

*SOLOMON ISLANDS STATEMENT BY THE HONOURABLE PETER SHANEL AGOVAKA,  
MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS & EXTERNAL TRADE BEFORE THE 65th SESSION OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, GENERAL DEBATE- 27th SEPTEMBER 2010(PLEASE  
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Mr. President,

It is indeed an honour for me, on behalf of the Government and people of Solomon Islands to congratulate you as President of our 65<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nation General Assembly. Your term in office coincide with the economic turmoil, impacts of climate change, growing social and security concerns and threats of unilateralism that is challenging multilateralism from all fronts.

Having said this, my delegation is pleased in the manner you have convened and concluded three High Level Meetings on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Biodiversity, and Mauritius Strategy. This is a clear indication of our confidence in you and your vast experience in overseeing this principle, organ of the United Nations for the next twelve months.

My delegation takes this opportunity to also acknowledge the leadership and contributions of your predecessor His Excellency Dr Ali Abdussalam Treki. His support for multilateralism has placed us on firm footing in preparing for this session.

Mr. President,

We witness around us the growth of democracy, corporate power, and emergence of new powers, all offering new perspective and opportunities. New international cooperation is linking development, finance, raw materials and markets. This development calls for increased collaboration and a new framework to facilitate the emergence of a new economic order. Solomon Islands under its new Foreign Policy will establish relations with all six regions of the United Nations.

Mr. President,

Solomon Islands believe in multilateralism and value the importance of having a closer working relationship between the United Nations and member states. My Government stands ready and committed to work with the United Nations in enhancing its presence in my capital. In this connection, we renew our call to up grade the United Nations sub-office in Honiara and headed by a Resident Representative.

Mr. President,

My delegation acknowledges United Nations outreach to Solomon Islands this year by convening a UN National Competitive Recruitment Exams in December. We welcome this engagement as it provides the opportunity for successful citizens to fill our national quota of international civil servants serving our family of nations.

Mr. President,

Democracy as you know is one of the core principles of the United Nations Charter. People continue to be the source of legitimacy of this organization and remain the basis of authority of this Assembly.

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Solomon Islands register its appreciation to the United Nations Political Affairs Office and UNDP for their role in coordinating some 400 local and international observers who monitored last month's national general election. We are equally pleased to note the positive pronouncement by the various local and international monitors, that Solomon Islands national election was conducted in a free and fair manner. A number of electoral reform recommendations were made, and will be acted on by my Government with the view of improving our national electoral system.

Mr. President,

The essence of progress and prosperity rests on having a clear and firm leadership, an obedient bureaucracy with a sense of vision. My Government is committed to providing these and will work tirelessly to offer our people a life of normality, dignity and freedom.

The challenge of nation building is huge and costly for any developing country. It is for this reason; each country has to define for itself the type and form of democracy it wants to adopt. For democracy cannot be imposed. In this regards, Solomon Islands continues to advocate for genuine dialogue and engagement with Fiji over confrontation and sanctions, and supports Fiji's effort to determine its destiny.

Mr. President,

Solomon Islands join the international community in calling for the lifting of the 49 year old economic embargo on Cuba. Such embargo belongs to a different time and era. It is our hope that the power of reaching out to our neighbours will break down artificial ideological barriers.

Mr. President,

Solomon Islands will be undergoing the Universal Periodic Review during this session. My delegation takes this time to reaffirm Solomon Islands commitment to the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter, including respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all. Solomon Islands find it regrettable to see these principles sacrificed by some that continues to divide this august Assembly. Solomon Islands recognize the Geneva based Human Rights Council, its role and impartiality, as the appropriate institution to deal with the issues of human rights.

Mr. President,

This year marks the seventh anniversary of my country's relationship with the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI). The current Partnership Framework promotes greater coherence and predictability in enhancing the quality of the cooperation to meet the country's development needs.

Solomon Islands RAMSI relations have brought political and financial stability however, the underlying causes of the conflict remains unaddressed. Issues of tolerance, respect for the diverse cultures has placed much stress on our road to peace. My Government remains committed in addressing these issues.

Mr. President,

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In June this year, the United Arab Emirates Foreign Minister, His Highness, Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, brought together Pacific Small Islands Developing States and our Middle East brothers to discuss cooperation including the Arab Peace Initiative in the Middle East.

Solomon Islands support all peace initiatives including proposals to normalize relations between the entire Arab region and Israel. The complexity of the Middle East conflict needs a regional solution and we strongly feel that parties to the conflict will need to sow conditions for peace as we work to have a two state solution. We are heartened to see negotiations proceeding however would like to see all stakeholders involved in the process.

Mr. President,

My delegation welcomes the outcome of the summer nuclear Conference. The existence of the nuclear weapons continues to pose a significant threat to humanity. History has shown the horror, depth and devastation of nuclear weapons. Solomon Islands support total elimination of all nuclear weapons as the only absolute guarantee in having a safe and secure world.

Mr. President,

The urgency of agreeing to a legally binding agreement on climate change, in Cancun Mexico, cannot be over emphasized. It is a common concern that binds the world together. Our planet is already absorbing more heat and getting warmer. Temperature has risen by 0.7 degrees Celsius in the last century. Under current trend, science tells us that the temperature will further increase by 4 to 7 degrees Celsius by the end of this century, threatening the survival of many, including Solomon Islands.

It is critical that we must have a clear path of stabilizing green house gas emissions. Solomon Islands supports Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) call to reduce temperature rise below 1.5 degrees Celsius and to bring down green house gas concentration to well below 350 parts per million.

Noting there is limited atmospheric carbon space left, a carbon budget approach is an option to prevent the climate from reaching irreversible levels in a just and fair manner. It takes into consideration development needs, space and concerns of developing countries, and our shared responsibilities and rights towards meeting the demands of the health of our atmosphere.

Mr. President,

On the issue of UN System-wide Coherence, the General Assembly in July established a new gender entity, "UN Women". This body will further strengthen UN's capacity and effectiveness in advancing the status of women universally. Solomon Islands looks forward to cooperating with the new entity.

Mr. President,

On Security Council reform, my delegation is pleased to see informal intergovernmental negotiations carried forward into this Session. Negotiations are now focused on a common text, which we hope will be

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further streamlined in achieving our goal of making the UN principal organ, more representative, efficient and responsive to emerging global threats of this century.

Mr. President,

The Pacific Ocean makes up a third of the world's surface and supplies a quarter of the world's tuna industry. In May this year, eight Pacific Small Islands Developing States including Solomon Islands set up the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) Secretariat in Marshall Islands.. The PNA countries agreed to coordinate the management and conservation of their tuna resources, to guarantee sustainability and greater economic benefits from their resources.

The closing off of the high seas pockets within the respective countries exclusive economic zones is to prevent illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and provide a safe haven for fish to breed.

Mr. President,

On the issue of the establishment of UNCLOS regional marine scientific center, my delegation is pleased to note the matter reflected in the Secretary General's report. The sub region of the Pacific values such a center of which my Government offers to host. We will pursue this regionally and internationally within the spirit of UNCLOS and the MSI.

This year Papua New Guinea, Federated States of Micronesia, and Solomon Islands, made a presentation on our joint submission to the UN Commission on the Limits of Continental Shelf. We hope to do the same with our remaining submissions at an appropriate time.

Mr. President,

Solomon Islands is encouraged by the further growth of positive development and engagements along the Taiwan Straits. This must be internationally recognized, commended and supported. Moderate and pragmatic path adopted by both the People's Republic of China and Taiwan along the Taiwan Straits contributes to international peace and security.

Solomon Islands continue to support Taiwan's meaningful participation within the UN system. My delegation is heartened to note Taiwan's participation as an observer at the World Health Assembly in 2009 and 2010 respectively. This is a gesture of the improved Taiwan cross Strait relations.

Taiwan has registered its interest to participate in two United Nations Treaty Organizations this year namely, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the International Civil Aviation Organization which my country supports. The two Organizations deal with two global issues that are of common concerns to the world. Climate change and aviation issues need the participation of all countries for aviation safety and the health of our atmosphere. My delegation finds it regrettable that the UNFCCC Secretariat has adopted a narrow position on a matter that requires the Parties to the Convention and the Protocol to decide on.

Mr. President,

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The Millennium Development Goals are internationally agreed development benchmarks. Solomon Islands score card remains mixed, uneven and generally off track in terms of meeting our 2015 goals. Solomon Islands international programme for achieving the MDGs are defined in the Mauritius Strategy and the Brussels Programme of Action. Both frameworks outline Solomon Islands special situation that requires special international attention.

The review of the Mauritius Strategy held last week revealed that international commitments to the Barbados Programme of Action remains wanting and disappointing. Small Islands Developing States vulnerability has worsened. To address this partnership gap, Solomon Islands call for a special category for SIDS within the UN system. There is also a need for firmer link between SIDS programme and UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) to ensure support is received from within our organization.

Mr. President,

This session will also see the convening of the Fourth United Nations Conference for Least Developed Countries in May 2011. We are equally pleased that the General Assembly has launched a process of national, regional and global reviews during the last session. We look forward to working with all in having a comprehensive, action-oriented and meaningful outcome of the conference.

Mr. President,

My delegation, wish to acknowledge our new partners Luxembourg for supporting the Melanesian Spearhead Group and Portugal for supporting Solomon Islands external students . We remain grateful for all partners from the South and North including Cuba, Italy, Papua New Guinea, Taiwan and our traditional partners European Union, Australia, New Zealand, Japan and my regional neighbours.

I close by assuring you Mr. President of Solomon Islands support and cooperation during your term in office.

Thank you Mr. President.