



PACIFIC SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES

United Nations Member States

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Fifty-fifth session

Statement by H.E. Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Nauru
on behalf of the

Pacific Small Island Developing States

24 February 2011

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS), represented at the United Nations, namely Fiji, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Vanuatu, and my own country, Nauru.

Let me first congratulate you and your entire staff on your election, and assure you of our support in the work of this Commission.

Mr. Chairman,

As we meet at this 55th Session of the Commission on the theme of its very important theme, we are reminded of the different challenges we face today, particularly the crisis that has affected our economies and our societies. The Beijing Platform for Action is clear and we are committed to our responsibility as States to fulfill the standards contained therein. However, it is important to emphasize that the challenges each of our societies face in fulfilling these obligations.

The PSIDS is a vibrant and pluralistic society that is full of diverse cultural and traditions. Not only have these traditions and cultures been a part of our lives, they have defined us as a people. The roles of our men, women and children have their genesis in those value systems. As in many of our societies, the role of women is still closely associated with the care of the family and supports the economic activity of men. That role is also reflected in the type of work women do in the formal sector. Despite the fact that there is an increasing number of educated women, we find most women employed in the health, education, and support services sector. Education and awareness has however facilitated the shift in a

Mr. Chairman,

The geography of the PSIDS is unique. We are challenged by our isolation, small population size, lack of resources, high frequency of natural disasters and vulnerability to rising sea-levels. These challenges are further exacerbated by global climate change. The limited size of most of our economies affects the range of our opportunities as well. Education and training in the field of science and technology are vital in enhancing the lives of our women and children.

the advice those preferences and will undoubtedly generate more opportunities for them in the workforce. In that regard, it is encouraging to see that in our regional university, the University of the South Pacific, female enrolment in science and technology programmes has increased steadily in the last 10 years and more programmes are needed to meet the demand. We also recognize that NGOs and international organizations play a complementary role in these efforts. Several initiatives by NGOs and academic institutions in the region, in partnership with intergovernmental and civil society NGOs, have enabled young female students to be more informed about future education opportunities and career choices.

The issue of climate change and natural disasters is an on-going challenge for our peoples and our land. Natural disasters have displaced communities. Aside from the emotional trauma these have caused, their adverse impacts affect food security, housing, water and land resources, access to land and increased vulnerability to crime. Moreover, climate change has increased challenges for women's livelihoods and access to land and property.

The need for international support for programmes that provide access to education for women's economic empowerment is a major challenge that must be met. We need multifaceted approaches to address the gender development divide. We need to have a coordinated training, technology and ensuring women have the same right and opportunities to full employment and decent work.

Mr. Chairman,

There is still a long way to go to support our transition to a green, inclusive and sustainable development and the administrative frameworks of the advancement and empowerment of women, particularly for many of the disadvantaged communities. Overcoming such challenges is not easy but with the continued support of our development partners, we can make a difference. We welcome the policy recommendations stipulated in the Secretary-General's report. However, we acknowledge that such recommendations can only be implemented if countries create a conducive environment for investment in the economic transformation of small economies. It is here that the majority of poor women and children live who are unable to access basic education, appropriate, affordable technology to start a decent livelihood for themselves.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, in concluding our joint support of our development partners to support our efforts for economic and social progress, we call for monitoring and assessment mechanisms, new development indicators to measure progress in gender equality and gender equality and continue to address practical tasks that exist between the national and regional organizations. The strategies we create for the future must be sustainable and have minimal conflict of interests in the implementation of this very important global agenda.

Thank you.