



## **PACIFIC SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES**

UNITED NATIONS MEMBER STATES

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### **PSIDS Statement to be delivered during the Closing Session for IGC4 for BBNJ**

**Friday 18<sup>th</sup> of March 2022**

Madame President,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of 12 Pacific Island countries with Permanent Missions to the United Nations in New York, namely, the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, the Republic of Kiribati, the Republic of Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, and my own country, Samoa. We are honored to be joined by the Cook Islands.

We commend you on your able stewardship of negotiations over the last two weeks during the 4<sup>th</sup> Substantive Session. We also commend the guidance provided by the facilitators and we have been pleased with the exchange of views, which have helped ensure the progression of the elements for our discussion.

As descendants of the continent moana, the ocean links our sea of islands, establishing our common identity and therefore making it critical for us to protect and promote our Pacific Ocean through shared stewardship. This builds on the Blue Pacific narrative that draws on our shared ocean identity and ocean resources, reminding us of the value and potential of the Pacific region, and collectively acting from a position of strength.

Madame President,

In maintaining the positive spirit in the coming months, we welcome your plan to update the draft treaty text and look forward to the advance unedited version to help our work in the lead up to the next IGC. We also see the value of cross-regional proposals and welcome the extra time to work with other delegations on this.

We welcome the continued support from the President and DOALOS in the inter-sessional period to help build on the work done in IGC4 and arrive at IGC5 ready to complete the negotiations.

PSIDS would like to thank the contributors to the BBNJ Trust fund which has allowed delegations from developing countries including those in the Pacific in the past to attend the meetings here in New York and we encourage delegations to continue contributions to the Trust fund to support further participation in this process.

Madame President,

For PSIDS, we acknowledge the encouraging reactions from respective delegations on significant issues and principles pertinent to us as Large Ocean States, including, adjacency, the special circumstances of SIDS, fair and equitable sharing of benefits and the traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples and local communities. We also want to highlight the importance that

we act as proper stewards of the ocean as we draft to ensure healthy productive and resilient oceans. As you have often heard from the Pacific –we need to act on behalf of present and future generations by protecting, caring for and ensuring responsible use of the marine environment, maintaining the integrity of ocean ecosystems and preserving the inherent value of biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction.

I wish to conclude by affirming our commitment to your leadership, keeping the momentum going and ensuring that we fulfill the aspiration we set for ourselves in finalizing an ambitious BBNJ instrument in 2022.

I thank you!