

BOE DECLARATION

**Forum Leaders:**

**Recognising** and **reaffirming** our endorsement of the Biketawa Declaration in the year 2000 and **recalling** the principles underpinning the Biketawa Declaration such as commitment to good governance, belief in the liberty of the individual under the law, upholding democratic processes and institutions and recognising the vulnerability of Member countries to threats to their security;

**Recalling** our vision and values for the Pacific under the Framework for Pacific Regionalism, as a region of ‘peace, harmony, security, social inclusion and prosperity so that all Pacific people can lead free, healthy and productive lives’;

**Recognising** our endorsement of the ‘Blue Pacific’ identity to drive collective action in support of our vision under the Framework for Pacific Regionalism;

**Recalling** our agreement at the 48th Forum Leaders’ Meeting in Apia, Samoa, to build on the Biketawa Declaration and other Forum related security declarations and agreements as the foundation for strategic future regional responses;

**Recognising** the importance we placed on an *expanded concept of security* inclusive of human security, humanitarian assistance, prioritising environmental security, and regional cooperation in building resilience to disasters and climate change, including through regional cooperation and support;

**Respecting** the principle of non-interference in the domestic affairs of Forum Members; and

**Recognising** the need to strengthen regional security cooperation and collective action through the assertion of *Our Will* and the voices of *Our Pacific Peoples*.

***HEREBY DECLARE AS FOLLOWS:***

- (i) We **reaffirm** that climate change remains the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security and wellbeing of the peoples of the Pacific and our commitment to progress the implementation of the Paris Agreement;
- (ii) We **recognise** an increasingly complex regional security environment driven by multifaceted security challenges, and a dynamic geopolitical environment leading to an increasingly crowded and complex region;
- (iii) We **affirm** our stewardship of the Blue Pacific and *aspire* to strengthen and enhance our capacity to pursue our collective security interests given our responsibility to sustain our Pacific peoples and our resources;

- (iv) We **respect** and **assert** the sovereign right of every Member to conduct its national affairs free of external interference and coercion;
- (v) We **reaffirm** the right of Members to individually and collectively address security issues and concerns;
- (vi) We **reaffirm** the importance of the rules-based international order founded on the UN Charter, adherence to relevant international law and resolution of international disputes by peaceful means;
- (vii) We **affirm** an expanded concept of security which addresses the wide range of security issues in the region, both traditional and non-traditional, with an increasing emphasis on:
  - a. Human Security, including humanitarian assistance, to protect the rights, health and prosperity of Pacific people;
  - b. Environmental and resource security;
  - c. Transnational crime; and
  - d. Cybersecurity, to maximise protections and opportunities for Pacific infrastructure and peoples in the digital age;
- (viii) We **recognise** that national security impacts on regional security, and therefore commit to strengthening our respective national security approaches by:
  - a. developing our national security strategies; and
  - b. strengthening national security capacity including through training;
- (ix) We commit to strengthening the existing regional security architecture inclusive of regional law enforcement secretariats and regional organisations to:
  - a. account for the expanded concept of security;
  - b. identify and address emerging security challenges;
  - c. improve coordination among existing security mechanisms;
  - d. facilitate open dialogue and strengthened information sharing;
  - e. further develop early warning mechanisms;
  - f. support implementation;
  - g. promote regional security analysis, assessment and advice; and
  - h. engage and cooperate, where appropriate, with international organisations, partners and other relevant stakeholders;
- (x) We **commit** to continuing regular Leaders' level discussions on the expanded concept of security as part of securing our Blue Pacific.