CSO Statement: Laisa Bulatale, Fiji Women’s Rights Movement, Fiji

My name is Laisa Bulatale, from the Fiji islands. I represent CSOs and youth organizations from 25 countries that convened for a forum ahead of this August gathering on 13-14 November.

The climate crisis is an immediate threat to all Pacific Island communities, disproportionately impacting women and girls in all their diversity. This is having profound implications for their bodily autonomy, impacting their sexual reproductive health and rights.

We call for stronger commitment and political will in protecting ourselves, our Vanua, Wansolwara and Moana, other species and the living Planet by ensuring national policies, programming and budget related to climate change and disaster risk reduction incorporate gender mainstreaming and realise the universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), and ensure women and girls' voices in all their diversities, older women and persons living with disabilities from the Pacific islands are at the very heart of the interventions we make today.

We call for stronger multilateral cooperation, and greater financial commitments, including Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) for the Pacific region, as we face geopolitical tensions, economic disparities, and intersecting crisis. Safeguarding the fundamental rights of the Pacific people, promoting the agency and peace and security of women and girls, in all their diversities including persons with disabilities, older persons, youth and children remain pivotal leap forwards to advance the sustainable development agenda.