



United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries,  
Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS)

**Statement**

**by**

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**Under-Secretary-General**

**and**

**High Representative**

**for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries  
and Small Island Developing States**

Pacific Regional Energy and Transport Ministers Meeting  
Nadi, Fiji

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Honorable Deputy Prime Minister

Honorable Jone Usamate, Minister for Labour, Industrial Relations and  
Employment and Acting Minister for Works, Transport and Public Utilities

Ministers from the Pacific countries

Director-General of SPC

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and gentlemen,

At the outset, let me thank the organisers and the Government of Fiji for inviting me to address this timely meeting of Pacific Energy and Transport Ministers. It is indeed a pleasure to be amongst you all and I bring the warm greetings and best wishes of the UN Secretary-General to this meeting

Energy and transport are at the crux of global efforts to tackle climate change and achieve sustainable development objectives. The Post-2015 Development Agenda will need to be holistic, universal, integrated and ambitious. Eradicating poverty will be a key objective while ensuring that we have inclusive and sustained growth and environmental sustainability. Sustainable energy and transport also play a very important role.

Energy is not part of the Millennium Development Goals, and has often been referred to as the ‘missing MDG’. It is crucial therefore that as momentum builds towards the acceleration of the MDGs and also framing the Post-2015 Development Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals and sustainable energy should be amongst the stand-alone goals. Indeed, many countries, across all regions, have come out strongly in support of the inclusion of sustainable energy as part of the Sustainable Development Goals and Post-2015 Development

Agenda. Furthermore, the outcome of Rio+20 – The Future We Want – emphasized the clear linkage between achieving sustainable energy for all and eradicating poverty; leading to sustainable development and global prosperity.

The UN Secretary-General's Sustainable Energy for All initiative provides a model for treating the different dimensions of energy in an integrated manner. Its three targets are; 1) Ensuring universal access to modern energy services; 2) Doubling the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency; and (3) Doubling the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix should reinforce each other. Indicators, data and a comprehensive Global Tracking Framework for these targets already exist, but requires a strong global partnership. If the right conditions are in place, these targets are fully achievable by 2030. They are also fully compatible to meet the ambitious targets of climate change. Therefore as the UN Secretary-General has said, sustainable energy is the golden thread that covers all dimensions of sustainable development; social, economic and environmental.

Pacific SIDS have demonstrated strong national leadership in promoting renewable energy and better connectivity. They have called for ambitious and urgent actions to address their transport and energy concerns including access to technology, improving infrastructure and partnerships on renewable energy.

Lack of access to modern energy is a major challenge in Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTS). Many SIDS, including here in the Pacific, are heavily dependent on fossil fuels for their energy needs. A high percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) is being spent on energy imports with per unit electricity costs in some cases in the Pacific being among the highest in the world. This

dependency on fossil fuels leaves Pacific SIDS highly exposed to oil-price volatility. The increasing cost of imported fossil fuels represent a major impediment to the achievement of sustainable development and poverty eradication in SIDS as scarce financial resources are diverted from efforts to promote social and economic development and ensure environmental sustainability. Furthermore, many remote and rural SIDS communities have little or no access to modern and affordable energy services, which would pave the way for greater security, protect natural resources and the environment and improve people's health in the Pacific.

The bold energy targets set by Pacific SIDS at the 2012 Barbados Declaration on Sustainable Energy for All and also reflected in the Majuro Declaration on Climate Leadership have not gone unnoticed. Many important partnership programmes have started in the Pacific with the support of international and emerging development partners, including the Pacific Renewable Energy Project of SPC. I urge all stakeholders to ensure economic transformation to a low-carbon pathway to achieve greater security and through strengthening and fostering new partnerships with Pacific SIDS for the realization of these exemplary targets with necessary scale and depth, in the context of the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Many partnerships that have been initiated with development partners both traditional and emerging countries will have a transformative and multiplier effect for achieving sustainable energy in the Pacific.

Aside from sustainable energy, transport and mobility are key issues for achieving sustainable development in the context of the Post-2015 Development Agenda. Sustainable transport improves social equity, health, resilience of cities, urban-rural linkages and the productivity of rural areas. Viable regional transportation

arrangements, including air, land and sea transport will facilitate greater access to regional and international markets. It is clear therefore, that transport is a cross-cutting issue that has the great potential to transform societies and economies and contribute to the sustainable development of entire PICTs.

As the Pacific SIDS continue to pursue their respective development pathways, it is crucial that the transport sector develop sustainably through a holistic approach which avoids haphazard development that is often more costly to correct in the future. Strong focus should be placed on public transport and non-motorized transport that also strengthens access to low income groups. Reduced congestion and air pollution, as well as improved road safety, can translate into economic savings equal to several percentage points of GDP. Since transport has such large and broad externalities, sustainable transport development promises a great potential for increasing efficiencies and contributing to green growth. Achieving low carbon transport should also encourage the use of clean fuels and all manner of vehicles and developing the right policies towards implementation. Partnerships will also be crucial in achieving sustainable transport which enables access to jobs, goods and services that support equitable development while limiting short and long-term adverse environmental, social and economic consequences.

The 2012 UN Secretary-General's Five Year Action Agenda identified transport as a priority area to convene aviation, marine, ferry, rail, road and urban public transport providers, along with Governments and investors, to develop and take action on recommendations for more sustainable transport systems that can address rising congestion and pollution worldwide, particularly in urban areas. Likewise, The Future We Want stressed that transportation and mobility are central to sustainable development” and recognised the inherent link between achieving

greater energy efficiency and transport as part of integrated planning and management.

Now the challenge is to ensure that goals, targets and indicators should reflect the aspirations and challenges of PICTS. For the Pacific SIDS, often referred to as Large Ocean States, air and sea transport are crucial considerations for the overall efforts to access international markets and strengthen tourism and to ensure rapid and inclusive economic growth in the region. Regional integration and initiatives play a very important role in this regard.

The year 2014 is proving to be a major milestone for Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Not only has the United Nations General Assembly designated 2014 as the International Year of SIDS, the first group of countries to be recognized in such a way, but also in September, Samoa will host the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States.

As we look towards Samoa for the SIDS Conference, it is important that the post-2015 development agenda, collectively address the challenges that SIDS face in building resilience of their societies, economies and most importantly, their people. Access to affordable, renewable energy and sustainable transport will be critical elements in building resilience.

Immediately prior to the SIDS Conference in Samoa, my Office, alongside the Government of Samoa and the Samoa Chamber of Commerce, will convene a two day Private Sector Partnerships Forum from 30 to 31 August which will provide a platform where concrete partnerships for SIDS can be showcased and new ones

announced. Both Energy and Transport will be major thematic areas of focus at the Forum. Based on our consultations with SIDS and partners,

I encourage international partners to work together with SIDS through the provision of support, capacity building, technology acquisition and resources that will generate the genuine and durable partnerships that SIDS are calling for because we know that there is a clear and substantial dividend that we can gain from the sustainable development of these sectors.

I will conclude by stressing the importance of sustainable energy and transport in the Post-2015 development agenda. There is no need to reiterate that international support measures are critical for the effective and strengthened implementation of the outcomes of this year's SIDS Conference in Samoa

I wish you all the best in your deliberations.

I thank you.