Pacific Island Countries Regional Statement for the Plenary

(to be delivered by CKI as Forum Chair)

Seventh Session of the Asia Pacific Population Conference (APPC7)

Review of progress made towards the implementation of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development, as well as of the PoA of the ICPD

HIGH LEVEL PANEL DEBATE

Mr. Chairman/Madam Chair,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of Pacific Island Countries and Territories, specifically Cook Islands, Federated State of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu,  

At the outset, I extend the Pacific’s warm and hearty congratulations on your appointment as Chair of the Seventh session of this Asian Pacific Population Conference. The Pacific is confident that with your leadership, APPC7 will be a success; and I assure you of the Pacific’s support.
Mr. Chairman/Madam Chair,
I wish to begin by reaffirming the Pacific’s unwavering commitment to the spirit and purpose of the 1994 ICPD Program of Action and the 2013 Asia Pacific Ministerial Declaration.

Pacific Leaders are fully committed to ensuring the health and wellbeing of Pacific people, safeguarding their human rights and ensuring equity for all. In the face of a set of unique challenges, our leaders continue to envision a resilient Pacific, as a region of peace, harmony, security, social inclusion and prosperity where all Pacific peoples can lead free, healthy and productive lives.

This is clearly expressed in the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific and its implementation plan, recently endorsed by the Leaders. This strategy, created by the Pacific for the Pacific, is people-centered, and interconnected with priorities related to key areas of priority for the Blue continent such as political leadership and regionalism, peace and security, resource and sustainable economic development, climate change and disasters, ocean and environment, and technology and connectivity.
It is important to note that Pacific Island Countries have made significant progress in implementing the ICPD program of action, and the 2013 Asia Pacific Ministerial Declaration. Of course, progress varies between countries but it is encouraging to see how many of us have integrated and aligned population dynamics with our national sustainable development strategies and policies, including climate change, emergency responses and disaster preparedness, displacement, food security, environmental management, emigration and seasonal work schemes.

Some countries have national population policies and action plans that are multi-sectoral, and cover Reproductive health, Maternal Newborn Child and Adolescent Health policies. Others have covered areas such as, poverty eradication and employment, health including reproductive and sexual health and rights (SRHR), education, gender equality and women’s empowerment, adolescents and young people, ageing, international migration, urbanization and internal migration, and data and statistics.

We acknowledge that our pacific progress has been supported by UNFPA Pacific Sub Regional Office. We also acknowledge that some Pacific countries are working
closely with our expertise and partners from civil society, who hold a key role in contributing to national and regional progress and achievements.

Mr. Chairman/Madam Chair,

Despite the tireless efforts to fully realize ICPD priorities, the policy directions and institutional measures in the Ministerial declaration and the SDG’s, we are faced with economic, social, cultural and environmental challenges, in particular, increasing climate change impacts, which further increase the vulnerabilities of the Pacific and seriously jeopardize the full realization of the ICPD promises.

Our Pacific People are facing severe Development challenges. Our unique situation, one of diseconomies of scale in production and exchange of goods and services, remoteness from export markets, high vulnerability to external market shocks is not unknown to the world. The compounding impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing climate and disaster shocks on Pacific Island countries will continue to pose major challenges for the region in the years ahead.

Due to limited financial resources and capacity, the Pacific is also witnessing a disconnect between good data
and information systems, policies and their implementation. Not only do we require better access to reliable data, as a region, we recognize the importance of our own knowledge systems and strive to lead on research from design through to implementation.

We call upon the international community in particular developed countries, international development partners, donors and regional organizations to work closely with Pacific island developing states in mobilizing resources to address all these development challenges. We call on you to pay attention to our 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent and its implementation plan, as a clear guide to partner with our region, so we can continue to prosper together, leaving no one behind.

Mr. Chairman/Madam Chair, time is of the essence. The health and wellbeing of the Pacific is inextricably linked to the 2030 global agenda and plan of action for people, planet and prosperity. As we continue our deliberations over the next few days, let us work together as one global community and together, the impossible can be achieved.

Thank You.