



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. AL'IOAIGA FETURI. ELISAIA
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF SAMOA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

ON BEHALF OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM GROUP

**TO THE SECOND BIENNIAL MEETING OF STATES TO
CONSIDER THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF
ACTION TO PREVENT, COMBAT AND ERADICATE THE
ILLICIT TRADE IN SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS IN ALL
ITS ASPECTS,**

NEW YORK, JULY 11, 2005.

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Mr Chairman,

As current Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum Group, I am making this statement on behalf of Australia, Fiji, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and my own country Samoa..

Mr Chairman,

Let me first congratulate you on your excellent preparation for this second Biennial Meeting of States to consider implementation of the Small Arms and Light Weapons Program of Action.

The members of the Pacific Islands Forum remain firmly committed to the Small Arms Program of Action and its effective implementation. While the region remains relatively free from large-scale transfers of automatic weapons, Pacific Island countries understand well the dangers posed by the uncontrolled and ready availability of small arms and light weapons. But the region is taking action.

Pacific Island countries continue to cooperate closely to address the challenges of small arms proliferation in the region, including through work to further the goals of the *Nadi Framework* - the region's agreed common approach to weapons control. Shortly after the first Biennial Meeting of States parties in 2003, the *Nadi Framework's* draft model firearms legislation was endorsed by Pacific Islands Forum Leaders. The model legislation includes provisions governing marking and record-keeping for civilian and security force weapons, as well as border controls. Pacific Island countries are, with regional technical assistance, now working to adapt and implement their regional weapons controls.

Building on the *Nadi Framework*, in August of last year Australia, Japan and the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament co-sponsored a workshop in Fiji on Small Arms and Light Weapons in the South Pacific. The workshop focused on: the practical implementation of the model weapons control legislation; strategies for harmonizing national weapons controls; enhancing regional cooperation and information sharing; and improving stockpile management. The meeting included participation by international organisations and civil society.

The region has made important progress towards improving the physical security and safety of its armouries. With Australian assistance, seven new armouries have been constructed for the Papua New Guinea Defence Force. New armouries have been built for the Fiji and Samoan police and there are plans for four more armouries and magazines to be built for the Republic of Fiji Military Forces. In early 2006, New Zealand will host a firearms safety seminar for Pacific Island participants. New Zealand has also offered to provide courses on armoury security for Pacific Island countries.

The Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI) is an excellent example of regional cooperation to combat the destabilising impact of SALW proliferation. RAMSI's well-recognised success to date has been due in no small part to the collection and destruction of over 3,600 small arms (including modern automatic, semi-automatic, pistols, shotguns and homemade weapons) and 306,700 rounds of ammunition.

Mr Chairman,

Pacific Island countries look forward to both the continued implementation of the Program of Action and further regional progress on Small Arms and Light Weapons.

Thank you Mr Chairman