

Forum Secretary General commended Pacific push on Climate Change and possible security implication

Wed, 10 Jun 2009

SUVA, Fiji ---- The Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Tuiloma Neroni Slade has commended the efforts of the Pacific Small Island Developing States at the United Nations for successfully getting a resolution through the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on “Climate Change and possible security implications.”

The United Nations General Assembly passed the draft resolution on 3rd June after it was introduced by Pacific SIDS last year. The resolution invited “the relevant organs of the United Nations, as appropriate and within their respective mandates, to intensify their efforts in considering and addressing climate change, including its possible security implications.” It also requested “the UN Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive report to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session on the possible security implications of climate change, based on the views of the Member States and relevant regional and international organizations.”

“The UNGA’s endorsement of the resolution by Pacific SIDS at the United Nations goes a long way towards the implementation of the Pacific Forum Leaders’ Niue Declaration at their meeting last August committing its members to advocate and support the recognition in all international fora the urgent social, economic and security threats by impacts of climate change and sea level rise on its members,” said Forum Secretariat Secretary General Mr Slade. Chair of the Pacific SIDS at the UN and Nauru’s Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations, H.E Marlene Moses described the UNGA’s endorsement of the resolution as “truly a historic occasion for the Pacific SIDS.” “It is the first time we have tabled any resolution at the United Nations and are pleased with the overwhelming support we have received from the international community,” said Ambassador Moses.

Following the adoption of the resolution, Samoa’s Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Aliioaiga Feturi Elisaia said: “This is a momentous occasion in the life of our organization, and a high point in Pacific SIDS continuing efforts to underscore the existential threats of the adverse effects of climate change on our smaller and more vulnerable island countries.”

Ambassador Elisaia thanked all the countries that supported the resolution and the UN for ensuring “that Pacific islands concerns are given centre stage notwithstanding the multitude of global crisis competing for our organisation’s attention and time.”

To the Pacific island states and people, Ambassador Elisaia said: “Today we have taken the first and crucial step. We have a long way still to go before we can benefit from today’s historic resolution. The United Nations is our sanctuary and place of last resort, and we have every faith that it will not let us down in the long and uncharted road

ahead.” In a statement delivered after the endorsement of the resolution by the UNGA, H.E Mr Andrew Goledzinowski , Charge d’ Affaires of the Australian Permanent Mission to the UN described the occasion as “indeed a historic day” and that it was about respect: “respect for some of the smallest and least powerful states represented in the UNGA.” “It is the first time Pacific Islands have come together to present a substantive resolution at the United Nations. Even more importantly, it is the first time that we have agreed, by consensus, on the linkage between climate change and security. “The Pacific Island countries do not usually make a great deal of noise in this place. They do not ask for much. In fact, it is generally we who ask them for favours – such as seeking their vote for this or that. But this time it is the Pacific Island countries that come to us with something of fundamental importance to them,” Mr Goledzinowski told the UNGA.