



Australia  
Federated States of Micronesia  
Fiji  
Kiribati  
Nauru  
New Zealand  
Palau

Papua New Guinea  
Republic of Marshall Islands  
Samoa  
Solomon Islands  
Tonga  
Tuvalu  
Vanuatu



Samoa  
Chairman of Pacific Islands Forum

**Pacific Islands Forum Group**

Pacific Islands Forum  
United Nations Member States

**STATEMENT BY H. E. MR AL'IOAIGA FETURI ELISAIA  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF SAMOA  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**ON BEHALF OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM GROUP**

**AT THE**

**2005 REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE TREATY  
ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS**

**NEW YORK, 4 MAY 2005**

**Please check against delivery**

**Mr President**

As the current Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum, I am pleased today to make this statement on behalf of Forum members with Permanent Missions in New York, namely Australia, the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Nauru, New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and my own country Samoa.

It is disappointing to note, 35 years after the entry into force of the NPT that threats to humanity continue to be posed by the possession of nuclear weapons and the attendant possibility of their use. At the same time we welcome the significant contribution the NPT has made during this time to international peace and security.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is, as we all know, the cornerstone of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation for nuclear disarmament. In 1995, Forum Leaders welcomed the indefinite extension of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty as achieving a long standing Forum objective. The Forum urged all non-signatories to the Treaty to accept the Treaty as soon as possible and also urged the nuclear powers to focus on meeting without delay their obligation under the Treaty to negotiate in good faith towards complete disarmament.

In 2000, the Forum Leaders called for active pursuit by the Nuclear Weapons States of the steps agreed at the 2000 NPT Review Conference leading to nuclear disarmament. They welcomed the Conference's identification of measures to maintain and further strengthen the international non-proliferation regime. Forum members look forward to updated reports from the Nuclear Weapons States during this Review Conference regarding their progress in implementing practical, systematic and progressive steps toward nuclear disarmament.

**Mr President**

There are two issues of particular concern to Forum members: nuclear weapons free zones and cooperation between nuclear weapons free zones in the Southern Hemisphere in particular; and the shipment of radioactive materials through our region.

The region which the Pacific Islands Forum members represent has a long history of supporting disarmament, born of the region's harsh experience with nuclear testing by colonial powers in the Pacific. The South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone, established in 1985, was the second such zone to be established in a populated region of the world. This year we approach the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Rarotonga Treaty. In a region of "young" countries, still working to strengthen our cooperation and integration through the Pacific Islands Forum, this achievement of twenty years is indeed a milestone worth celebrating.

The South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty (commonly known as the Rarotonga Treaty) has been signed and ratified by all Forum members within the original geographical boundaries of the Treaty. We continue to encourage the three newest Forum members – Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of the Marshall Islands and Palau – to join the Treaty, and hope that in time we can welcome them as Parties.

The operation of the South Pacific nuclear free zone is enhanced by three protocols to the treaty, through which the nuclear weapons states have undertaken to apply the treaty to their territories in the region, to refrain from the use or threat of nuclear explosive devices against any party, and not to test nuclear explosive devices in the Zone. The protocols relevant to them have been ratified by the UK, France, China and the former USSR.

We take this opportunity to again call on the United States to ratify the Protocols to the Treaty.

We recall the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference, which recognised the continuing contributions of the nuclear free zone treaties towards the achievement of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament objectives, particularly in the southern hemisphere and adjacent areas, and towards keeping the areas covered by the treaties free of nuclear weapons in accordance with international law.

The Parties to the Rarotonga Treaty are proud to be part of the network of nuclear free zones with our counterpart Treaties of Tlatelolco and Bangkok, and supported by the bans imposed by the Antarctic Treaty and the Seabed Treaty. We look forward to the entry into force of the Pelindaba Treaty, establishing a nuclear weapons free zone for Africa. We welcome Mongolia's nuclear weapons free status, and support and encourage the efforts of states in South Asia and the Middle East towards establishing those regions as nuclear weapons free zones.

Forum members have been in the forefront of exploring ways and means of cooperating with other nuclear weapons free zones. In this regard we are pleased to note the MOU signed between the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and OPANAL in 2002, committing both organisations to ongoing communication and cooperation on matters relating to our respective nuclear weapons free zones. We welcome the initiative of the Government of Mexico in hosting last week's Conference of States Parties to nuclear free zone treaties and we support new measures to further enhance cooperation between the nuclear weapons free zones. We also note that the strengthening and implementation of nuclear weapons free zones has been raised as a possible priority area for cooperation, in the dialogue between the UN and regional organisations.

On the shipment of radioactive materials Mr President, members of the Pacific Islands Forum continue to be concerned about the human, environmental and economic risks posed by the shipment of radioactive materials around the world; particularly those shipments which pass through our waters.

For the past five years, Forum members have been involved in a direct dialogue process with representatives of the shipping states on the key issues of prevention, response, liability and compensation. We have received welcome assurances from the shipping states that the measures taken for the safety and security of the shipments accord with international guidelines, and that they will provide practical support to help manage the response to any incident in our region.

However, concerns remain among Forum members that present international arrangements for liability and compensation do not adequately address the risks posed by these shipments. We have a particular worry about possible economic loss in the event of an incident involving a nuclear shipment. The fragile economies of most Forum Island Countries depend heavily on industries such as fisheries and tourism, which in some cases are the only two economic pillars, would be totally devastated by negative publicity following any incident in our waters, whether or not that incident resulted in a radioactive release. Forum members continue to seek assurances from the shipping states that, where there is a demonstrable link between an incident and economic loss, we will not be left to carry such a loss unsupported.

We recall that the 2000 NPT Review Conference underlined the importance of effective national and international regulations and standards for the protection of States concerned from the risks of transportation of radioactive materials.

The Conference also took note of the concerns of Small Island Developing States and other coastal States with regard to the transportation of radioactive materials by sea. *Inter alia*, the Conference called on States parties to continue to work bilaterally and through the relevant international organizations to examine and further improve measures and international regulations to this end. While welcoming the recent progress made on this issue, Forum members hope this Review Conference will emphasise the need for continuing action in this regard.

We also note that the 2005 Mauritius Strategy for the sustainable development of Small Island Developing States includes reference to the transport of radioactive materials, and in particular the need for “the further development and strengthening of international regulatory regimes” for such transport. We would welcome opportunities in the context of the Mauritius process, to undertake further action on our concerns about shipments in cooperation with all states involved.

In conclusion Mr President, the members of the Pacific Islands Forum support the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and nuclear disarmament. We recognise the important role that the NPT plays in achieving that aim. We stand ready to assist in any way with the implementation of practical steps for systematic and progressive efforts to achieve nuclear disarmament.

Thank you, Mr President.