



PACIFIC SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES
United Nations Member States

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Statement of H.E. Mrs. Jane J. Chigiyal
Ambassador/Permanent Representative Federated States of Micronesia
On Behalf of the Pacific Small Island Developing States
United Nations Security Council Open Debate:
Conflict Prevention and Sustaining Peace

Tuesday, 10 January 2017, New York

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Thank you, Madam President,

I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Pacific Small Island Developing States.

At the outset, we would like to thank Sweden for convening this important debate on Conflict Prevention and Sustaining Peace.

Similarly, we would like to commend the President of the General Assembly for the upcoming High-Level Dialogue on “Building Sustainable Peace for All: Synergies between the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Sustaining Peace” scheduled for 24 January 2017.

We would also like to recognize Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, and to thank him for his proactive leadership on this important issue. Mr. Secretary-General, in many of your recent statements, including an excellent piece published in Newsweek yesterday, you have highlighted the inter-linkages between conflict and many of its root causes – poverty, inequality, human rights violations, and environmental destruction. In your Newsweek piece you state, and I quote, “...climate change, population growth, rapid urbanization, food insecurity and water scarcity are adding to the tensions and instability.” End quote.

The Pacific SIDS fully agree. We must reinvigorate our political and diplomatic engagement in responding to conflict, and a significant portion of that energy must be directed toward improving the material circumstances of people. Happy, safe, and secure people rarely see the need to reach for a weapon. And the single largest threat to the safety and security of present and future generations is climate change.

Madam President,

In resolution 63/281, the United Nations General Assembly agreed that climate change could have security implications and invited all relevant organs of the United Nations to intensify their efforts to address the matter. This was followed by a landmark report by former Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon entitled, “Climate change and its possible security implications,” in which he labeled climate change a “threat multiplier” and identified numerous channels, like food and water insecurity, natural resource scarcity, exposure to extreme events, and human migration, through which climate change has the potential to destabilise societies. In a 2011 Presidential Statement, the Security Council agreed, recognizing that climate change could aggravate existing threats to international peace and security.

Since 2011, the threat of climate change has only grown. Impacts are happening faster are more severe than most scientists previously projected, and, Paris Agreement notwithstanding, current emissions trends are still far from adequate.

The climate change threat is unprecedented, and therefore we need new tools to respond. For this reason, the Pacific SIDS are renewing our call for the Secretary-General to appoint a Special Representative on Climate and Security. The Special Representative would serve the Secretary-General, with responsibilities that include:

- Reporting regularly to UNGA and UNSC on emerging climate-related security threats,
- Facilitating regional cooperation and resolution of cross-border issues that might be affected by climate change,
- Helping vulnerable countries evaluate their security-related national circumstances and develop action plans to increase their resilience,
- Identifying and monitoring potentially dangerous tipping points at the climate and security nexus,
- Engaging in preventive diplomacy as appropriate, and
- Supporting post-conflict situations when climate change is a risk factor that could undermine stability.

The initial outputs of the SRSG in the first two years of work should include:

- (1) An update of the Secretary-General’s 2009 report, including the status of implementation of Resolution 63/281 and an assessment of the UN’s capacity to respond to the security implications of climate change.
- (2) Working with relevant scientific bodies and research organizations, a new report that identifies and analyses potentially dangerous tipping points at the climate and security nexus, along with recommendations for improving our ability to monitor and respond.
- (3) Preliminary climate security risk assessments for interested vulnerable countries.

To be completely clear, the appointment of the Special Representative should in no way alter the mandate of the Security Council. The mandate of existing bodies and institutions, most notably the General Assembly, must be respected.

Madam President,

The climate change risk is real, it is dangerous, and it is growing. It will touch the lives of billions over the coming century, threatening their well-being, and in some cases, their lives. And it has the potential to undermine global peace and stability in ways we are only beginning to understand. Moreover, the nexus between climate change, peace and security, and the SDGs cannot be ignored. For these reasons, the Pacific SIDS urge all countries to support our call for a Special Representative on Climate and Security.

Thank you.