2024 PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM WOMEN LEADERS MEETING

26 July 2024 Majuro, Republic of the Marshall Islands

OUTCOMES

The 2024 Pacific Islands Forum Women Leaders Meeting was convened on 26 July 2024, in Majuro, Republic of the Marshall Islands.

- 2. The meeting was chaired by the Cook Islands, and attended by Australia, the Cook Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, the Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.
- 3. The Pacific Community (SPC), the Pacific Islands Development Program (PIDP), attended as members of the Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP). American Samoa and the UN Women attended as Observers. The full List of Participants is at **Annex A**.
- 4. The Secretary General **welcomed** Members to the 3rd PIF Women Leaders Meeting in Majuro and **acknowledged** the Government and People of the Republic of Marshall Islands for hosting the 2024 PIF Women Leaders Meeting. The Secretary General **invited** Hon. Vainetutai Rose Toki-Brown, Minister of Cook Islands, to provide opening remarks as Chair of the meeting.
- 5. In opening the meeting, Hon. Vainetutai Rose Toki-Brown **highlighted** the immense potential the Blue Pacific has in driving positive change not only within the region, but globally. Hon. Toki-Brown **emphasised** the revitalised Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration, as the renewed and inclusive approach to strengthen the Blue Pacific's commitment to accelerate gender equality and social inclusion actions for all Pacific Peoples. and, further, **encouraged** stronger collaboration with a strong cohesive approach for tackling gender and social inequalities, realising our shared vision, reflected in the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, for a just and equitable region.
- 6. Her Excellency, Dr Hilda Heine, President of the Republic of Marshall Islands in her keynote address **welcomed** PIF Women Leaders to the Republic of Marshall Islands and **highlighted** the PIF Women Leaders Meeting was established with the aim of putting the regional gender equality agenda within the Forum Leaders' line of sight on an annual basis, making it a high developmental priority for the region. President Heine **emphasised** the Pacific has the lowest number of women parliamentarians in the world, sitting at 7 percent, against a global average of 27 percent. Women's parliamentary representation in the Pacific region has been historically low, as national leadership and politics is still a male dominated field.
- 7. Further, Her Excellency President Heine **emphasised** the lack of accountability for gender equality across all levels of government and within the programmes of CROP and other development partners, and the need to ensure stakeholders implement and monitor commitments to gender equality, mutual accountability measures are needed. President Heine

highlighted, the PIF Women Leaders Meeting can play an important role in the region, ensuring Pacific women and girls are safe and equitably share in resources, opportunities and decision-making with Pacific men and boys.

8. The Secretary-General Baron Waqa acknowledged the Republic of the Marshall Islands for hosting the 3rd PIF Women Leaders Meeting and to the Pacific Community (SPC), for the collaborative effort in streamlining the 15th Triennial, the 8th Pacific Ministers for Women Meeting, and the 3rd PIF Women Leaders Meeting. In addition, Secretary General acknowledged the women and girls of the Blue Pacific, as the backbone members of countries, custodians of Pacific cultures, and the champions within Pacific communities. Secretary General **emphasised** Pacific resilience through climate change, economic vulnerabilities, and social inequalities, is a testament to the spirit of the Blue Pacific Continent, that is unyielding and hopeful. Secretary General **noted** the revitalised PLGED, goes hand in hand with the Pacific Platform for Action on Gender Equality and Women's Human Rights (PPA). Secretary General **expressed** the potential the Pacific has, in creating an environment where women and girls can thrive, innovate, and lead. Further, Secretary General called on Pacific men and women to be agents of change by standing alongside women and girls in the pursuit of a more equal, equitable and inclusive Pacific. The opening remarks for all speakers are provided under Annexes B - D.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

9. Forum Women Leaders:

- i. **adopted** the Annotated Agenda, attached at **Annex E** and **established** a Drafting Committee;
- ii. **welcomed** the request from the Republic of Nauru to include under Other Matters, the inclusion of the $\bar{A}\dot{n}$ Towepo Declaration; and
- iii. **welcomed** the request from the Republic of Palau to include under Other Matters, the inclusion of the 26th Micronesian Islands Forum Joint Communique.

MAINSTREAMING GENDER EQUALITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION IN THE 2050 STRATEGY FOR THE BLUE PACIFIC CONTINENT

10. Forum Women Leaders:

- i. **acknowledged** all the work that has been progressed at the national, subregional, and regional level in mainstreaming gender equality, social inclusion, and disability inclusion (GESI) and targeted support and **reaffirmed** the Blue Pacific's commitment to GESI in the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent (2050 Strategy);
- ii. **recognised** the importance of strengthening existing or establish regional knowledge hubs, on information including on gender-based violence, sexual and reproductive health and rights and gender responsive planning and budgeting;
- iii. **recognised** the interconnectedness of the issues of gender-based violence, sexual reproductive health and rights, and women's economic empowerment;

- iv. **recognised** the importance of disaggregated data (SADD) collection, collation and analysis and to further develop a tool to assist in data collection;
- v. **noted** and **directed** the need to provide a comprehensive interpretation between the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPA), the PPA and the revitalised PLGED, noting the Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning Framework (MERL Framework) of the revitalised PLGED;
- vi. **recognised** the importance of data for sex, age and disability for robust and effective MERL systems and **called on** CROP agencies to support national level efforts and build national statistical systems to collect, analyses, and track the progress of gender equality commitments;
- vii. **called for** CROP collaboration to ensure clear pathways for accountability and reporting on commitments to link national actions to sub-regional, regional, and global commitments;
- viii. **called for** strengthening alignment between national and regional processes and intergovernmental mechanisms such as the Pacific Regional Council for Early Childhood Development (ECD) to link and coordinate gender equality and social inclusion with early childhood development efforts recognising the importance of early intervention beginning with young children;
 - ix. **discussed** the key actions required to ensure the mainstreaming of GESI commitments and actions in the 2050 Strategy and 2050 Implementation Plan (2050 IP), including through the revitalised PLGED and the PPA with specific focus on:
 - (a) providing gender sensitisation and gender equality social inclusion and disability inclusion presentations across all Forum meetings;
 - (b) develop sensitive gender contextualised messaging, with regards to culture and faith, as an enabler for positive change;
 - (c) gender responsive budgeting as a tool for equity and economic prosperity, with a focus on climate change and disasters, for access to climate financing;
 - (d) the issues of climate change related sea-level rise and the need to continue to support the 2021 and 2023 PIF Declarations (<u>Annex F G</u>), with the priority of safeguarding ancestral land and the ocean;
 - (e) supporting the adoption of appropriate regulatory arrangements, especially in light of the emerging issues of Technology Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV); and
 - (f) as a long-standing priority of the region, the nuclear testing legacy issues must be addressed at all forums, including developing and mainstreaming GESI into Pacific nuclear testing legacy issues.
 - x. **highlighted** the need to safeguard women-led industries through the Pacific Roadmap for Economic Development (PRED), in particular the protection of cultural intellectual property, which are critical for economic resilience;

- xi. **supported** the CROP Nuclear Taskforce's current work, including the independent study on nuclear contamination across the Pacific, with specific focus on hot spots such as Runit Dome on Enewetak Island in the Marshall Islands, including neighbouring Pacific Islands Countries which are now being threatened by sea-level rise and **strongly urged** the need to recognise the nexus between climate and nuclear testing issues;
- xii. **reiterated** the Forum Leaders 2023 Communique recalling the strong concerns by Forum Leaders for the significance of the potential threat of nuclear contamination to the health and security of the Blue Pacific as per the 2022 and 2023 Forum Communiques, and **noted** the extensive Forum dialogue and engagement process taken over the last three years on this matter¹; and
- xiii. **recognised** the importance of gender responsive climate finance, and **reaffirmed** the Pacific Resilience Facility (PRF), as a significant resource for the Pacific and **called on** financial contributions from Forum partners to support the work of the PRF.

UPDATE ON THE 2050 STRATEGY FOR THE BLUE PACIFIC CONTINENT AND THE REVIEW OF THE REGIONAL ARCHITECTURE (RRA)

11. Forum Women Leaders:

- i. **supported** efforts to align and to ensure the revitalised PLGED commitments are effectively monitored and evaluated through the 2050 Baseline and MERL through evidence-based data; and
- ii. **noted** feedback on the emerging recommendation from the Review of the Regional Architecture in relation to the regional governance platforms that have oversight of GESI related issues and **called for** more data to inform GESI related issues and **noted** the need to include relevant civil society and faith-based organisations in the ongoing work of the RRA.

HIGH-LEVEL COMMITMENTS TO GENDER EQUALITY AND EQUITY

GOVERNANCE OF THE REVITALISED PLGED

I. REPORTING ON PROGRESS ON OUTCOMES FROM 2ND PIF WOMEN LEADERS MEETING

12. Forum Women Leaders:

- i. **noted** the progress on the Outcomes from the 2nd PIF Women Leaders Meeting in 2023;
- ii. **recognised** the important role of faith-based leaders and churches in addressing gender-based violence and gender equality, and **urged** the Secretariat to strengthen engagement with faith-based bodies in progressing gender equality in a Pacific context:

¹ 2023 PIF Leaders Communique – Para 42.

- iii. **welcomed** the update on the convening of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) Committee session in the region in 2025 and **tasked** SPC and the PIF Secretariat with UN Office of the Commission on Human Right Pacific (UNOCHR), to establish the Pacific Steering Committee, based on the 2023 PIF Women Leaders Meeting Outcomes, to support the convening of the CEDAW session; and
- iv. **requested** to support Members in the CEDAW reporting process, particularly Members who are required to submit national reports in 2024.

II. REVITALISED PACIFIC LEADERS GENDER EQUALITY DECLARATION MONITORING, EVALUATION, RESEARCH AND LEARNING (MERL)

13. Forum Women Leaders:

- i. **noted** the status current draft revitalised PLGED MERL (<u>Annex H</u>), additionally the framework would benefit from highlighting reproductive health cancers as standalone indicators, and extensively improving the indicators for women's economic empowerment, and TFGBV to address broader structural and systemic issues;
- ii. **directed** the Secretariat to socialise the MERL Framework in draft and final across Member countries;
- iii. **noted** and **directed** the Secretariat to further work on and consolidate a clear process for implementation in 2025; and
- iv. **called for** sub-regional gender equality frameworks such Micronesian Sub-Regional Gender Equality Framework and MERL and now the intended work on the Melanesian Sub-Regional Gender Equality Framework to align with the revitalised PLGED and the PPA, noting any future intention of the Polynesian sub-region for their own sub-regional gender equality framework.

III. PACIFIC WOMEN'S TRIENNIAL CONFERENCE AND PACIFIC MINISTERS FOR WOMEN MEETING OUTCOMES

14. Forum Women Leaders:

- i. **noted** and **reaffirmed** support for the Outcomes of the 15th Triennial Conference and the 8th Ministers for Women Meeting (<u>Annex I</u>), and all the work being undertaken in the region to advance gender equality and the rights of women and girls in all their diversity;
- ii. **urged** Pacific Island Forum Leaders to affirm the Outcomes of the 15th Triennial Conference and the 8th Ministers for Women Meeting at the upcoming 53rd Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting in August 2024, and support the implementation of actions and recommendations in this regard; and
- iii. **encouraged** Pacific Island Countries and Territories to take action to accelerate progress towards gender equality and the full realisation of human rights for all women and girls in the region, especially in the areas of health, climate justice and prevention of gender-based violence, as outlined in the Outcomes of the 15th Triennial Conference and the 8th Ministers for Women Meeting.

OTHER MATTERS

I. ĀN TOWEPO DECLARATION

15. Forum Women Leaders **noted** and **requested** the $\bar{A}n$ Towepo Declaration be elevated to the 2024 PIF Leaders Meeting (Annex J).

II. 26th Micronesian Islands Forum Joint Communique

16. Forum Women Leaders **noted** the 26th Micronesian Islands Forum Joint Communique (**Annex K**) and **recognised** the importance of framework including its MERL component and associated capacity building.

NEXT MEETING

17. Forum Women Leaders:

- i. **noted** that the Secretariat will advise on the arrangements for the next PIF Women Leaders Meeting to be held prior to the 2025 PIF Leaders Meeting;
- ii. **recognised** the need to consider a Terms of Reference for the review of the gender architecture in relation to including its Ministerial meetings, specifically the Pacific Ministers for Women Meetings and PIF Women Leaders Meetings as part of the ongoing RRA process; and
- iii. **noted** the opportunity and benefits of the joint convening of the 8th Pacific Ministers for Women and 3rd PIF Women Leaders Meetings and **recommend** this for future joint convenings.

2024 PIF WOMEN LEADERS MEETING OUTCOMES

18. Forum Women Leaders **noted** and **endorsed** the Outcomes and recommendations of the 2024 PIF Women Leaders Meeting which will be conveyed to the 2024 Forum Leaders' Meeting in Tonga by the Secretary General.

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Majuro, Republic of the Marshall Islands 26 July 2024

ANNEX A

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

AUSTRALIA

Marcus Samo [HoD]
Stephanie Campbell
Secretary

Ambassador for Gender Equality FSM Department of Health and Social

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Jane Bastin Sikimeti Herolynn Movick

Director Senator

Pacific Gender Section Merlynn Abello-Alfonso

Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs Senator

and Trade (DFAT)

Perpetua S. Konman

Joella Marron Senator

Assistant Director

Pacific Culture and Gender Yoslyn G. Sigrah

Department Of Foreign Affairs and Trade Senator

Geraldine Tyson Yolanda C. Rondon Assistant Director Legislative Attorney

Pacific Gender and Disability Section

Augustine Sue
Lila O'Connor
Acting Assistant Secretary

Australian Department of Foreign Affairs Department of Health & Social Affairs

Marit Jones-Virma

Australian Department of Foreign Affairs Esmeralda P

COOK ISLANDS

Child Protectionn Coordinator
Health & Social Affairs

Hon Vainetutai Rose Brown [HoD] Jessicalynn Reyes

Chair of the PIFWLM Chief Clerk

Minister of Internal Affair, Health,
Agriculture, Parliamentary Services and
Cook Islands National Superannuation

Maileen Immanuel
Project Officer-Gender

Anne Herman Ruby Awa
Permanent Secretary Adviser

Ministry of Internal Affairs Department of Health & Social Affairs

Abigail Chynoweth Serpina Lebehn
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FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA (FSM)

FIJI

Hon Lynda Tabuya (HoD)

Minister for Women, Children and Social

Protection

Ministry of Women, Children and Social

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Emily Eunice Savea Kamoe Divisional Women's Interest Officer

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FRENCH POLYNESIA

Madame Minarii Galenon-Taupua (HoD)

Minister

Delegation aux affaires Internationales

Aline Flore

President

Union of Francophone women of Oceania

Irmine Tehei

President of the "Conseil des femmes de

Polynésie"

(French Polynesian Women's Council)

Jeanne Lecourt

Director

Bureau of Women's Affairs

Ravahere Rauzy

Head of Solidarity, family and equality

Department.

KIRIBATI

Hon. Martin Moreti

Minister

Ministry of Women, Youth, Sports &

Social Affairs

Tirebwa Maurintekeraoi

Officer in Charge

Ministry of Women, Youth, Sports &

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Tarota Bwebwetara

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Ministry of Women, Youth, Sports & Social Affairs

NAURU

Hon. Charmaine Scotty (HoD)

Deputy Minsiter

Ministry of Health, Internal Affairs, Women's and Social Development Affairs, People living with Disability, and the

Naoero Museum and Tourism.

Joy Heine

Secretary

Ministry of Health, Internal Affairs, Women's and Social Development Affairs, People living with Disability, and the Naoero Museum and Tourism.

Livai Sovau Legal Advisor

Marjorie Karl

Safehouse Counsellor

Ojay Stephen

M & E Officer

Tara Detogia

Director

GMU

NEW ZEALAND

Hon. Nicola Grigg (HoD)[Virtual]

Minister of State for Trade

Minister For Women

Associate Minister of Agriculture

(horticulture)

Anna Chapman

Senior Policy Analyst

Ministry for Women

Anna Macdonald

Policy Manager

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Senior Policy Analyst

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Tara D'Sousa

Senior Adviser Gender Equality Ministry of Foreign Affairs

NIUE

Hon. Mauren Melekitama Florence Member Assisting the Minister Office of the Secretary of Government

Pats Sionetama
Executive Assistant

Office of the Premier of Niue

PALAU

Hon. J Uduch Sengebau Senior (*HoD* Vice President & Minister of Justice Office of the Vice President

Ministry of Justice

Hon. Rukebai Kikuo Inabo

Senator

Palau National Congress

Ening Reblund Legislator

Eunice Awiko

Director for the Repiblic of Palu's Bureau

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Roxamme Yusim Blesam

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PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Hon. Jason Peter Waviha (*HOD*) Minister Responsible for Women & Girls Ministry of Religion, Youth & Community Development

Hon. Kessy Sawang

Minister for Labour and Employment

Jerry Ibu Ubase Secretary Department for Community Development & Religion

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Sonya Kaiyo M&E Officer

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Hon. Jess Gasper Jr (HOD)

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Ambassador Aini Jnr

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Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Daisy Alik-Momotaro

Senator

Ministry of Culture & Internal Affairs

Brenda Silk

Secretary

Ministry of Culture & Internal Affairs

Isabela Silk

Secretary

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Winder Loeak

Assistant Secretary

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Francyne Wase Jacklik

Secretary

Ministry of Health

Bedi Racule

SIS-DO

Mela Druwani

Embassy of the RMI

Suva

SAMOA

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Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs

Vaela Devesi Director

Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and

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TONGA

Hon. Fekitamoeloa 'Utoikamanu (*HoD*) Ministry of Energy, Information, Disaster, Environment & Climate Change

Akanesi Paunga

Chief Executive Officer Ministry of Internal Affairs

Anna Jane Lagi

Family Protection Act Coordinator

Ministry of Internal Affairs

Nua Veilofia

PAS Climate Change

TUVALU

Hon. Feleti Penitala Teo (*HoD*) Prime Minister of Tuvalu

Brigitte Leduc

Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Adviser

Elise Melenoa Lusama – Mawi

Private Secretary to the Prime Minister

Filiga Taukei Nelu Fatu Lei Organisation

Lilian Faleluga Tine National Coordinator

Tuvalu National Council of Women

Penivao Penete

Close Protection Officer to the Prime

Minister

Savali Fatoga

Acting Secretary to the Office of the Prime

Minister

Dr Tufoua Panapa

Acting Secretary to the Office of the Prime

Minister

Sokotia Kulene

Director

Gender Affairs Department

Naomi Maheu

Department of Foreign Affairs

VANUATU

Rothina Ilo Noka

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Ministry of Justice and Community

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National Human Rights Coordinator Justice and Community Services

Kirara Akeimo

Gender Affairs Department

Seman Dalesa Saraken

Governance and Leadership Program

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OBSERVERS

AMERICAN SAMOA

Salote Aoelua-Fanene

Director

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Hulda Ouma

Deputy Representative ai

UN Women Fiji Multi-Country Office

Delphine Serumaga

UN Women Representative

UN Women Fiji Multi-Country Office

Selai Korovusere National Consultant Senior Violence Against Women and Girls Prevention Coordinator

UNDP

MariaPaula Reuda Palata Gender Advisor Effective Governance Pacific Office in Fiji

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Baron Waqa Secretary General

Virginia Dawson Director Policy Melinia Nawadra Policy Adviser – Social Inclusion

Dr Fiona Hukula Policy Adviser – Gender Equality

Talei Tuinamuana Social Policy Officer

Anasimeci Wainiveikoso Research Officer

Lisa Williams Public Affairs Adviser

Gayle Manueli Acting Legal Officer

Emele Bovoro Director's Assistant

Mary Tagicakiverata KRA Admi

OPENING REMARKS BY HON. VAINETUTAI ROSE TOKI-BROWN, MINISTER OF COOK ISLANDS

Kia Orana, Iakwe.

Your Excellency President Hilda Heine,

Prime Minister of Tuvalu, Right Honourable Feleti Teo,

Vice President of Palau, Hon Uduch Sengebau Senior,

Excellencies, Honourable Ministers, Head of Delegation, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to be with you here today and welcome you all to the third Pacific Islands Forum Women Leaders Meeting. It is an honour to be amongst our region's change makers. I also take this opportunity to welcome the Pacific Island Forum (PIF) Secretary General Baron Waqa to his first PIF Women Leaders Meeting. I look forward to his leadership and ongoing support for all women and girls across our Blue Pacific Continent.

Today, we have convened not only to celebrate our achievements but also to harness the collective power of our experiences, insights, and aspirations. Indeed, it has been a week of collegiality, sharing, learning, and planning.

As women leaders in the Pacific, we understand the unique challenges and opportunities that define our region. Yet, we also recognise the immense potential we hold to drive positive change, not just locally, but across our Blue Pacific Continent, and globally.

Our meeting this year is not the usual two-day meeting, but I know it will be rich in discussion, ideas, and shared experiences. I am especially excited for the *KORERO* that will start off our agenda.

Today, I am bringing a little bit of Cook Islands to the Marshall Islands. In my language, a *KORERO* is a conversation, a discussion, an opportunity to share insights, bold ideas, even doubts. These frank discussions are where innovative strategies & policies are born, which then leads to transformative action for our Pacific people.

The Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration which was discussed in our 2023 meeting and endorsed by PIF Leaders in my home country the Cook Islands in November last year. The PLGED (pledge) is their renewed and strengthened commitment to accelerate gender equality and social inclusion actions for all Pacific peoples.

The renewed and inclusive approach behind the PLGED means synergies with the Pacific Platform for Action on Gender Equality and Women's Human Rights – the PPA. It means stronger collaboration, strong cohesive approach to tackling gender and social inequalities. And it means better outcomes for our people.

In Judges 4, verse 5 it speaks of a strong women called Deborah. She was chosen by God to lead as a prophet, a judge and even led men's into battle. She wasn't just a woman passing advise but a strong wise and obedient follower of God.

Deborah serves as an excellent example for us today. Not only was she successful in her authority, but she also took decisive action, collaborating with the men in these biblical chapters to achieve the victory God had planned. Similarly, we have a clear vision for our future. Now is the time to move forward and act on the plans we have articulated today to ensure gender equality across the Pacific regions.

Although our agenda has been tucked into one day, it is still a substantive one. Let us leave here today with renewed vigour, armed with new insights and collaborations that will propel us towards our shared vision, reflected in the 2050 Strategy, of a just and equitable region.

I look forward to the deliberations today and the outcomes of this meeting.

Meitaki Ranuinui, Te Atua te Aroa

Kia Orana e Kia Manuia.

Kommol Tata

KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY DR HILDA HEINE, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MARSHALL ISLANDS

(Protocol)

Gender equality and women's human rights have been on the regional agenda for at least the last 30 years when the first itineration of the Pacific Platform for Action was adopted in 1994. Most countries in the region have ratified CEDAW, and many have established gender policies or action plans. However, these commitments have not necessarily translated to transformative action on the ground.

The Pacific Islands Forum Women Leaders Meeting was established with the aim of putting our regional gender equality agenda within the Forum Leaders' line of sight on an annual basis, making it a high developmental priority for our region. This is a great accomplishment and something we should be proud of.

As a Pacific leader, I am excited and encouraged by the convening of the Pacific Ministers for Women Meeting yesterday to be followed by the PIF Women Leaders Meeting today. As President of the RMI, the importance of co-convening these meetings back-to-back in Majuro is not lost on me.

When we talk about women in leadership, we primarily look to the representation of women in our national parliaments as a key indicator of how we are performing. The Pacific as a region (excluding Australia, New Zealand and the PI Territories) has the lowest number of women parliamentarians in the world, sitting at 7%, against a global average of 27%. Women's parliamentary representation in the Pacific region has been historically low. The reality for us is that national leadership and politics is still a male dominated field.

That context is an open challenge to us as a convening. As women leaders, what can we do to change the narrative around the composition of our Parliaments around the region? What is our role? What targeted approach can we adopt to ensure that concrete steps are taken to have more women sitting in parliaments and equally supporting and contributing with Pacific men to nation building.

We are at a critical point which gives us the leverage to define our regional mechanism for gender equality through the Review of the Regional Architecture (RRA). A lot has been achieved at national, sub-regional and regional level. It is the right time for us to take stock of these achievements and shape an ecosystem that is fit for our aspirations as captured in the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, the revitalised Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration and the Pacific Platform for Action for Gender Equality and Women's Human Rights.

We have the opportunity to define our role as women leaders on this platform through our Terms of Reference. I ask that we play a very active part in defining our role as a convening. As we think about our role, I ask that we be cognisant of the role that is being played by the Triennial Ministers for Women in their convening. Our role must work to complement that of our Ministers for Women. We are in a unique space as women leaders and our role must highlight that we will work with our male counterparts in advancing gender equality in our countries and in our region.

It has become very clear by looking at the consistency of the low number of women in parliaments across the region, that our policy intervention in this space needs to be stronger.

We are at a critical juncture and this meeting provides a great opportunity to draw on some of the most challenging issues for gender equality in our region.

There is a lack of accountability for gender equality across all levels of government and within the programmes of CROP and other development partners. To ensure stakeholders implement and monitor commitments to gender equality, mutual accountability measures are needed. Currently, there is a significant gap in our regional gender ecosystem regarding this accountability role, especially at the highest levels of governance both regionally and nationally. This PIFWLM can play an important role in that respect.

Different countries represented here today have had a unique journey for gender equality at a national level. This meeting provides an opportunity to learn from each other and to optimise on success stories of Pacific-driven solutions. It is also an opportunity to reflect on the challenges that we share.

As a sub-region, I am proud to highlight the strides that we have taken in Micronesia to harness our collective efforts for gender equality through the Micronesian Islands Forum. I recognise the support of SPC to the Gender Equality Committee of the MIF and call on other CROP agencies to lend your support to the sectoral committees of the MIF. A strong regional architecture must necessarily sit on a solid sub-regional and national foundation.

We have had gender equality on our regional agenda for the past 30 years. The question I would like to leave with you today is this – what will we do differently to ensure that in the next 30 years we can look back and see that Pacific women and girls are safe and equitably share in resources, opportunities and decision-making with Pacific men and boys.

The 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Strategy clearly articulates our vision as Pacific Leaders and the region for a resilient, safe, inclusive Blue Pacific Continent. This will not be possible if we do not meaningfully involve and include women and girls in all their diversity in navigating our path to 2050.

I wish you well in your deliberations and look forward to seeing an impactful and action-focused outcomes document at the end of the meeting.



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

Excellency, President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, President Hilda Heine,

Prime Minister of Tuvalu, Right Honourable Feleti Teo,

Vice President of Palau, Hon Uduch Sengebau Senior,

Vice President of French Polynesia, Hon. Minarii Galenon-Taupua

Excellencies,

Honourable Ministers,

Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

Empowered leaders of the Pacific!

Ekamowir Omo Iakwe!

It is with great pride and profound respect that I open this important meeting.

- 2. Firstly, I acknowledge our gracious hosts, the Government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, who have left no stone unturned in their preparations and hospitality. Kommol tata.
- 3. The PIF Women Leaders Meeting this year is different from the last two. It has been a concerted and collaborative effort with The Pacific Community to align and streamline the Triennial, the Pacific Ministers for Women Meeting, and this PIF Women Leaders meeting. To have it all in one week is an amazing feat! Chair, at this juncture, please allow me to express my appreciation to the Director General of the Pacific Community and his team.
- 4. The resilience of our people is persistently tested climate change, economic vulnerabilities, and social inequalities. I speak from experience when I say that, for our people in Smaller Island States, those tests of resilience hit even harder. Part of building resilience is recognition that we cannot go through hard times alone. Our resilience is greater when we are connected as part of the wider *Pasifika* family.
- 5. Pacific resilience is a testament to the spirit of our Blue Pacific Continent a spirit that is unyielding and hopeful, always looking towards a brighter future.
- 6. Our 2050 Strategy is our *vaka* that will take us to that bright future: lighting a path along the way for all our Pacific people, today and for those to come.

- 7. Today, I want to especially acknowledge the women and girls of our Blue Pacific Continent. You are the backbone of our Member countries, the custodians of our cultures, and the champions of our communities.
- 8. The revitalised Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration is a commitment to the women and girls of our region that Pacific Leaders recognise you and pledge to accelerate efforts to uplift and enhance the status of women and girls across all sectors and at all levels.
- 9. The revitalised PLGED goes hand-in-hand with the Pacific Platform for Action on Gender Equality and Women's Human Rights. Both are much-needed pieces of the *vaka* that will take us to a more gender equal, equitable and socially inclusive Pacific in 2050.
- 10. The theme of the Triennial Conference and the Ministerial meetings is important and aligns well with the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders 53rd Meeting theme of "A Transformative Resilient Pasifiki: Build Better Now".
- 11. To truly harness the potential of our islands, we must continue to include our women and girls in all efforts creating an environment where they can thrive, innovate, and lead.
- 12. I challenge us Pacific men and boys to be agents of change by standing behind and alongside women and girls in pursuit of a more equal, equitable and inclusive Pacific.
- 13. In closing, I wish you well in the deliberations today. I know your discussions will be thorough and meaningful, drawing on your own experience as powerful leaders of the Blue Pacific.

Tubwa kor, I thank you.

PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM SECRETARIAT

PIFS(24)PIFWLM1.2Rev

PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM WOMEN LEADERS MEETING

26 July 2024 Majuro, Republic of the Marshall Islands

PROVISIONAL ANNOTATED AGENDA

1. **Opening** (9:00am-9:15am)

The Chair will call the meeting to order and opening formalities will be observed.

2. **Adoption of Agenda and Meeting Timetable** (9:15am – 9:20am)

Please refer to meeting paper PIFS(24)PIFWLM1.2Rev

3. Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Social Inclusion in the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent (9:20am – 10:30am)

A Dialogue on how women leaders can work together to achieve the 2050 vision by mainstreaming the Revitalised Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration through key regional initiatives including the Pacific Road Map for Economic Resilience (PRED) and the Pacific Resilience Facility (PRF).

Please refer to meeting paper PIFS(24)PIFWLM1.3

Photograph & morning tea (10:30am – 10:45am)

4. Update on the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent and the Review of Regional Architecture (RRA) (10:50am – 11:20am)

An update on the Implementation Plan for the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent and the Review of Regional Architecture.

Please refer to the meeting paper PIFS(24)PIFWLM1.4

5. **High-level commitments to Gender Equality and Equity** (11:20am – 1:00pm)

Governance of the Revitalised PLGED

i. Reporting on progress on outcomes from 2nd PIF Women Leaders Meeting (2023) (11:40am – 12:00pm)

To consider the update on the key actions from 2nd PIF Women Leaders Meeting (2023).

Please refer to the meeting paper PIFS(24)PIFWLM1.5(i)

ii. Revitalised Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Framework (11:20am – 11:40am)

To consider the draft revitalised Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration MEL Strategy.

Please refer to the meeting paper PIFS(24)PIFWLM1.5(ii)

iii. Pacific Women's Triennial Conference and Pacific Ministers for Women Meeting Outcomes (12:00pm – 12:20pm)

Presents the Outcomes of the 15th Pacific Women's Triennial Conference and 8th Pacific Ministers for Women Meeting and the recommended actions/priorities for Leaders' attention.

Please refer to the meeting paper PIFS(24)PIFWLM1.5(iii)

- 6. **Other Matters** (12:20pm 12:50pm)
 - i. Republic of Nauru: 2024 Micronesian Ministers for Women Conference Outcomes

Present the \bar{An} Towepo Declaration, and recommended actions/priorities for PIF Women Leaders.

Please refer to the meeting paper PIFS(24)PIFWLM.Info.1

ii. Republic of Palau: Update on the 26th Micronesian Islands Forum

Verbal update on the 26th Micronesian Islands Forum Joint Communique.

7. **Next meeting and Adjournment of Meeting** (12:50pm – 1:00pm)

LUNCH BREAK (1:00pm – 3:00pm)

(Drafting Committee to have a working lunch to finalise the outcomes)

8. Consideration and Endorsement of the 2024 PIFWLM Outcomes (3:00pm-4:00pm)

Women Leaders to consider and endorse the 2024 PIFWLM Outcomes document prepared by the Drafting Committee.

9. **Closing of 2024 PIFWLM** (4:00pm - 4:30pm)

Information Paper:

Paper reference	Details
PIFS(24)PIFWLM.Info.1	2024 Micronesian Ministers for Women Conference Outcomes
	Presents the Outcomes of the Micronesian Ministers for Women
	Meeting held on 16 – 18 April 2024 and the recommended
	actions/priorities for PIF Women Leaders.

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Majuro, Republic of Marshall Islands 16 July 2024