



PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM SECRETARIAT
2024 FORUM FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING

9 August 2024
Suva, Fiji

OUTCOMES

The 2024 Forum Foreign Ministers Meeting (FFMM) was convened on 9 August 2024 at the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat headquarters in Suva, Fiji, as well as virtually.

2. The meeting was chaired by Cook Islands and attended by Australia, the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, the Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. Guam and American Samoa attended as Forum Observers.

3. The Pacific Community (SPC), Pacific Islands Development Program (PIDP), Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO), and the University of the South Pacific (USP) attended as members of the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP). The full List of Participants is attached at **Annex A**.

4. The Chair of the Meeting, the Honourable Mark Brown, Prime Minister of the Cook Islands, and Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum reaffirmed the importance of regional solidarity amidst the ever-increasing geostrategic interest, navigating the ongoing climate crisis and the managing emerging challenges, threats and opportunities. The Prime Minister congratulated the Secretary General on his assumption of Office and reaffirmed the importance of reviewing and strengthening the way the region organises itself to progress our shared priorities. The full opening remarks by the Chair and the Secretary General are attached at **Annex B** and **Annex C**.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

5. Foreign Ministers **adopted** the Provisional Annotated Agenda and Meeting Timetable at **Annex D** as revised, and **established** a Drafting Committee.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL

6. Foreign Ministers recognised the current geo-strategic environment and reaffirmed the importance of the strong and committed leadership in the Region. Ministers acknowledged and welcomed the transitions in the leadership of the Secretariat and discussed the importance of the ongoing work on institutional strengthening at the Secretariat to ensure that it was robust, fit-for-purpose and responsive to member needs.

7. Foreign Ministers:

- (i) **acknowledged** the service and contribution of the former Secretary General, Mr Henry Puna whose tenure ended in May 2024;
- (ii) **congratulated** Secretary General Baron Waqa as well as Deputy Secretary General Desna Solofa on their recent appointments and **welcomed** them to their first meeting of the Forum Foreign Ministers; and
- (iii) **noted** the update provided on the progress of work by the Secretariat for the first half of 2024.

THE 2050 STRATEGY FOR THE BLUE PACIFIC CONTINENT

8. Foreign Ministers considered an update on the work undertaken to develop the 2050 Strategy Baseline Report, including its Executive Summary and related Regional Collective Actions Snapshot. Ministers reaffirmed the importance of alignment to national development strategies as well as the Sustainable Development Goals and emphasised the need for clear monitoring and accountability processes, aligned to the 2050 Strategy Implementation Plan and its goals and outcomes. Ministers also considered the proposal for a peer-to-peer cooperation programme to support the implementation of the 2050 Strategy, noting that it provides an opportunity for members to look within the region to support capacity building and knowledge sharing initiatives among countries.

9. Foreign Ministers:

- (i) **commended** the efforts undertaken to date on the development of the 2050 Strategy Baseline Report (2050 Baseline Report) and **noted** that the document is a work in progress;
- (ii) **emphasised** the importance of a well-defined 2050 Baseline Report in guiding the implementation of the 2050 Strategy and **further encouraged** the consideration and reflection of progress towards deeper regional integration in the Report; and
- (iii) **subject to further refinement** through Member consultation to ensure it captures the Leaders vision on regional integration and the clear prioritisation of Regional Collective Actions, endorsed the following for consideration by Forum Leaders:
 - (a) Executive Summary of the 2050 Baseline Report; and
 - (b) High-Level Summary of the 2024 Prioritised regional collective actions (RCAs).

Peer to Peer Cooperation to Support the 2050 Strategy Implementation

- (i) **endorsed** the Concept Note for a proposed regional peer-to-peer cooperation programme;
- (ii) **directed** the Secretariat to undertake a comprehensive mapping of existing peer-to-peer initiatives in the region, to inform the design and focus of the proposed programme; and
- (iii) **tasked** the Secretariat to present a programme that is informed by the lessons learnt of the Forum Compact and includes clear resourcing estimates, and programming principles, for endorsement by the Forum Officials Committee in December 2024.

REVIEW OF THE REGIONAL ARCHITECTURE

10. Foreign Ministers considered an update on the work undertaken on the Review of the Regional Architecture (RRA) and in particular, the recommendations from *Phase 2 Report on Strengthening Cooperation, Coordination and Coherence* within the regional architecture. Ministers discussed the evolving regional environment and the need for the regional system to constantly adapt to the changing circumstances. Ministers emphasised the need to strengthen collective understanding on the roles and responsibilities of the wide range of partners engaged in the region and their mechanisms.

11. Foreign Ministers:

- (i) **commended** the work undertaken on Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the RRA; and
- (ii) **endorsed** the Phase 2 Report of the RRA and the draft Leaders Retreat Brief on the RRA, as revised.

APPLICATION FOR ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

12. Foreign Ministers considered the applications for associate member status by Guam and American Samoa. Ministers also considered presentations from the respective Lieutenant Governors of both Governments. Ministers discussed the value of strengthening linkages between the Pacific Islands Forum and the two Governments, recognising the kinship, culture and traditional linkages that they share with the broader Forum membership. Ministers welcomed the commitment to the 2050 Strategy by the Governments of Guam and American Samoa, and also noted the ongoing work on the RRA and its potential implications on this category within the Forum architecture.

13. Foreign Ministers:

- (i) **considered** the applications by Guam and American Samoa, for Associate Member status to the Pacific Islands Forum;

- (ii) **affirmed** the importance of the review of the Forum Associate Member and Forum Observer categories and criteria within the Forum Architecture, on the application of this status across the full Forum Architecture; and
- (iii) **supported in principle** the conveyance of the applications to Forum Leaders for their decision.

PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM PRESENCE IN THE UNITED STATES

14. Foreign Ministers considered an update on the assessment undertaken to fulfil the Leaders direction to explore the implications of a Forum presence in the United States. Ministers noted the ongoing work on the RRA, the ongoing change management process in the Secretariat as well as related resourcing options.

15. Foreign Ministers:

- (i) **noted** the assessment undertaken, **reaffirmed** the strong regional presence of Forum Members at the United Nations, and **further noted** the ongoing support provided by the Governments of Australia and New Zealand to the representative of the Forum Chair in New York; and
- (ii) **recognised** the ongoing organisational reforms and resourcing constraints within the Secretariat and **agreed** to maintain the status quo and continue to support strengthened coordination with multilateral organisations and the United Nations from the Secretariat Headquarters in Suva.

LEADERS UPDATE ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND RELATED INITIATIVES

16. Foreign Ministers discussed the progress on the implementation of the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific, including the Pacific Resilience Partnership (PRP). Ministers reaffirmed climate change as a cross-cutting issue and noted ongoing negotiations at the multilateral level. On the mid-term review of the PRP, Ministers welcomed the coordinated effort by members in partnership with the CROP, private sector and civil society.

17. Foreign Ministers **noted** the findings and recommendations from the FRDP mid-term review, and the progress achieved under the PRP

PACIFIC RESILIENCE FACILITY FORUM ECONOMIC MINISTERS OUTCOME – DOMICILE UPDATE AND LEGAL STRUCTURE OPTIONS

18. Foreign Ministers considered the discussions and the outcomes of the Forum Economic Ministers Meeting on the Pacific Resilience Facility.

19. Foreign Ministers:

- (i) **noted** FEMM's recommendation for Tonga to be the country of domicile for the Pacific Resilience Facility (PRF) to be considered for decision by Pacific Islands Forum Leaders;
- (ii) **discussed** the options on the PRF legal structure and **encouraged** further member consultation to ensure that it is sustainable and credible, prior to consideration by Special FEMM and subsequent submission to Forum Leaders, if appropriate; and
- (iii) **noted** the proposal for a Special FEMM to be tasked by Leaders to further consider the PRF and Pacific Roadmap for Economic Development (PRED) recommendations from FEMM.

UPDATE ON THE 53RD PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM LEADERS MEETING

20. Foreign Ministers **welcomed** the update from the Government of Tonga on the preparations for the 53rd Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting to be convened in Tonga from 26 – 30 August, 2024.

OTHER MATTERS

New Caledonia – New Caledonia

21. Foreign Ministers:

- (i) **acknowledged** the update by New Caledonia on the ongoing political situation in New Caledonia and **expressed** their sympathy and ongoing support to New Caledonia;
- (ii) **expressed** the PIF's ongoing commitment to support a resolution to the situation, and **agreed** to institute the New Caledonia situation as a standing agenda item for Forum Leaders, at this time; and
- (iii) **reaffirmed** the importance of the proposed high-level mission to New Caledonia led by the Forum Troika and **noted** the indication of support by France for the same.

Ocean of Peace - Fiji

22. Foreign Ministers **welcomed** Fiji's presentation on the concept of the Ocean of Peace and its alignment to the 2050 Strategy, the Boe Declaration, and the Biketawa Declaration and **reaffirmed** the importance of the principles enshrined in the paper and to further discuss and develop a draft Declaration for consideration by Leaders at the 54th Pacific Islands Forum in Honiara, Solomon Islands in 2025.

79th United Nations General Assembly Statement on Sea Level Rise - Tuvalu

23. Foreign Ministers **emphasised** the importance of continued advocacy and **agreed** to issue a strong Pacific Islands Forum statement for the United Nations General Assembly High Level Plenary Meeting on Sea-level Rise of which will be conveyed to Leaders for their consideration in Tonga.

Candidature for the UN Human Rights Council – Republic of the Marshall Islands

24. Foreign Ministers **welcomed** the update from the Republic of the Marshall Islands' and **reaffirmed** their support for the RMI's candidature for the Human Rights Council for the 2025 – 2027 in October.

Pacific ICT Action Plan 2024 – 2030 – Lagatoi Declaration – Papua New Guinea

25. Foreign Ministers:

- (i) **noted** the *Lagatoi Declaration Pacific ICT* and Digital Transformation Action Plan 2024 – 2030 which is designed to support and enhance the Thematic Area on Connectivity and Technology under the 2050 Strategy; and
- (ii) **recommended** to Forum Leaders that the Pacific ICT Ministerial Dialogue be integrated within the Forum Architecture and **directed** the Forum Secretariat to work with Pacific ICT Senior Officials Dialogue on the development of a governance framework, taking into account the current RRA, for consideration and adoption at the 54th Pacific Islands Forum in 2025.

AUKUS – Australia

26. Foreign Ministers **noted** the update provided by Australia in relation to the Trilateral Partnership between Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States (AUKUS).

Reinstatement of the PIF Panel of Independent Experts on ALPS-treated water from the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant – Republic of the Marshall Islands

27. Foreign Ministers:

- (i) **noted** ongoing concerns about the ALPS water discharge, which is projected to continue for the next 30 years, and **recalled** the 52nd PIF Leaders Communique and Statement on the Fukushima ALPS-Treated Wastewater issues and the PALM 10 Declaration;
- (ii) **highlighted** commitments to scientific evidence and compliance with international safety standards and practices, through engagement with the International Atomic Energy Agency, and support to build regional capacity and monitoring capabilities;

- (iii) **recalled** Leaders’ acknowledgement of the work of the PIF Panel of Independent Experts and of efforts for scientific dialogue between the Panel and the IAEA, in line with PIF Members commitment to pursue independent guidance to interpret the scientific evidence as it becomes available; and
- (iv) **noted** the proposal to reinstate the PIF Panel of Independent Experts regarding the discharge of ALPS treated water from the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, and **tasked** the Secretariat to explore options, in consultation with members and the CROP, to seek a long-term approach to provide interpretation, guidance and assessment of scientific data on all nuclear-related discharge and contamination issues and report back to the Forum Officials Committee.

Pacific Policing Initiative – Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police

28. Foreign Ministers:

- (i) **welcomed** the update on the Pacific Policing Initiative, commended the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police (PICP) and **agreed** to convey it to Forum Leaders for consideration recognising also the need for further consultation at national level; and
- (ii) **noted** the intention of the incoming Forum Chair to seek Leader’s endorsement and to request that PICP develop an implementation plan.

Health and Education – Tonga

29. Foreign Ministers **welcomed** the initiative by the Government of Tonga to elevate Health and Education to the Leaders agenda for consideration at the 53rd Pacific Islands Forum.

MEETING OUTCOMES

30. Foreign Ministers **endorsed** the Outcomes of the 2024 Forum Foreign Ministers Meeting.

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
Suva, Fiji
9 August 2024

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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Suva
9 August 2024

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**OPENING ADDRESS BY
HONOURABLE MARK BROWN
PRIME MINISTER OF THE COOK ISLANDS
CHAIR OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM**

The Prime Minister of Tonga and Incoming Forum Chair, the Hon. Hu'akavameiliku
Honourable Ministers of the Pacific Islands Forum
The Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum, Mr Baron Waqa
Senior Officials
Representatives of the CROP Agencies
Ladies and Gentlemen

Kia Orana, Popongi Manea to you all!

It is wonderful to be back again here at our Secretariat and indeed, to be in Suva and amongst colleagues and peers.

It has been a busy year for many of us and we have seen a number of momentous transitions throughout the region.

Not the least being, the assumption of Office by Secretary General Baron Waqa – SG, on behalf of the Forum Ministers gathered here this morning, may I offer once again our sincere congratulations on your appointment.

You come into the role at an important time in our region's history.

We contend with ever-increasing geostrategic interest.

We continue to battle a climate crisis that intensifies with every year.

We navigate new and emerging challenges and threats such as cyber-attacks and transnational crime.

And we continually work as a region to strengthen our political solidarity – to ensure that when one Member calls on us, we, as a Forum Family, are able to respond.

Indeed, I cannot underscore enough the importance of our collective solidarity.

While we all recognise that our national priorities will always be paramount, we must also recognise that in the face of the uncertainties we contend with today, we must be able to trust and count on the solidarity and support of those closest to us – our Forum Family.

Amidst these pressures, I am pleased that we are taking the time to consider how we can better strengthen the way we organise ourselves to progress the priorities that we share.

We can no longer rest on our laurels and depend on the goodwill of others.

If we are to attain our shared 2050 vision, we must be more strategic and more assertive in our collective engagement.

In doing so, we can ensure that partners are supporting our priorities, and our aspirations.

I realise that these are issues that we can consider further through the agenda items before us today.

In saying so, I encourage and urge us all to be frank, constructive and honest in our discussions – - this is our space – let's make the most of it.

As I approach the end of my tenure as Forum Chair, allow me to also acknowledge every member around the table this morning for your support and candour over the course of Cook Islands' chairing of the Pacific Islands Forum.

It has been an honour and a privilege for my Government, my people and myself to have been entrusted with this role by the Forum membership.

In this convening of Foreign Ministers, I thought it only fitting to also acknowledge you all for your support over the last 18 months.

Finally, I wish to also recognise the incoming Forum Chair, the Hon. Hu'akavameiliku of Tonga and I look forward to handing over the baton when we meet in Tonga at the end of the month.

With those few words, I thank you and I will invite the Secretary General to offer his own reflections.

Meitaki Ma'ata.

**WELCOME ADDRESS BY
BARON WAQA, SECRETARY GENERAL, PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM**

Honourable Mark Brown, Prime Minister of the Cook Islands and Forum Chair;
Honourable Prime Minister of Tonga and incoming Forum Chair;
Forum Foreign Ministers;
Excellencies.

Ekamiwir Omo and a very good morning to you all.

At the outset, please allow me to thank you so much for being here today.

As you know, this is my first Foreign Ministers meeting in my capacity as Secretary General.

It was wonderful to share a meal with you this morning, and to break bread together.

These opportunities to be with one another, are precious to me.

I can assure you that my tenure as Secretary General will be founded on nurturing unity and leadership. And we will continue to have more opportunities like this morning, to strengthen our bond.

After all, the collective strength of the Forum is drawn from its unity.

It is drawn from Forum centrality.

And it will only prosper through Forum solidarity.

Honourable Ministers, we are in a period of transition, and the guidance we require from you today is significant.

The presence today of our Forum Chair and incoming Forum Chair, should indicate to us all, the significance of this meeting. I know that we all have high expectations.

Honourable Ministers, I call on you to be frank in your discussions, to ensure that we provide our Leaders with strong, firm and decisive outcomes, as they prepare to meet in Tonga.

With those few words, I wish you well in your deliberations.

I thank you.



PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat

Suva, Fiji

9 August 2024

DRAFT PROVISIONAL ANNOTATED AGENDA

OPENING FORMALITIES

1. **Opening** (10.00am – 10.10am)
The Chair will call the meeting to order, and opening formalities will be observed.
2. **Adoption of Agenda and Meeting Timetable** (10.10am – 10.15am)
Please refer to meeting paper PIFS(24)FFMM.3.Rev3
3. **Report by the Secretary General** (10.15am – 10:45am)
To consider and discuss an update on the progress of the decisions taken in 2023 including ongoing institutional strengthening.
Please refer to meeting paper PIFS(24)FFMM.4

MORNING TEA AND OFFICIAL PHOTOGRAPH (10.45am – 11.15am)

ISSUES PRESENTED FOR DECISION

4. **The 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent** (11.15am – 12.00pm)
 - a.) **2050 Strategy Executive Summary and Regional Collective Action Snapshot**
To consider and discuss an update on the implementation of the 2050 Strategy.
Please refer to meeting paper PIFS(24)FFMM.5(a)
 - b.) **Peer to Peer Cooperation to Support 2050 Strategy Implementation**
To consider a proposal to establish the peer to peer cooperation.
Please refer to meeting paper PIFS(24)FFMM.5(b)
5. **Review of the Regional Architecture (RRA)** (12.00pm – 12.30pm)
To consider and discuss the progress and related recommendations emerging from the work on the RRA, including the recommended way forward on the partnership mechanism for the Pacific Islands Forum.
Please refer to meeting paper PIFS(24)FFMM.6

- 6. Application for Associate Membership (12.30pm – 1.00pm)**
 To consider the application for associate membership status by the Government of Guam, the Government of American Samoa and the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas.
Please refer to meeting paper PIFS(24)FFMM.7

LUNCH (1.00pm – 2.00pm)

- 7. Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) Presence in the United States (U.S.) (2.00pm – 2.15pm)**
 To consider and discuss the proposal for a PIF presence in the U.S., in accordance with the Leaders decision.
Please refer to meeting paper PIFS(24)FFMM.8

- 8. Leaders Update on Climate Change and related Initiatives (2.15pm – 2.30pm)**
 To consider the Pacific Resilience Partnership Taskforce update on climate change and related initiatives for the consideration of Leaders.
Please refer to meeting paper PIFS(24)FFMM.9

- 9. Pacific Resilience Facility Forum Economic Ministers Outcomes – Domicile Update and Legal Structure Options (2.30pm – 3.00pm)**
 To consider and endorse an advocacy approach for the capitalization of the Pacific Resilience Facility.
Please refer to meeting paper PIFS(24)FFMM.10

AFTERNOON TEA (3.00m – 3.30pm)

ISSUES PRESENTED FOR UPDATE

- 10. Update on the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders and Related Meetings (3.30pm – 4.00pm)**
 To consider an update on the preparations for the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders and Related Meetings in 2024 and 2025:

i.	53 rd Pacific Islands Forum and Related Meetings <i>Government of Tonga</i>	<i>Verbal</i>
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- 11. Other Matters (4.00pm – 5.00pm)**

(i)	<i>New Caledonia, New Caledonia and the Forum Chair</i>	<i>Verbal</i>
(ii)	<i>Ocean of Peace, Fiji</i>	<i>PIFS(24)FFMM.12(ii)</i>
(iii)	<i>79th UNGA Statement on Sea Level Rise, Tuvalu</i>	<i>Verbal</i>
(iv)	<i>Candidature for the UN Human Rights Council, Republic of the Marshall Islands</i>	<i>PIFS(24)FFMM.12(iv)</i>
(v)	<i>Pacific ICT Action Plan 2024 – 2030 on the Lagatoi Declaration, Papua New Guinea</i>	<i>PIFS(24)FFMM.12(v)</i>

(vi)	AUKUS, <i>Government of Australia</i>	<i>Verbal</i>
(vii)	Pacific Policing Initiative, <i>Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police</i>	<i>Verbal</i>

12. Consideration of Outcomes Document

13. Closing

Information Papers:

i.	Suva Agreement	<i>PIFS(24)FFMM.Info.i</i>
ii.	Report by the Secretary General on the Rarotonga Treaty	<i>PIFS(24)FFMM.Info.ii</i>
iii.	Pacific Islands Forum Women Leaders Meeting Outcome	<i>PIFS(24)FFMM.Info.iii</i>

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
Suva, Fiji
8 August 2024