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**Securing our future in the Pacific**

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Pacific Islands Forum  
with United Nations Missions  
*Australia, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji,  
Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, Palau,  
Papua New Guinea, Republic of Marshall Islands,  
Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu*

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**PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM  
STATEMENT FOR ECOSOC OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR  
DEVELOPMENT SEGMENT**

***DELIVERED BY***

**H.E MR. SAMUEL LALONI**

***PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF TUVALU***

***ON BEHALF OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM***

Madam President, Secretary-General, Excellencies

It is my honour to speak on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum members represented at the United Nations: Australia, Fiji, Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu and my own country, Tuvalu.

Madam President, we thank you for organizing this meeting.

We would also like to thank the Secretary-General for the excellent presentation you have made this morning.

In 2017, our countries set out beside you on a journey to reform the UN Development System, with the objective of making the UN more fit for purpose to implement the 2030 Agenda. We commend your team for the work that they have done to bring us so far on this journey.

This unprecedented time in our history has shown us, more than ever, how critical the UN system is in driving and protecting sustainable development. In our region, many countries have so far remained COVID free. This is good news, but it has come at a tremendous economic cost,

requiring the complete shutdown of the tourism industry that so many SIDS rely on. COVID-19 represents an ongoing threat to trade, food security, employment, remittances, culture and recreation for our entire region.

The climate change crisis facing our Pacific Island Nations remains foremost in our priorities. In the Pacific we have seen that climate related hazards do not pause during pandemics. Tropical Cyclone Harold recently caused widespread damage across Solomon Islands, Fiji, Vanuatu and Tonga in the very midst of their COVID responses, damaging vital sanitation infrastructure when it was needed most. This is a practical demonstration of the unique vulnerability of SIDS, and the need for a comprehensive, holistic, and nimble response.

We have seen some promising developments, for example, implementation of the reinvigorated Resident Coordinator system moving in the right direction. However, implementation of the recommendations of the Multi-Country Office remains a significant outstanding issue, and we would encourage Member States to take this forward.

As we commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the UN charter - we see the establishment for a MCO in the North Pacific as part and parcel of a UN we want.

We welcome the establishment of a dedicated UN office in the North Pacific, to provide closer engagement with North Pacific countries and deeper understanding of our challenges and priorities. This also represents an opportunity to promote greater understanding of the UN for our peoples. Once established and as conditions allow, we would encourage personnel to undertake an active travel program between countries to ensure adequate consultation on and assistance with national priorities and interests.

We agree with the finding in your report on Implementation of the General Assembly resolution of the QCPR that a strengthened regional response is essential to achieve the 2030 Agenda and we strongly support

additional coordination resources for Multi-Country Office engagement with key regional organisations in the Pacific.

To conclude, we reiterate our continued support to the Secretary-General and your ongoing efforts to reposition the development system to improve how the UN operates and delivers on the ground.