



National Statement

Delivered by

Honourable Mrs. Lenora Qereqeretabua

Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs, Republic of Fiji
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“Building momentum towards the 2023 SDG Summit:
Transformation for accelerating implementation of the SDGs”.

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GA Hall

Madam President,

I am honoured to deliver this Statement on behalf of the Republic of Fiji, at this year’s High-Level Political Forum.

As it is the first time, I am addressing this esteemed Forum; allow me to convey the Fijian Government’s full support to your Presidency of the UN Economic and Social Council and to members of your bureau.

Madam President,

The theme of this Debate, *“Building momentum towards the SDG Summit: Transformation for accelerating implementation of the SDGs”* appropriately reflects the sprint towards 2030, against the backdrop of the COVID19 pandemic, Geo-political instability and conflicts, and the worsening climate and biodiversity crisis, with widespread effects on people, planet, prosperity and peace.

There is a dire need for transformative and accelerated action, and political will for effective stewardship of our collective resources, to ensure that development gains are not lost forever, and no one is left behind in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

Global collective action remains paramount as countries strive to find the right balance between their economic recovery and ensuring sustainable development.

Madam President,

In our commitment to the Sustainable Development Agenda, we are presenting at this year’s High Level Political Forum, our 2nd Voluntary National Review (VNR) Report, since we last presented in 2019. Ensuring that Fijians have water in their taps, better health facilities, better roads, uninterrupted electricity, improved transportation, affordable housing and improvement in living standards, is a top priority. To fully realise this, collaborative efforts within all levels of society, and in partnership with development partners is key.

Although our progress to achieve the 2030 Agenda has been hampered by multiple and on-going crises in one form or another; Fiji continues to forge ahead, in ensuring that the needs of the most vulnerable of our communities, are met.

Madam President,

For the Pacific, climate change remains the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security and wellbeing of our people and ecosystems. It is a threat to our culture, history and our identity as a people.

In recognising the deep and lasting impacts of the climate crisis, on our future, we are proactively engaging as a region, to plan the way forward to beyond 2030. The 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent is our vision and our blueprint for a safe and prosperous Blue Pacific, in our future.

The world is failing to meet the 1.5-degree Celsius goal and immediate change is needed through rapid, deep and sustained reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. Building resilience into our strategies and responsive structures is critical. A low-carbon future will have development benefits for all of us.

In the Pacific, we are already identifying climate mobility adaptation strategies. In the face of rising sea-levels, recurring and intensive natural disasters, and climate hazards, we are proactively working together to mobilise our collective resources, and identify mobility pathways.

Madam President,

Climate change is the most significant challenge to achieving long term sustainable development. I ask us today **“What more, can we do together to ensure that our children, and their children have a chance to live in a safe and prosperous world?”**

The upcoming SDG Summit in September marking the mid-point of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda is an opportunity to review our progress on implementation, and identify opportunities for collaboration to take us forward.

Given that we only have 7 years before 2030, we need a fair and equitable access to the necessary resources to give us equal footing and to enable sustainable recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Fiji is encouraged by the on-going work on the Multidimensional Vulnerability Index (MVI) for SIDS, which goes beyond traditional measures of development to capture our vulnerabilities.

Science and technology is essential for our collective response to sustainable development challenges. However, the digital divide between and within countries and between women and men, rural and urban cannot be allowed to continue.

Madam President,

The pathways we choose need to be inclusive and people-centred, and environmentally sustainable. The transformative and

accelerated action needed must address inequalities and debt burden, leverage technologies, create economic opportunities, and promote partnerships and most of all support vulnerable developing countries.

I thank you.