



THIRD PACIFIC REGIONAL ENERGY AND TRANSPORT MINISTERS' MEETING

(Nuku'alofa, Tonga, 26–28 April 2017)

Theme: Affordable, reliable and sustainable energy and transport services for all

COMMUNIQUÉ

1. The Third Pacific Regional Energy and Transport Ministers' Meeting was organised by the Pacific Community and hosted by the Government of Tonga at the Fa'onelua Convention Centre in Nuku'alofa, Tonga from 26–28 April, 2017. The meeting was officially opened by His Royal Highness, Crown Prince Tupouto'a 'Ulukalala. The meeting was chaired by the Honourable Siaso Sovaleni – Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Meteorology, Energy, Information, Disaster Management, Environment, Climate Change and Communications (MEIDECC) and Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the Honourable Semisi Sika, Minister for Infrastructure. It was attended by the Prime Ministers of Cook Islands and Tuvalu and Ministers/Secretary and Associate Ministers from the following Pacific Island countries and territories (PICTs): Federated States of Micronesia, French Polynesia, Marshall Islands, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. Heads of delegations or senior officials also attended on behalf of American Samoa, Australia, Fiji, France, Guam, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Palau, United States of America and Wallis and Futuna.
2. The meeting was also attended by the High Representative for Landlocked least Developed and Small island Development States and Under Secretary General, the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Representative and Chief Executive Officer for the SEforALL initiative (Sustainable Energy for All), and representatives from the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and many other international and regional inter-governmental and non-governmental partner organisations, universities, civil societies and the private sector.

The Ministers:

3. Expressed their deep gratitude to His Royal Highness, Crown Prince Tupouto'a 'Ulukalala and the Government and the people of Tonga and their co-host, the Pacific Community (SPC), for the excellent arrangements made in hosting the Third Pacific Regional Energy and Transport Ministers' Meeting and the preceding meetings of the Energy and Transport Officials and for the generous hospitality extended to them during their stay in Tonga. They further expressed their appreciation to the Honourable Siaso Sovaleni and the Honourable Semisi Sika for their capable leadership in chairing the meeting.



4. Congratulated the SPC on the 70th Anniversary, and expressed their gratitude for its invaluable contributions towards the sustainable development of its Members. The Ministers reaffirmed the leadership role of SPC in the implementation of the regional frameworks for the Energy and Transport sectors.
5. Applauded the launch of the Pacific Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (PCREEE), an initiative of SPC, the Government of Tonga and the Sustainable Energy Island and Climate Resilience Initiative (SIDS DOCK) supported by UNIDO and the Government of Austria through the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) and members of the Council of the Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP). They also applauded the signing of the *Memorandum of Understanding on Flag State Implementation for Domestic Ships in the Pacific Islands Region* (Pacific MoU), the first in the world to address the safety of domestic shipping.
6. Applauded the attendance of Ms Rachel Kyte, UN Secretary-General's Special Representative and Chief Executive Officer for the SEforALL, and Mr Stein Hansen, Director and Regional Representative of UNIDO and welcomed their presentations on "Affordable, Reliable and Sustainable Energy and Transport Services for All" and the implications of these, respectively, on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the promotion of circular island economies.. The meeting also welcomed the presentation by Mr. Juvenal Shiundu, Senior Deputy Director, Technical Cooperation Division of IMO on "The contribution of Maritime Transport to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development." The meeting also congratulated Ms Fekita 'Utoikamanu on her appointment as the United Nations High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Land-locked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States.
7. Acknowledged the adoption of the Small Islands Developing States Accelerated Modalities for Action (SAMOA) Pathway, SDGs and the coming into force of the Paris Agreement as historical shifts in the dynamics of the global and regional effort on sustainable development and poverty eradication, more particularly for Small Island Developing States (SIDS). At the regional level, the Framework for Resilient Development (FRDP) was adopted as the regions guiding document for resilient low-carbon development.
8. Reaffirmed the need to take ambitious and urgent global actions to keep global warming well below 2 degrees Celsius and aiming for 1.5 degrees Celsius and to avail adequate financial resources to SIDS for technology development and climate change adaptation and mitigation.
9. Acknowledged the commitment of the region to demonstrate leadership in the fight against climate change, as stated in the Majuro Declaration on Climate Leadership.



10. Acknowledged the pivotal role of affordable, reliable and sustainable energy and transport services for all in the sustainable development of the Pacific Islands region and the contribution of these sectors to global efforts to achieve the SDGs and reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and recognised that urgent reforms are required in both the Energy and Transport sectors in the PICTs in order to maximise the region's contribution to global efforts to reduce GHG emissions and to maximise benefits to the people and the environment. Urged all Parties to Paris Agreement to urgently meet their targets in their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

11. ***The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the contribution of the Energy and Transport sectors***

Recognised the importance for PICTs to accelerate regional momentum towards framing their priorities for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the achievement of the SDGs using the concept of Green/Blue Economy and reflect it in national policies. Ministers also urged development partners to support PICTs in meeting their energy and transport related SDGs and continue to coordinate development assistance in both sectors with capacity-building to improve monitoring and reporting on SDGs.

12. ***Maximising opportunities under Climate Financing***

Welcomed the current energy and transport-related funding proposals that are being developed for consideration by the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and tasked Members, relevant organisations and partners to work with Accredited Entities in order to advance preparations for submission to GCF.

Agreed in relation to energy sector, the following as high priority reforms for implementation in the next three years:

13. ***Progress from the previous communiqué***

Noted progress on the implementation of the seven high priority areas identified by the Second Pacific Energy and Transport Ministers Meeting in 2014.

14. ***Accelerate the adoption and enforcement of energy sector laws***

Acknowledged that the adoption and enforcement of appropriate legal frameworks are required for the effective management and governance of the energy sector, such as an Energy Act, energy sub-sector laws related to energy efficiency and the establishment of a regulator's office. Noted also the formation of the Pacific Regulators Alliance, and the need for regulatory frameworks to create an enabling environment for PPP.



15. *Commitments to the global efforts to reduce GHG emissions*

Endorsed the vision of 100% renewable energy generation for the region and confirmed the value and need for regional Renewable Energy (RE) and Energy Efficiency (EE) targets. ,

16. *New approach to capacity-building on sustainable energy*

Acknowledged the need for reform in the capacity-building efforts of Members to meet national, regional and global obligations. Supported the approach that the region's capacity-building must be based on officially-accredited /industry recognised qualifications constructed around a "competency" and "skill-set" approach, rather than non-formal ad-hoc, project-based training. This approach is currently being undertaken by the European Union Pacific Technical and Vocational Educational and Training in Sustainable Energy and Climate Change Adaptation project (EU PacTVET).

17. *Strengthen and consolidate support to existing efforts:*

Acknowledge and support the work of SPC, including:

- i. the Pacific Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (PCREEE) and Development partners were called upon to provide further financial support;
- ii. the Pacific Regional Data Repository (PRDR) Strategy 2018-2023;
- iii. the petroleum advisory to support safety and find cost-effective supply and price verification information;
- iv. the feasibility of phasing out fossil fuel subsidies and to use higher quality fossil fuels that are less damaging to the environment than those currently in use.

18. Endorsed the mandate of the Pacific Power Association (PPA) - "supporting the power utilities of the PICTs in the provision of high quality, secure, efficient and sustainable electricity services".

19. Acknowledged with appreciation the further NZD1 billion commitment by development partners at the Pacific Energy Conference in 2016.



Agreed in relation to the transport sector, the following as priorities for implementation in the next three years:

20. *Continued coordination and partnerships*

Acknowledged progress that has been made in the implementation of the *Framework for Action on Transport Services (FATS)* since the 2014 Transport Ministers' meeting and committed to continued efforts to further progress its implementation through improved regional coordination and collaboration. They recognised and acknowledged the significant and valuable contribution of international and regional development partners particularly Australia and IMO and their long-term commitment to the sustainable maritime development of the Pacific region.

21. *Gender equality in the maritime sector*

Welcomed the recent initiatives to enhance gender equality and empower women in the maritime sector. Governments, development partners, civil society and local communities were enthusiastically urged to champion the provision of an enabling environment to achieve SDG 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls). The development of a regional Strategy for Pacific Women in Maritime was strongly supported and prioritised to assist with this objective.

22. *Improving safety at sea for all*

Reaffirmed the paramount importance of a safe environment and safety culture in international and domestic shipping through coordination and collaboration on relevant initiatives. Adoption and implementation of harmonized maritime laws and a long-term approach to capacity development in the Pacific maritime sector is required to provide an enabling environment for all to achieve a culture of safety and environmental stewardship. The Ministers:

- i. adopted the text of the *Memorandum of Understanding on Flag State Implementation for Domestic Ships in the Pacific Islands Region, a world first*; and
- ii. endorsed the *Regional Strategy on Safety of Navigation in the Pacific*.

23. *Reducing GHG emissions from Pacific maritime transport*

Acknowledged global efforts to reduce GHG emissions and urged all stakeholders to take appropriate action to progress low-carbon maritime transport in the Pacific Islands region and to actively participate in international negotiations. Noted Pacific and European cooperation and leadership at the IMO in the High Ambition Coalition for shipping to reduce GHG emissions and ensure that IMO provides its contribution towards the Paris Agreement goal of guarding temperatures to well below 2 degrees and aiming for 1.5 degrees.



Urged IMO to accelerate its work on the accounting of GHG emissions from shipping.

Endorsed the leadership shown by Micronesian Sustainable Transport Centre (MSTC) and the IMO-EU Maritime Technology Cooperation Centre (MTCC) as leading examples of how to progress low carbon maritime transport in the Pacific Islands region.

24. *Eliminating dumping at sea*

Urged all stakeholders to improve their environmental stewardship by implementing all relevant international instruments and domestic laws related to marine pollution. Endorsed the *Pacific Oceans Pollution Prevention Programme Strategy 2015-2020* (PACPOL Strategy) and the *Pacific Regional Reception Facilities Plan* (RRFP), a world first. Noting that commercial fishing vessels pose a greater threat to the marine environment than other vessels, it was agreed to work with relevant Ministries in their respective States to pursue an holistic approach in the management of fishing vessels.

25. *Equitable and Fair Air Services Agreements, and Greater Control and Management of Upper Airspace*

Noted the work being carried out by Pacific Aviation Safety Office (PASO) and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) and the limitations in current arrangements requiring further discussions amongst SPC, PIFS and PASO.

MEETING OUTCOMES AND RESOLUTIONS

26. Considered and adopted the outcomes of the Energy Officials' and Transport Officials' meetings as resolutions of this ministerial meeting. The resolutions are attached as **annex I** (Energy Resolutions) and **annex II** (Transport Resolutions) to this Communiqué

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27. Greatly appreciated the offer from Papua New Guinea and Samoa to host the next Pacific Energy and Transport Ministers' Meeting and recognised the need to possibly meet in 2019 given the rapid developments in energy and transport sectors.