Secondly, improving development effectiveness through peer reviews, development partner reporting, and making climate change finance more accessible and integrated into existing financial management systems.
- And thirdly, strengthening private sector and infrastructure development.

With this focus on strengthening country leadership, effective institutions and mutually accountable partnerships, with enhanced development partner support, the Compact complements the *Framework for Pacific Regionalism's* focus on improving the effectiveness of regional mechanisms in supporting national priorities.

One of the mechanisms set up through the *Forum Compact* is the Peer Review, where Forum member governments and development partners volunteer to have their systems and processes reviewed by a team selected from Forum member governments and partners within the region.

The review aims to help strengthen national institutions and capacities to more effectively plan for, resource, deliver and monitor the priorities of sustainable development and development coordination, including strengthening development partner policies and practice. Good development practices are identified for regional learning and recommendations are made to the governments and development partners to address remaining challenges.

A total of 13 Forum Island countries have undertaken peer reviews, while the first peer review of development partners was conducted for the first time last year.

The peer reviews of development partners seek to complement the country peer reviews by monitoring the alignment and accountability of development partner support to national and regional priorities.

This is crucial given that the overall effectiveness of development efforts is reliant upon the contributions of both the development partners and the recipient country. We encourage development partners to support the monitoring of the post-2015 agenda through continued open data sharing. Transparent and accountable partnerships will assist our countries and the region to more effectively plan for and enhance our development efforts.

Finally, a key part of the Forum Compact is regular progress reports and since 2010, our Forum Leaders have considered and endorsed annual reports on the region's progress towards the MDGs, as well as progress towards improving the effectiveness of resource allocation and use.

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The Pacific also has many existing regional monitoring and reporting mechanisms that could contribute to follow up and review of each of the proposed SDGs and the Samoa Pathway.

Let me provide the example on Oceans and Climate Change.

Recognising the importance and opportunity vested in our Pacific ocean, Forum leaders endorsed the Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy in 2002 and the Framework for a Pacific Oceanscape in 2010.

The approved Framework for Pacific Oceanscape represented a major step forward for Pacific Ocean policy. Initiated by His Excellency Anote Tong, President of Kiribati, the overriding intent of the Framework is to catalyse action and political will to ensure the sustainable development, management and conservation of the diverse ocean and island resources within our region through an integrated approach to ocean management.

The Framework also established the appointment of a Pacific Ocean Commissioner to act as a champion for the region, providing the necessary high level representation and commitment urgently required to ensure dedicated advocacy and attention to ocean issues.

The ocean continues to be an essential issue for our political Leaders, as reflected by the theme and Declaration from the Forum Leaders meeting last year in Palau entitled "The Ocean: Life and Future".

Through the Palau Declaration, Leaders called on the Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner, with assistance from the Pacific Ocean Alliance, to build on and maintain a list of initiatives and commitments on the ocean being undertaken by Forum member states as a basis for promoting and monitoring the sustainable development of our Ocean and fostering integrated management approaches where appropriate.

This list will also assist the Office in implementing a structured monitoring and evaluation strategy around the Framework for a Pacific Oceanscape, allowing us to monitor how we are doing in managing implementation at the regional level. Leaders envisaged that this list should assist in reducing individual country reporting in the long term and help facilitate the necessary collective reporting from this region towards global monitoring efforts, including towards the post-2015 development agenda and proposed ocean SDG 14, as well as towards the Samoa Pathway.

#### Co-facilitators

We also have existing Pacific regional mechanisms in place to address urgent action towards climate change. We have ten years of experience of the implementation of the Pacific Islands Framework for Action on Climate Change, which began in 2006.

In 2013, our Forum Leaders agreed to the Majuro Declaration for Climate Leadership, which captures the Pacific's political commitment to be a region of Climate Leaders, and to spark a "new wave of climate leadership" that can deliver a safe climate future for all.

Moreover, last year, at the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, our region announced the development of an Integrated Strategy for Climate and Disaster Resilient Development in the Pacific, making us one of the first regions in the world to take constructive steps towards combining regional, national and sub national efforts to reduce the risks to sustainable national development posed by disasters and climate change.

#### Co-facilitators

We hope that our existing Pacific regional mechanisms provide important examples and good practice for consideration in the follow up and review of the post-2015 development agenda and SDGs.

Thank you.