

FIFTY-FOURTH PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM

HONIARA, SOLOMON ISLANDS

8 – 12 SEPTEMBER 2025

FORUM COMMUNIQUÉ



PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM SECRETARIAT

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The Fifty-Fourth (54th) Pacific Islands Forum was held in Honiara, Solomon Islands from 8 – 12 September 2025 and was attended by the Heads of State and Government of Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of Fiji, French Polynesia, the Republic of Kiribati, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, the Republic of Palau, the Independent State of Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and the Republic of Vanuatu. The Republic of Nauru was represented at Ministerial level, and Samoa at Senior Government Official level. The Forum Leaders’ Retreat was held in Noro in the Western Province of Solomon Islands.

2. Guam attended the formal session as an Associate Member. The Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP) in attendance were the: Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA); Pacific Aviation Safety Office (PASO); Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), Pacific Community (SPC), and the University of the South Pacific (USP). The Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner was also in attendance. Forum Leaders also welcomed the opportunity to engage with the broader Forum family, including representatives from Civil Society, the Private Sector as well as Associate Members, during the formal session of Leaders.

3. Leaders **expressed** their deep appreciation to the Honourable Jeremiah Manele, Prime Minister of Solomon Islands and the Government and people of Solomon Islands, for the warm hospitality extended to their delegations and the magnificent demonstration of culture and heritage at the opening ceremony of the 54th Pacific Islands Forum. Leaders **commended** the preparations and facilitation of the meeting, which enabled Leaders to engage in robust discussions and reach political settlements that contributed to the overall success of the 54th Pacific Islands Forum.

4. Leaders also **acknowledged** the outgoing Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum, the Hon. Dr ‘Aisake Valu Eke, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Tonga, for his leadership and commitment to regionalism during his tenure.

5. Leaders **offered** their condolences and **reaffirmed** their solidarity with the Republic of Marshall Islands on the recent destruction by fire of its Nitijela (Parliament House) as well as the passing of the former President of the Marshall Islands and former Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum, H.E. Iroijlaplap Christopher Jorebon Loeak.

IUMI TUGEDA: ACT NOW FOR AN INTEGRATED BLUE PACIFIC CONTINENT

6. Leaders **congratulated** the Government of Solomon Islands on the reflective 54th Pacific Islands Forum theme – *Iumi Tugeda: Act Now for an Integrated Blue Pacific Continent*. Leaders **recognised** the timeliness of the theme which responded to the evolving geostrategic environment, and emphasised the centrality of Pacific regionalism and the Forum family in navigating the emerging challenges and opportunities. In discussing the region’s regionalism journey over the

last five decades, Leaders **reaffirmed** the importance of moving from regional cooperation to deepened regionalism.

REGIONAL AND STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

7. Reflecting on the current geostrategic environment, Leaders **recognised** that the region's strategic landscape in 2025 was one of both challenge and opportunity. The convergence of climate impacts, geopolitical competition, economic fragility, and social pressures **underscored** the importance of strengthened regionalism.

8. In an increasingly complex strategic landscape, Leaders **emphasised** the value of strengthened Forum governance, including the ongoing advisory role of the Pacific Islands Forum Troika, to anchor deliberations and member-led political settlements. Leaders **reaffirmed** inclusivity and solidarity in guiding the work of the Forum family. Leaders **reflected** on and further **reaffirmed** the importance of regionally driven economic development and encouraged deeper regional integration, including in trade, fisheries development, labour mobility, digital connectivity and sectoral cooperation where relevant, while continuing to ensure that partnerships are aligned to Forum decisions and the *2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent* (2050 Strategy).

9. Leaders **reflected** on their dialogues with regional stakeholders, including the Heads of CROP, representatives from the private sector, civil society, and Associate Members. Leaders **welcomed** the robust exchange of views on key development, political and social issues and **agreed** to refer these issues to the relevant Forum processes for oversight and advice to the Forum Officials Committee (FOC), and to be considered by Leaders in 2026.

10. Anchored in solidarity and sustainable development, Leaders **reaffirmed** the 2050 Strategy as the region's collective vision. Its Implementation Plan sets the framework for collective action, ensuring that national priorities are advanced regionally, where necessary, to deliver the greatest impact. In considering the progress update on implementation, Leaders **endorsed** the *Executive Summary of the 2050 Strategy Regional Collective Actions (RCA) Report* which highlighted the practical initiatives already underway that give effect to the 2050 vision.

Priorities of the Smaller Island States (SIS) Members

11. In considering the evolving strategic environment, Leaders **recognised** the unique vulnerabilities and challenges of the SIS Members. Leaders **welcomed** and **endorsed** the mainstreaming of the SIS Leaders priorities across all CROP agencies as follows:

- i. Securing reliable and affordable air and sea transport, including upper airspace management;
- ii. Advancing fisheries development and participation in regional value chains;
- iii. Strengthening regional procurement and health workforce mechanisms; and
- iv. Enhancing access to climate finance, with a strong call for operationalising the Multi-Dimensional Vulnerability Index within regional agencies.

12. Leaders **noted** the call by the SIS Members for the provision of adequate and dedicated support on the implementation and management of SIS matters.

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND REGIONALISM

13. Recognising that the region is in a period defined by both heightened political transitions and increased global attention, Leaders were **cognisant** that matters such as nuclear legacy issues continue to test the integrity of the Blue Pacific's long-standing nuclear-free identity, while political processes in New Caledonia are at a critical juncture.

14. Leaders also **recognised** that an increasingly crowded international engagement calendar demands coherent and structured regional engagement and advocacy to ensure the Forum's collective voice remains credible, coordinated, and aligned with the priorities of Forum Leaders. Leaders **noted** these evolving developments and **reaffirmed** their custodian role as the Pacific Islands Forum in balancing regional political integrity with the need to respond decisively to shifting geopolitical dynamics.

15. Leaders **noted** the *Report of the High-Level Forum Troika Plus Mission to New Caledonia* and **reaffirmed** the Forum's ongoing support to New Caledonia. Leaders also **noted** the ongoing discussions on the Bougival Accord and **encouraged** sustained, inclusive dialogue among all stakeholders towards a peaceful political transition. Leaders further **noted** the Melanesian Spearhead Group's decision on the matter.

16. Leaders **reaffirmed** the Forum's ongoing recognition of Indonesia's sovereignty over West Papua (Papua). **Recalling** Indonesia's 2018 invitation for a mission led by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Leaders **tasked** the Secretariat to work constructively with Indonesia on a proposed visit by Forum Leaders Envoys in 2026, in consultation with the Melanesian Spearhead Group Secretariat.

17. Leaders **endorsed** the Regional Mechanism for the Selection and Appointment of Regional Candidatures to International Bodies. Leaders further **agreed** to develop a consolidated 2050 Strategy International Engagement and Advocacy Plan to coordinate strategic advocacy across priority agendas, such as the ICJ Advisory Opinion on Climate Change, the Pacific Resilience Facility (PRF), and efforts to secure a Pacific COP31.

18. Leaders **noted** the *Report on the Implications of U.S. Policy Shifts on the Pacific Islands and CROP Agencies* endorsed by Forum Troika Leaders, including its recommendation to develop a unified, targeted advocacy agenda on engagement with the United States of America (U.S.) through a Special Envoy to be appointed by Troika, in consultation with Forum Leaders, on a needs basis to strengthen Pacific engagement and coordination with the U.S.

19. Leaders **reaffirmed** their ongoing commitment to address nuclear-related issues in the Pacific region. In welcoming the 40th Anniversary of the *South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty* ("Rarotonga Treaty"), Leaders **issued** a commemorative statement ([Annex 1](#)) and further **encouraged** non-Party Members and the U.S. to sign and ratify the Treaty and Protocols. Leaders also **welcomed** and **commended** the signing of the Treaty by the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

20. Leaders **supported** the guidance from Forum Officials on operationalising the Rarotonga Treaty, including updating outdated references and elevating the Treaty in light of emerging issues and **welcomed** further discussions at the next States Parties Meeting of the Rarotonga Treaty.

21. Leaders **recalled** the 2024 decision to support bilateral, regional and multilateral action assisting the Republic of the Marshall Islands engagement with the U.S. towards a just resolution of the U.S. Nuclear Testing Programme, including consideration of a further Leaders' letter.

22. Leaders **reiterated** the importance of regional solidarity in addressing the Advanced Liquid Processing System (ALPS) water discharge, **welcoming** the ongoing efforts by the Pacific Community to develop a long-term approach to provide interpretation, guidance and assessment of scientific data on all nuclear-related discharge and contamination issues, including its progress on a Memorandum of Understanding with the International Atomic Energy Agency.

23. Leaders **recognised** and **reaffirmed** the ongoing need to invest in regional leadership that is built on traditional values and principles, and that is nurtured to navigate contemporary challenges and complexities. In support of this, Leaders **welcomed** and **endorsed** the *Pacific-Centred Leadership Initiative* as an opportunity to embed Pacific cultural values and practices across leadership systems and networks in support of the 2050 Strategy.

Review of the Regional Architecture (RRA)¹

(i). High-Level Political Talanoa Process

24. Leaders **commended** and **welcomed** the work of the High-Level Persons Group on the development of the *Report on the High-Level Political Talanoa on Deepened Regionalism and the Regional Architecture to support the 2050 Strategy*. Leaders **engaged** in a robust exchange on the issues and **agreed** to progress the recommendations in line with Leaders discussions in Retreat as conveyed in writing to all Forum Leaders by the Forum Chair.

(ii). Partnership Mechanism

25. Leaders **discussed** and **endorsed** the *Leaders Policy on Partnerships* as provided at [Annex 2](#), reaffirming that its application would be limited to the current classification of Forum Dialogue Partners and Forum Observers and that it maintains the 1992 Leaders decision on Development Partners. The Policy establishes the framework for engagement with Dialogue Partners and Observers ('Forum Partners') under the Pacific Islands Forum Partnership Mechanism. Leaders **agreed** to operationalise this, as the basis to reform the Pacific Islands Forum Partnership Mechanism, and to provide an update to Leaders in 2026.

(iii). Oversight of the RRA process

26. Leaders **agreed** that Forum Troika Leaders will provide oversight on the implementation of these recommendations and undertake further consultations, as required. Leaders **emphasised** the importance of member ownership, including members commitment to make themselves available, in the progress of the RRA and its related recommendations.

¹ The Republic of Nauru disassociates itself with the Review of the Regional Architecture section in entirety.

RESOURCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

27. Leaders **welcomed** considerable efforts undertaken to operationalise the thematic area on Resource and Economic Development under the 2050 Strategy and **encouraged** continued effort to foster cross-sectoral discussions across the different ministerial platforms within this thematic area.

28. Leaders **reaffirmed** the importance of a focused regional approach to economic development in the Pacific with emphasis on strengthened cross-sectoral synergies, alignment of policies and strengthened infrastructure development to drive regional economic integration. Leaders **reaffirmed** the importance of delivering tangible results that addresses the structural vulnerabilities that challenge economic resilience and inclusive growth in the region.

29. Leaders further **recognised** fisheries development, including through the East New Britain Initiative (ENBi), as a transformative opportunity for the Pacific region, **underscoring** the importance of cross-sectoral mechanisms such as the Joint Ministerial Working Group of Fisheries and Economic Ministers in supporting the implementation of the ENBi. Leaders also **noted** the potential of the Bina Harbour project. Leaders **welcomed** the *Pacific Roadmap for Economic Development* as the key regional framework to guide economic integration in the region.

30. Leaders **reaffirmed** the importance of the PRF as a member-led and owned financing mechanism. Leaders **endorsed** the *Agreement to Establish the Pacific Resilience Facility (PRF)*, **welcomed** the signing of the Agreement by 15 Forum Members and **commended** the ratification of the Agreement by the Host Government, Tonga.

31. Leaders **welcomed** the update on the pledges to date of US\$165 million to capitalise the PRF to date of US\$165 million, comprising: Nauru (AUD\$ 1 million), Australia (AUD\$100 million), New Zealand (NZD\$20 million), Saudi Arabia (USD\$50 million), the People's Republic of China (USD\$500,000), the United States (USD\$20 million), Japan (USD\$2.7 million), Germany (EUR\$ 5million), France (EUR\$2 million), and Taiwan/Republic of China (US\$3 million) and **tasked** the Secretariat to intensify strategic engagement with development partners to secure additional pledges.

32. In recognising the urgent need to broaden and enhance access to climate finance, Leaders **supported** Fiji's bid, on behalf of the Pacific, to host the Green Climate Fund (GCF) Regional Office in Suva and **tasked** the Secretariat to support Fiji in preparing and finalising a regional proposal, through established regional processes and mechanisms, for submission to the GCF by the deadline.

33. Leaders discussed the emerging issues relating to regional labour mobility and **acknowledged** and **endorsed** the *Pacific Regional Labour Mobility Principles* as a reflection of shared Pacific values, providing a flexible, non-binding framework, that respects national sovereignty while guiding the region in maximising the developmental, social and economic benefits of labour mobility. Leaders also **welcomed** the discussions on the proposal to enhance regional mobility through the freer movement of people and noted the ongoing deliberations through the Pacific Immigration Directors Conference and **supported** its regular reporting to the Forum through the relevant Forum processes.

34. Leaders **noted** the call from several Members for a dedicated Labour Ministers Meeting and **noted** that this would be considered alongside the RRA, including the requisite assessments on associated costs and implications.

35. Leaders **acknowledged** the significance of a regional Declaration on Kava, recognising its Pacific origins, associated traditional knowledge, and cultural heritage as a symbol of identity and collective pride, while affirming its economic potential as a shared regional asset. Leaders **tasked** the Secretariat to facilitate further inclusive consultations with Members to consolidate alignment, with a view to conveying the *Kava Declaration* for Leaders' consideration at their meeting in 2026.

36. In relation to fisheries development in the region, Leaders **commended** the ongoing efforts to enhance market access for regional fisheries products, including through initiatives such as Pacific Islands Tuna, and **committed** to strengthen and enhance the region's ability to develop and participate in value chain production, to increase the region's economic returns from fisheries. Leaders **acknowledged** the U.S. Tuna Treaty annual Economic Assistance Agreement payment of US\$60 million for 2024 to the Forum Fisheries Agency and **supported** renewed and continuous engagement with the U.S. to facilitate the annual payment for 2025. Leaders further welcomed the ongoing update on aquaculture development in the region.

37. Leaders **noted** the outcome of the *Pacific Water and Wastewater Ministers Meeting* (PWWM) and the importance of raising water visibility at the highest political levels, noting the role of the PWWM in informing PIF Leaders on water and wastewater priorities, challenges and needs.

PEACE AND SECURITY

38. Leaders **discussed** the region's evolving security environment, noting that it is increasingly shaped by global conflicts, shifting alliances, and intensifying strategic competition. Leaders **further noted** that the escalations in the Middle East have disrupted global energy markets, driving volatility that continues to impact Pacific economies.

39. Leaders **welcomed** with appreciation the initiative by Prime Minister Rabuka of Fiji on the concept for the Ocean of Peace at the 52nd Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting in Rarotonga and **endorsed** the *Blue Pacific Ocean of Peace Declaration* ([Annex 3](#)).

40. Leaders also discussed the ongoing legacy issues relating to unexploded ordnance (UXO) in the region and **reaffirmed** support for the ongoing discussions on the re-integration of UXOs into the regional security work programme, **recognising** its multi-dimensional threat to sovereignty, human security, environment and economic development. Leaders also **recognised** the importance of women, peace and security as reflected in the Declaration.

41. Leaders **expressed** strong concerns on increased transnational crimes and that the region is being used as both a transit route across multiple pathways and a market for synthetic drugs such as methamphetamines. Leaders **discussed** the rising cases of illegal drugs, addiction, mental health challenges, and **noted** that violent crimes are placing increasing strain on societal and health systems. Leaders **cautioned** that if left unaddressed this issue would undermine the wellbeing of Pacific youth, erode family and community structures, and deepen vulnerabilities across our Blue Pacific.

42. Leaders **called** for a coordinated regional response on this issue for consideration within the review of the Boe Action Plan, and related regional security work programmes.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND DISASTER

43. Recognising the grave and irreversible threat that climate change poses to our peoples, economies, and cultures, Leaders **called** for all countries to take individual and collective action to prevent near-term warming by addressing short-lived climate pollutants, in particular, methane emissions. Leaders **further committed** to advocating for and supporting action to reduce methane emissions so as to safeguard our shared future.

Preparations for the 31st Conference of the Parties (COP31) – Climate Change

44. Leaders **reaffirmed** that climate change remains the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security, and wellbeing of peoples of the Pacific. They underscored the Pacific's moral and political leadership in global climate action and committed to advancing a unified regional voice, grounded in the 2050 Strategy. In recognising the advocacy opportunity of hosting COP in the Pacific, Leaders **reaffirmed** their strong support for Australia's bid for COP31 as a Pacific COP, including its commitment to host in 2026. Leaders endorsed the issuance of a Statement of Support on COP31 ([Annex 4](#)).

45. Leaders **noted** the update on the work progressed in preparation for hosting COP31 and **supported** the proposed governance arrangements, including the establishment of a Special Taskforce under the guidance of the Pacific Climate Change Ministers.

46. Recognising the importance of the coordinated advocacy and engagement on the matter, Leaders **recalled** the Campaign Plan endorsed by Forum Foreign Ministers and **supported** the engagement of the Forum Troika Mechanism as well as other Forum Leaders, where available, to support political advocacy on the campaign.

47. Leaders also **commended** Türkiye's ongoing commitment to addressing climate change, including through its own bid to host COP31, and **welcomed** the opportunity to constructively work with Türkiye to demonstrate the region's commitment to the multilateral system at a challenging time.

International Court of Justice (ICJ) Advisory Opinion (AO)

48. Leaders **commended** the ICJ AO on climate change as a powerful affirmation of what the region can achieve when it works together as one Blue Pacific, and **acknowledged** with appreciation the leadership by the Government of Vanuatu on this matter. Leaders **further acknowledged** the advocacy of the *Pacific Islands Students Fighting Climate Change*, and the dedicated support of CROP and regional and sub-regional agencies throughout the process, leading to the issuance of the landmark advisory opinion.

49. Leaders **urged** all countries, including Forum Members, to utilise, as appropriate, the ICJ AO in respect of States' obligations in relation to climate change in implementing their respective obligations nationally and internationally. Leaders **strongly encouraged** all Forum Members to

consider the ICJ AO when engaging in international climate change negotiations and associated processes, and to uphold the importance of maintaining the 1.5°C global temperature goal in accordance with the Paris Agreement and to engage in appropriate mitigation efforts, including by calling on all countries to submit updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), as soon as possible, ahead of COP30;

50. Leaders **agreed** to progress next steps in respect of the ICJ AO, including in the development of a follow-up resolution in the UN General Assembly. Leaders **further acknowledged** that the ICJ AO reiterates the calls from the global stocktake for countries to come forward in their next NDCs with ambitious emissions reduction targets aligned with keeping 1.5°C degrees within reach, and **urged** all parties, particularly major economies, to implement their NDCs in a manner consistent with closing the ambition gap.

Maritime Boundaries

51. Building on the landmark 2021 and 2023 Declarations, Leaders **reaffirmed** their collective commitment to **urgently** conclude all outstanding maritime boundaries delimitations and continental shelf submissions. Leaders **reaffirmed** this decisive action is crucial to securing the full legal certainty and permanence of our maritime zones in perpetuity, in the face of the existential threat posed by climate change-related sea-level rise. Leaders **emphasised** that this would safeguard the region's sovereign rights, protect ocean resources, and secure the Blue Pacific Continent for Pacific peoples and for all generations to come.

52. Leaders **commended** the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Republic of Palau for the successful signing of amended treaties on maritime boundaries and **called upon** Pacific nations to enshrine the *2021 Pacific Islands Forum Declaration on Preserving Maritime Zones in the face of Climate-Change-Related Sea-Level Rise* into their respective maritime agreements and legislation, as necessary.

OCEAN AND ENVIRONMENT

53. Leaders **recognised** that the region faces converging ocean and environment challenges, including climate change, overfishing and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, plastic and pollution, and accelerating biodiversity loss threatening food security, livelihoods, and ecosystems. Leaders **reaffirmed** the importance of unity, strong political leadership and coordinated regional action to safeguard the shared oceanic future of the Blue Pacific Continent.

54. Leaders **welcomed** the update on the progress of work on the Ocean and Environment Thematic Area and **noted** the outcomes of the various meetings such as the Pacific Ocean Ministers Preparatory Meeting for the 3rd United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC3), UNOC3, and the ongoing work on the *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction* (BBNJ). Leaders **encouraged** the timely ratification of the BBNJ Treaty by all signatories of the agreement.

55. Leaders **noted** the update on the negotiations for a plastics treaty and **reaffirmed** the need for an ambitious and binding agreement that addresses the full life cycle of plastics, from production to waste, to protect our marine environment.

56. Leaders **welcomed** the convening of the Deep-Sea Minerals (DSM) High-Level Talanoa and noted the Summary of Discussions. Leaders **considered** and **supported** the proposed member-led regional approach to DSM, as endorsed by FOC, and **directed** the FOC to develop an appropriate implementation plan for consideration by Forum Leaders, inter-sessionally.

PEOPLE CENTERED DEVELOPMENT (PCD)

57. Leaders **reaffirmed** the thematic area on People Centered Development as a central pillar of the 2050 Strategy, recognising that it places the wellbeing, equity and inclusion of Pacific peoples at the heart of collective action.

Gender Equality

58. Leaders **recommitted** to leading national and regional advocacy efforts for gender equality as aligned to the political commitments in the revitalised *Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration* (PLGED), including championing the engagement of men and boys in transforming social norms to advance women's rights. Recognising its cross-sectoral significance, Leaders **endorsed** Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) as well as the institutionalisation of Early Childhood Development (ECD) as standing agenda items within the PCD Thematic Area on the Leaders' Agenda, and taking into account the ongoing work on the RRA.

59. Leaders **supported** the mainstreaming of GESI in all key regional policy priorities, including climate financing, governance as well as the implementation structures of the PRF and the inclusion of women's voices in peace and security dialogues and decision-making processes.

60. Leaders **welcomed** the Pacific's global leadership as the only region to host the human rights treaty body reporting of the 84th Session of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC84) in Samoa in 2020, and the Pacific Technical Cooperation Session of the CEDAW Committee in Fiji in April 2025.

Education

61. Leaders **reiterated** that quality foundational education is the basis for productive economies, requiring increased investment for sustainable development and thriving inclusive communities by investing in the region's future generations, including through strengthened efforts to improve literacy rates and advancing mutually recognised qualifications across the region. Leaders **noted** the Outcomes of the Conference of Pacific Education Ministers (CPEM) and **recognised** CPEM as the oversight mechanism for the review of the regional education architecture.

Health

62. Leaders **noted** the progress made over the past three decades on the Yanuca Island Declaration on the *Healthy Islands Vision for the Pacific* and **reaffirmed** the importance of a robust health data to inform decision-making, measure progress, and ensure accountability.

63. Recognising the interdependence of health outcomes in non-health sectors, and the importance of multi-sectoral, whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches, Leaders

committed to multi-sectoral coordination and mobilisation of investment and partners to drive change and achieve the health goals set out in the 2050 Strategy.

TECHNOLOGY AND CONNECTIVITY

64. Leaders **noted** the progress on the implementation of the *Lagatoi Declaration* and **endorsed** the 2025 Communiqué for the Pacific ICT Ministers Dialogue, including the call for a regional approach to enhancing digital transformation across the Pacific, most notably on undersea cables, data storage transformation, and cloud solutions. Leaders **highlighted** the need for regional action to address the negative impacts of social media platforms on the youth and general population.

65. Leaders **further endorsed** the Digital Transformation Action Plan and the Governance Framework and **acknowledged** the leadership of Papua New Guinea in advancing the digital transformation agenda for the Pacific.

66. Leaders **recognised** the work of the 4th Regional Aviation Ministers Meeting and **emphasised** the need to incorporate sustainable aviation connectivity as a standalone agenda item for Leaders under the thematic area on Technology and Connectivity.

UPCOMING FORUM LEADERS MEETING

67. Leaders **endorsed** New Zealand as the host of the 56th Pacific Islands Forum Leaders and Related Meetings in 2027 and **endorsed** French Polynesia's offer to host the 60th Pacific Islands Forum Leaders and Related Meetings in 2031.

*Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
Honiara, Solomon Islands
12 September 2025*

40th Anniversary of the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Rarotonga)

We, the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) Leaders, commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the adoption of the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Rarotonga) by Leaders at their 16th Forum Meeting in Rarotonga, Cook Islands on 5-6 August 1985.

In 1985, Forum Leaders were joined in their collective conviction that the bounty and beauty of the Pacific's land and sea must be safeguarded for all in peace. The tragedies of Hiroshima and Nagasaki 80 years ago demonstrated the catastrophic consequences of nuclear weapons use to the world. Every effort must be made to ensure these weapons are never used again.

The Treaty of Rarotonga was borne out of decades of devastating nuclear testing across our Blue Pacific. Although testing has ceased, our peoples and environments continue to bear the health, cultural and ecological scars across generations. We acknowledge the enduring legacy faced by Pacific communities most directly affected by nuclear testing, and the continuing need for recognition, assistance and remediation. We welcome and encourage continued and elevated international cooperation to ensure that affected peoples and environments receive full and lasting attention. In this context, we restate our total opposition to any nuclear testing and reiterate our calls for remaining countries to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

For four decades, the Treaty of Rarotonga has been a force for good, making a significant contribution to global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and inspiring other nuclear weapon free zones around the world. Despite being victims of nuclear testing, Pacific peoples chose the path of peace, showing moral leadership to the international community.

We reaffirm the importance of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to our shared objective of eliminating nuclear weapons. It is incumbent upon all States, particularly nuclear-weapon States, to fulfil their disarmament obligations under the NPT, and work towards a world free of nuclear weapons. We also call for remaining countries to sign and ratify the NPT.

We note the 2021 entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), and its third meeting of States Parties in March 2025, and encourage continued constructive dialogue on its contribution to the broader international nuclear weapons disarmament and non-proliferation architecture.

As we mark this anniversary, we are mindful that the Pacific must never become a theatre for nuclear testing, the dumping of radioactive waste, or the proliferation of nuclear weapons. True security is people-centred, protecting the health, environment, and heritage of our Blue Pacific for generations to come. We therefore call on all remaining non-Parties to accede to or ratify the Treaty of Rarotonga, and urge States that have yet to do so to ratify all Protocols to the Treaty.

On this 40th anniversary, we recommit to upholding the vision of a peaceful Pacific, free of nuclear weapons and nuclear testing, as enshrined in the Treaty of Rarotonga, and consistent with our shared vision under the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent. We recommit to working with the global community to realise the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons and the existential threat that nuclear war poses to humanity.

**PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM
LEADERS POLICY ON PARTNERSHIPS**

A. Strategic Approach to Partnerships

1. The Pacific Islands Forum has long acknowledged that the strength of its regional vision is amplified through the value of enduring and diverse partnerships with Dialogue Partners, Development Partners and Observers. The involvement of partners over many years has contributed to enriched regional dialogue, broadened perspectives, enabled critical investments, and reinforced Pacific priorities on the global stage. Building on this foundation, Leaders have reaffirmed that the delivery of the *2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent* will rest on partnerships that are genuine, durable, and accountable, and which strengthen Pacific leadership, voice, and engagement to ensure recognition and alignment with Pacific cultures, values, priorities, and collective interests.

2. Recognising the evolving landscape of regional and global engagement, Leaders called for a rationalised partnership mechanism that addressed the growing number and diversity of Dialogue Partners and Observers, the need for greater clarity and coherence in how the region manages engagement, and the imperative to safeguard the primacy of Members' voices in decision-making. Leaders further underscored their commitment to ensuring that the Forum and the wider regional architecture are coherent and effective, that they provide space for the inclusion and engagement of partners, and that such engagement is channelled through established regional mechanisms and processes which safeguard collective ownership and coherence in advancing shared priorities.

3. This policy replaces the current classification of Forum Dialogue Partners and Forum Observers under the Forum Architecture and establishes the framework for engagement with Dialogue Partners and Observers ('Forum Partners') under the Pacific Islands Forum Partnership Mechanism², as specified in the ensuing sections. It ensures that partnerships are structured, balanced, and accountable in relation to collective, regional political decision-making processes. In doing so, the policy anchors partner engagement with the Pacific Islands Forum at a strategic and enduring level, reinforcing both continuity and alignment with collective priorities.

B. Pacific Islands Forum Partnership Mechanism

4. The Partnership Mechanism consists of arrangements that allocate partners into a dual-partnership framing, including a provision for a transitional category. The dual-partnership framework distinguishes between *Strategic Partners*, whose engagement is broad-based, long-standing, and central to regional political and economic cooperation; and *Sectoral Partners*, whose support is targeted, programmatic, and focused on specific areas of development. Each of the partnership streams is further subdivided into two sub-categories as follows:

Partnership Streams

a. Strategic Partners

- i. *Strategic Partner*: comprising all sovereign countries, including political communities such as the European Union.

² This policy does not apply to Development Partners of the Pacific Islands Forum as specified under the 1992 Forum Leaders decision on the same.

- ii. *Strategic Partner Organisation*: comprising intergovernmental organisations (IGOs).
 - b. **Sectoral Partners**
 - i. *Sectoral Sovereign Partners*: comprising all sovereign countries, including political communities.
 - ii. *Sectoral Partner Organisation*: comprising organisations, including IGOs, international non-governmental organisations, and philanthropic organisations.
 - c. **Transitional Stream**: Comprises those Partners that are: (i) awaiting formal consideration by Leaders; (ii) transitioning between, into, or out of existing partnership streams; (iii) as required.
5. Together, these two streams of partnership engagement ensure that the Forum benefits from both comprehensive strategic cooperation and sector-specific expertise, aligned under the 2050 Strategy. The placement of partners within these streams will determine their modalities of engagement across the Forum architecture. Transparent reporting, accountability, and review processes will ensure that partners engage in ways that are genuine, durable, and demonstrably supportive of Pacific priorities.
6. The Partnership Mechanism applies equally to both existing Partners¹ and new applicants. All Partners will be subject to the same assessment process to determine their placement within the Mechanism, ensuring that engagement is consistent, transparent and anchored in delivery of the 2050 Strategy. Leaders have underscored the importance of maintaining focused and high-value dialogue with partners at the political level and may consider setting parameters around the number of Strategic Partners in future. This policy will serve as a guide for Leaders in determining partnership status with the Forum, while preserving their full discretion, including whether and how to apply such parameters.

C. Criteria

7. In deciding on admission to formal partnership status with the Pacific Islands Forum, Leaders will be guided by the following criteria and further clarified by a set of indicators that balances quantitative and qualitative evidence, to be determined by the FOC:
- a. Demonstrated connections to the region with demonstrable commitment to advancing the vision and priorities of the Leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum as reflected in the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent through established regional mechanisms, including in development assistance, trade and investment promotion, knowledge transfer and technical cooperation, people-to-people exchange;
 - b. Long-term forward commitment to the Pacific region as demonstrated through foreign policy commitments, engagement strategies, diplomatic missions and engagement with regional organisations, and transparency in declaring economic, political, and strategic interests in engaging in the region;
 - c. Shared interests and common positions on international issues and a commitment to using global networks and membership of international organisations to support Forum priorities; and

- d. Commitment to engaging with the Pacific Islands Forum in accordance with the Blue Pacific Principles for Dialogue and Engagement and engagement principles.

8. The Secretariat assessments will integrate measurable indicators, including but not limited to, aid volumes, trade, participation, reporting and alignment with 2050 priorities and implementation, alongside qualitative analysis of political, strategic and multilateral contributions. This balance ensures consistency and comparability across partners, while allowing Leaders to exercise political discretion.

D. Process for Admission to Partnership Status

9. Consistent with the above, countries and intergovernmental organisations may apply to be a partner or be invited by Forum Leaders, should they meet the criteria.

10. Recommendations may be made by the Forum Officials Committee (FOC) and Forum Foreign Ministers to Forum Leaders regarding the issuing of invitations to prospective Forum Dialogue Partners. Upon the agreement of the Forum Leaders, the Secretary General shall issue a written invitation to the prospective Partner.

Application Process

11. Partners interested in applying for Forum Partner status will write formally to the Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum expressing their interest. Upon immediate receipt of an application, the Forum Secretariat will share the application with all Forum Members and CROP agencies for information and provide the applicant with a Partner Feedback Template which will support the partnership assessment and inform its placement in the Partnership Mechanism.

12. Applicants seeking *Strategic Partner* status will be invited to submit a further strategic brief (2-3 pages) outlining their case against the agreed criteria. The Secretariat will prepare a structured analysis, integrating both quantitative indicators and qualitative assessments, with a clear recommendation for the next meeting of the FOC, and submit it through the Forum Processes thereafter for consideration by Forum Leaders. If the application is endorsed by FOC and FFMM, the applicant will be invited to attend the annual Pacific Islands Forum to observe the session of Forum Leaders and Forum Partners, as a Special Guest.

13. If endorsed by Forum Leaders, the Secretary General will write to the applicant to confirm their Forum Partner status, including their approved partnership stream, and initiate the relevant induction process.

14. If the application is not endorsed at any stage of the process, the applicant will be notified by a letter from the Secretary General, with feedback and advice on possible next steps provided. Unsuccessful applicants may reapply following a minimum stand-down period of two years, or earlier if there is a demonstrable change³ in circumstances or commitments relevant to the 2050 Strategy.

³ Demonstrable changes may include but are not limited to: adoption of new Pacific engagement policies, establishment of a stronger regional presence, increased alignment with Forum positions in multilateral fora, or delivery of new resourcing directly supporting 2050 Strategy priorities.

15. At any stage in the preparation of the application, the applicant can call on the Forum Secretariat to assist with queries or clarifications on the process and application progress.

Upon Admission

16. Upon admission, the partner will work with the Secretariat as well as a Member Working Group of the relevant FOC Sub-Committee, to develop a Pacific Action Commitment and Engagement (PACE) Plan including partner contributions to Regional Collective Actions (RCAs) aligned to the 2050 Strategy. The Partnership Stream will define the PACE Plan framework to which the partner belongs.

E. Reporting & Accountability

17. To ensure transparency, mutual accountability, and consistency, all Forum Partners will be requested to report through the established reporting and monitoring system for the *2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent*, to ensure that partnership commitment, support and reporting continue to align with a common reference point.

PACE Plans

18. PACE Plans will ensure that partnerships with the Forum are fair, transparent, and consistently aligned with regional priorities. The scope of the PACE Plan for *Strategic Partners* will reflect the depth and breadth of their cooperation. *Sectoral Partners* will enter into sectoral and programming agreements tailored to their specific contributions. These PACE Plans will help foster mutual understanding, reinforce shared obligations, and provide constructive pathways for review and dialogue where alignment with Forum priorities may need to be strengthened, thereby safeguarding the integrity of the region's collective positions and advancing the vision of the Blue Pacific Continent.

F. Privileges and Obligations

19. A key expectation for members is that the Leaders' dialogue with partners be rationalised to an engagement with the most strategically important partners on the most critical issues, including resourcing and partners' alignment to Forum priorities.

Engagement and Participation

20. *Strategic Partners* will have ongoing access to the annual Leaders' Dialogue, engaging on political and strategic issues of concern to the Pacific and contributing resources and support towards regional priorities. *Strategic Partners* will be expected to participate at the requisite political level⁴. Access to other Ministerial or technical meetings will be by invitation only, where they are directly relevant to the 2050 Strategy priorities.

21. *Sectoral Partners* access will be tailored to the scope of their contributions. Their involvement will focus on relevant thematic, sectoral, or technical discussions, including at

⁴ A politician who holds a ministerial portfolio and/or is the political head of a government ministry and a member of the Executive branch of government. This definition would consider the range from a Cabinet Minister at its fullest extent to a Parliamentary Under-Secretary or Junior Minister in the least. Outside of Cabinet this would include heads of intergovernmental organisations. This definition does not include politically appointed individuals of diplomatic rank and/or special envoys.

Ministerial or Officials’ levels as appropriate. Where directly relevant to Leaders’ priorities in a given year and based on consensus, a limited number of *Sectoral Partners* may also be invited to contribute to discussions. This approach ensures that engagement with *Sectoral Partners* is meaningful and aligned to the 2050 Strategy, while safeguarding the primacy of Leaders’ priorities and the integrity of regional decision-making processes.

G. Modality of Engagement at the Leaders Meeting

22. The modality of Partner engagement at the Leaders Meeting will be shaped by the depth of strategic relationships and the priorities identified by Forum Members. While the detailed arrangements will be elaborated once the Leaders Policy is completed, this engagement will serve as a platform for elevated dialogue between Forum Leaders and Partners—fostering trust, sharpening focus on Pacific priorities, and advancing the shared vision of the Blue Pacific Continent with renewed ambition and purpose.

H. Review Mechanism

23. A regular review of the Forum’s partnerships is necessary to ensure that members continue to be engaged with partners that are active, engaged, and genuinely committed to the Pacific and its people.

24. All partners will be expected to provide annual reports on their engagement and contributions. These reports will be assessed by the Forum Secretariat and shared with Members, forming the basis for monitoring active commitments and emerging issues, if any.

25. A thorough review of all partners will be undertaken through a Quadrennial Assessment. This cumulative review will assess partners against their combined engagement and contributions. Reviews will combine both quantitative data (e.g., financial flows, trade, participation, and delivery of 2050 priorities) with qualitative assessments (e.g., multilateral political advocacy, alignment with 2050 priorities, and broader regional interests).

26. Where the reviews indicate that a partner is not meeting the obligations set out in this policy, Leaders may decide to recommend changes in a partner’s placement within the mechanism, including remaining in their current placement or moving to a different partnership stream, suspension or rescinding that partnership, based on engagement, contribution and alignment to the 2050 Strategy.

27. Reviews will be managed by the Forum Secretariat, with oversight from Members through the relevant FOC Sub-Committee and considered by Forum Leaders, through the relevant Forum processes.

*Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
Suva, Fiji
28 August 2025*

BLUE PACIFIC OCEAN OF PEACE DECLARATION

PREAMBLE

1. **Recalling** our vision and values under the *2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent* for a resilient Pacific Region of peace, harmony, security, social inclusion and prosperity that ensures all Pacific peoples can lead free, healthy and productive lives,
2. **Recognising** Pacific peoples as custodians of the Blue Pacific Continent, and recalling that peace is integral to the Pacific Way in guiding interactions within and beyond the region through dialogue, consensus, respect for national sovereignty, and cultural traditions,
3. **Recognising further** the diversity of Pacific peoples and cultures across our region, and the importance of grounding peacebuilding, peacemaking and peacekeeping approaches in national governance systems and cultural contexts,
4. **Reaffirming** the equality of all Forum Members and their national sovereign right to exercise autonomy and self-determination over their governance, resources and development pathways, in accordance with international law, and the shared responsibility to ensure the peace, security and well-being of all Pacific Peoples and the Blue Pacific Continent,
5. **Acknowledging** the wide-ranging impacts of geo-politics, growing development needs of the region and economic uncertainty, the rapidly changing and unstable climate environment, external coercion, undue influence, and the increasing and diverse threats to international peace and security, including the continuing risk of nuclear war that poses an existential threat to humanity,
6. **Recalling** the *2005 Establishment Agreement of the Pacific Islands Forum*, the *Boe Declaration on Regional Security*, the *2000 Biketawa Declaration*, and other relevant regional instruments, arrangements and Leaders' decisions, and reaffirming the long-standing principle and commitment in Pacific regionalism as a path to peace, security and shared prosperity,
7. **Recalling the Declaration on the Right of Peoples to Peace and convinced** that the establishment of a Blue Pacific Ocean of Peace will contribute towards strengthened international peace and security, de-escalate international tension and promote international law including the purpose and principles of the *Charter of the United Nations*,
8. **Reaffirming** our commitment to the rules-based international order, that is aligned to the norms and principles of international law, including the *1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea* and the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*,
9. **Recalling** the *1985 South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty*, and our shared commitment to a Pacific, free from nuclear weapons, nuclear weapons testing and the dumping of radioactive waste, and to the elimination of nuclear weapons, recognising the treaty's enduring role in promoting peace, security, and environmental stewardship across the Blue Pacific Continent to ensure the peaceful enjoyment of our shared heritage by present and future generations,

10. **Recognising** the Pacific's long-standing traditions of customary peace and reconciliation practices, and affirming their valuable contribution to global peace in alignment to the principles of peaceful dispute settlement enshrined in *Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations*,
11. **Reaffirming** that climate change remains the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security and the wellbeing of Pacific peoples, and our commitments on climate change as framed in the *Kainaki II Declaration for Urgent Climate Change Action Now*, the *2021 Declaration on Preserving Maritime Zones in the Face of Climate Change-Related Sea-Level Rise* and the *2023 Declaration on the Continuity of Statehood and the Protection of Persons in the Face of Climate Change-Related Sea-Level Rise* and other regional commitments,
12. **Acknowledging** the critical role of inclusive approaches to peace that recognise the unique contributions of Indigenous Peoples, local communities, civil society, faith-based organisations, the private sector, women and girls in all their diversity, persons with disabilities, youth, and other marginalised or vulnerable groups in building and sustaining peace and resolving conflict across our Blue Pacific Continent,
13. **Positioning** the Blue Pacific Ocean of Peace as a statement of our Pacific worldview, where peace, security and development are interconnected and mutually reinforcing, and where our priorities, including economic, social, cultural, environmental, and human wellbeing, are defined on our terms and advanced in alignment with our values, interests and aspirations,

WE, THE LEADERS OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM, THEREFORE:

14. **Declare** the Blue Pacific Continent as an Ocean of Peace,
15. **Re - Commit** to strengthening Pacific regionalism in advancing the Ocean of Peace, through the Pacific Islands Forum, as the apex of the regional architecture,
16. **Further Commit** to:
 - (i) cultivating a culture of peace grounded in the Pacific Way, drawing on the depth and diversity of our cultural practices and Indigenous knowledge systems, and strengthening inclusive, culturally anchored, and national led approaches to peace that uphold and promote human rights,
 - (ii) embed the Blue Pacific Ocean of Peace as a cornerstone of future national and regional policies and strategies, supported through partnership and investment in inclusive governance, cultural revitalisation, education and sustained Pacific leadership, recognising that peace is an intergenerational responsibility,
 - (iii) deliver collective peace and security initiatives, which respects national sovereignty, to strengthen and safeguard our shared Pacific peace, including through greater sharing between Forum members of information, technology and resources, supported by a flexible and responsive regional architecture that enables peace.

- (iv) advancing coordinated, integrated and inclusive development pathways that position economic, social, environmental and human dignity as foundational to lasting peace and resilience across the Blue Pacific Continent,
- (v) supporting a rules-based international order, grounded in the *Charter of the United Nations*, harnessing international norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviour, including measures and protocols to promote the peaceful settlement of disputes, and suppress all acts of aggression,
- (vi) protecting our shared Blue Pacific Ocean from multidimensional threats, and upholding the *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea* as the foundation that upholds legal certainty, stability, security and predictability for our island nations,
- (vii) preserving the region from acts that undermine peace, including the proliferation of nuclear weapons, consistent with the *1968 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons*, and other weapons of mass destruction,
- (viii) strengthening inclusive and people-centered approaches to conflict prevention, peacebuilding, mediation and dialogue at all levels, in alignment with established regional mechanisms, and deepening Pacific engagement with global peace mechanisms to promote sovereign Pacific contributions to global peace,
- (ix) pursuing approaches to climate action which considers human rights and sustainable development in relevant multilateral processes, recognising the need to protect Pacific peoples, including future generations, from the escalating impacts of climate change, and
- (x) addressing the nuclear legacy in the Pacific and safeguarding against the potential threat of nuclear contamination, as well as addressing hazards posed by unexploded ordinances and other remnants of war, by advancing support towards bilateral, regional and multilateral action to provide national and regional capacity building for nuclear issues as well as, other consequences of war, including recognition, remediation, and reparations for affected communities, as critical to promoting peace in the region.
- (xi) upholding the right of all states to conduct their domestic affairs, and to the principle of friendly relations.

17. Call upon all states and non-state actors to:

- (i) engage with the Blue Pacific Continent in a manner that honours the Pacific Way, respects the national sovereignty of all Forum Members, and supports national and Pacific-led approaches, including through Forum-endorsed mechanisms, to safeguard Pacific peace and security,
- (ii) support the integration and advancement of the Blue Pacific Ocean of Peace, by respecting its principles and aligning all engagement with the Pacific's vision for peace,
- (iii) support the Blue Pacific Continent in strengthening the conditions for peace to

thrive, through long-term investment in inclusive and resilient development that upholds national ownership, fosters stable governance, and builds Pacific capacity and capability to sustain lasting peace for all Pacific peoples, including the role of women in peace building,

- (iv) recognise the special needs and circumstances of Small Island Developing States and their vulnerabilities,
- (v) promote the responsible use of technology and innovation, and
- (vi) join the Blue Pacific Continent in taking bold, decisive and transformative action, through the *Paris Agreement* and other relevant mechanisms, to limit global warming to 1.5C above pre-industrial levels, recognising this is critical to the peace and security of our Blue Pacific Continent.

STATEMENT BY THE 2025 PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM LEADERS MEETING

BID TO HOST THE UNFCCC 31ST CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

We recall the *Boe Declaration on Regional Security and Kainaki II Declaration for Urgent Climate Change Action Now*.

We reaffirm that climate change remains the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security and wellbeing of the peoples of the Pacific and a critical barrier to achieving our Leaders' Vision in the *2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent*, and the UN Sustainable Development Goals globally.

We call on all nations to urgently respond to the climate crisis.

We reaffirm the support of the Pacific Islands Forum for Australia's bid for COP31 as a Pacific COP and our strong commitment to host this historic international engagement in 2026 to accelerate global action to set us on track to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement and its subsequent decisions.

We commit to championing the needs of all countries impacted by climate change, particularly the most vulnerable, and to refocus global efforts on accelerating practical action and scaling-up support in line with the Paris Agreement and its first global stocktake, reiterating the vital importance of keeping 1.5C within reach.

We celebrate Pacific leadership in driving regional solutions to global challenges as demonstrated through the establishment of the Pacific Resilience Facility, which will be a decisive step forward in securing a resilient future for the Blue Pacific Continent.