



Republic of Nauru

Statement By The Chairman of the Delegation

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Mr. President,
Distinguished Heads Of Delegations,
Ladies & Gentlemen

Mr. President, it gives me great pleasure to deliver this statement on behalf of His Excellency President Ludwig Scotty, M.P. President of the Republic of Nauru who had to cancel his trip to New York at the last minute due to pressing matters at home. President Scotty has asked that I convey to this august assembly the warm greetings and good wishes of the people and Government of Nauru and his warmest congratulations to you Mr. President on your assumption of the stewardship of this Assembly and to assure you of Nauru's fullest cooperation in the deliberations ahead of us.

Through you Mr. President, my delegation joins previous speakers in congratulating Foreign Minister Julian Hunte of St. Lucia for a productive 58th session of the General Assembly and for his exemplary performance. As a member of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), Nauru is extremely proud to be associated with St. Lucia and the Caribbean Community and it goes to show that like our coconut tree our ability is multifaceted but the lack of resources has limited the flourish of many more like Julian Hunte and others from the AOSIS region who are serving or have served in international offices.

Peace and Security

Mr. President we congratulate the Secretary General for his continued commitment to multilateralism as means of resolving our common problems and for the report on the work of the Organisation (N5911) for the past 12 months. However, it is discouraging to note that peacekeeping activities had increased rather than decreased. Armed conflicts and acts of terrorism continue to perpetrate the violation of human rights and humanitarian norms. Atrocious acts of terrorism against innocent civilians particularly women and children continue to puncture the fabric of civility and moral values that each and every society on this planet is founded on. Nauru sympathizes with those countries and its peoples who have suffered lost through conflict and terrorist acts.

Nauru encourages peace in its Asia-Pacific neighbourhood and expresses the hope that whatever their differences, China and Taiwan can resolve them peacefully for the sake of the region's continued peace, stability and prosperity.

We support the Secretary General's bold statement of position with respect to mitigation of armed conflicts generally and in particular those on the African continent and in the Middle East. We are pleased to hear that he will be dedicating the thrust of his focus for the remainder of his term on strengthening the rule of law and transitional justice. Nauru supports the position the Secretary General expounded in his statement last week when he said and I quote "It is by reintroducing the rule of law, and the confidence in its impartial application, that we can hope to resuscitate societies shattered by conflicts. It is the law, including Security Council resolutions, which offers the best foundation for resolving prolonged conflicts — in the Middle East, in Iraq, and around the world." Unquote. The democratization of governance, the application of accountability and transparency and the protection of minorities and the vulnerable are complementary elements of ruling under law.

Reforms and Revitalization of the Organisation

Mr. President, Nauru, like the other members looks forward with anticipation to the report to be tabled by the Secretary General on the finding of the High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change later this year. The Panel was charged with the task of reviewing the threats to peace and security and other global challenges in so far as these may influence or connect with those threats. Nauru continues to believe that multilateralism is the key to resolving contemporary problems in all of their

complexities. Hence, it is important that the recommendations that would be forthcoming from the High Level Panel reinforce this point and that their proposal are doable and adds value to the reform programs that are already in the pipeline including the revitalization of the General Assembly.

Mr. President, my delegation has stated in previous debates that it agrees fully with the reform of the Security Council. The fresh approach instigated by the President of the 58th UNGA has to some extent injected life back into the debate by focusing on key elements of the reform. It is our hope that the Bureau would continue the push for further convergence of views by refining the choices we have made during the 58th session. The formation of an informal group of countries with aspirations for permanent membership seat on an expanded Security Council is interesting and could be the catalyst in expediting the debate on expansion. Nauru can and will support the aspirations of Germany, Japan and India for a permanent seat on an expanded Security Council.

However it is my delegations strong view that progress is being held hostage by those countries who insist that expansion should not be done in isolation of either eliminating or modifying the veto power accorded to permanent members of the Security Council. Unless this difference in approach is reconciled, time and energy spent on the other elements of the reform would be futile!

Revitalization of the General Assembly must have at its heart the maximization of opportunity for equitable representation by all member states in the major organs of the UN and Committees and to ensure that its program of work will allow for the full participation of members, particularly the small states. In this regard the proposal to split the work of the General Committees of the General Assembly into two sessions over a 6 month period would allow small states like Nauru that has only 2 diplomatic staff to increase its participation. Nauru would therefore support such a proposal when further deliberations take place this session.

Nauru would note that its position would be consistent with the United Nations' core principle of universality which should remind us all to be ever mindful of those countries seeking expanded responsibilities in international affairs. Countries which have sterling records in democracy, human rights, peace and the principle of freedom should have their achievements as well as their capacities appropriately recognized.

Small Island Developing States

Mr. President, as a small island developing states in the Pacific Ocean, Nauru aligns itself with the interventions already made by the Leaders of the AOSIS countries who have spoken before me on the concerns and challenges that we, the small island big ocean developing states are facing. Nauru bears all the unique characteristics of a small island state derived from our smallness both in land area and population, lack of resources, remoteness and vulnerability to exogenous forces, be it man-made or natural.

The devastation of Niue by cyclone Heita in 2003 and the Caribbean countries this year is a stark reminder of the vulnerability of the island states and Nauru joins in expressing its deepest sympathy for losses to life and property in the affected countries of the Caribbean and the southern coastal states of the United States of America. Against this background, my delegation would like to focus on what it considers to be a "spanner in the wheel" in the negotiations of the outcome strategy paper for the International Meeting in Mauritius on the further implementation of the Barbados Plan of Action. It appears to us that the political recognition of the special case of SIDS made at the Barbados conference in 1994, reinforced in New York during the +5 year review in 1999 and in Chapter VII of the JPOI to have taken a backseat, in the negotiations, to generic undertakings made at other international conferences on development since 1999, in particular the Millennium Development Goals of 2000 and the Monterrey Consensus of 2002. Benchmarking the SIDS outcome strategy paper to agreed texts from conferences referred to above would render the review process hypocrisy of the high order on the political acceptance of SIDS's special case. The slow progress towards implemen-

tation by many SIDS is but a true reflection that our problems which are SIDS specific and that they go deeper than the generic issues of development in general. Nauru is also concerned that some of the development partners would skew the review into one addressing SIDS MDG performance instead of BPOA performance. I believe our concern has to an extent been warranted and therefore my delegation would like to use this opportunity to remind our partners that the review is about identifying and solving SIDS failure to accomplish agreed development programs under the Barbados Plan of 1994; and its about how you, our development partners can help us the SIDS attain these goals. It is therefore our sincere hope that the third round of negotiations due early in October will be conducted in the right spirit and better understanding.

Regional Issues

Mr. President, the Pacific Islands Forum continues to be the vehicle for regional cooperation and collaboration amongst the 16 Pacific Island countries of the central and western pacific. It has adopted the Pacific Plan at the Apia Forum last month to revitalize and make the Forum more effective in its response to the needs of the peoples of the region. Issues such as climate change, peace and security, economic and social development of its peoples and the protection of and sustainable use of the environment and the natural resources are still the priority of the Forum.

Nauru welcomes the admission of The Kingdom of Thailand as the 13th member of the Forum's dialogue partners. This group of countries along with the EU and individual member countries of the EU and the UN specialized agencies and programs are critical to the development of the region as they provide the financial backbone to enable such activity to take place. During this session the cooperation between the UN and the Pacific Island Forum will be considered under item 58Q of the agenda. The Pacific Island Forum group at the UN looks forward to working closely with member states in developing and expanding the areas of cooperation under a draft resolution that will be tabled before the General Assembly in due course.

Nauru like the other low-lying small island states sees the Kyoto Protocol as our salvation from sea level rise and climate change that would devastate our already fragile ecological system which is essential to our livelihood and culture. My delegation understands that the Russian Federation stands between the Kyoto Protocol coming into force or continuing to linger in the wilderness. Nauru welcomes the statement by the Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation that President Putin has ordered serious consideration on Russia's ratification of the Protocol. This is a step forward from last year.

A healthy Pacific Ocean and the sustainable use of its natural resources including the highly migratory fish stocks are also critical to our livelihood. We in the Pacific have walked-the-talk on these issues by the development of an Ocean Policy to guide us in the management of our part of the Pacific Ocean and to form the framework for future Regional Ocean related initiatives.

The Convention on the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stock in the Western and Central Pacific which provides a comprehensive regime for the management of the region's highly migratory fish stock both in our EEZ and in the high seas has come into force.

The transshipment of nuclear waste through our waters is of great concern to many of the Island countries because of the inherent damages it could cause.

Domestic Issues

Mr. President, one of the positive outcomes of the Pacific Islands Forum meeting last month is the decision of the Forum Leaders to intervene in the internal economic crisis in Nauru at the request of the Government of Nauru and consistent with the terms of reference of the Forum's Biketawa Declaration of 2000.

Our crisis lies largely in the fact that two thirds of our people in employ work for the Government and its instrumentalities. These employees have not been paid regular salary for over a year now although at irregular intervals either A\$100 food vouchers or A\$30 to A\$50 cash are given to purchase food compared to the basic wage of A\$350 (US\$248.50) per fortnight. The average family size on Nauru is around 6 and therefore A\$50 cash fortnightly is equivalent to US\$0.42 per day, well below the UN definition for abject poverty of US\$1 a day!

The fact that many Nauruans can harvest, albeit, limited food from the sea and the land in conjunction with our culture and tradition of sharing has meant that despite the lack of cash, our people eat at least once a day. The problem would be in the level of daily nutritional intake particularly for the children as one cannot buy imported commodities such as fruits and vegetables and hygienic supplies and the situation is exacerbated by the fact that Nauru imports 99% of all food and other essential items. Accordingly food security in the medium to long term is a serious concern as there is no form of agricultural activity on Nauru.

Nauru's recovery cannot be possible without the establishment of reputable financial institutions on Nauru and the lifting of the restriction on financial transaction between the international community and Nauru. This will not happen if Nauru continues to be subjected to counter-measures and black-listing by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). Despite the outlawing of the registration of foreign banks some 12 months ago Nauru has not been successful in its bid to be lifted from counter-measures as a first step although there have been incremental progress toward this goal over the period. Following the visit by IMF early this year, Nauru has, for the fourth time, passed an anti-money laundering law that now supersedes previous laws. We have participated in FATF regional reviews and despite strong support of actions taken on advice; we seem to fail at the plenary review.

As I speak, the Parliament of Nauru is considering passage of three bills addressing issues raised by the FATF: the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Organized Crime Bill; the Proceeds of Crime Bill, and the Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters Bill. We are confident that passage of these bills, prioritizing related issues through appointment of a National Coordinating Committee on Anti-Money Laundering (NCC) – which also comprises the Australian official appointed as Secretary for Finance – and the NCC's 'Face-to-Face' meeting with the FATF's Asia-Pacific Working Group in Brunei next week will bring us closer to our objective of being de-listed. Mr. President, we will persevere as we know that in the end we will prevail.

Mr. President, the intervention by the Pacific Islands Forum is seen as pre-empting the possibility of the economic crisis escalating into a security and safety issue for the Nauruan people and the region. Teams of regional experts representing the Forum and Australia have visited Nauru on a fact finding mission and will be reporting to the Leaders in due course which will include recommendations on the type and manner in which assistance should be rendered. Whilst the proposal –to be formally known as Pacific Regional Assistance to Nauru (PRAN) - is being finalized, the Forum has agreed to provide in the immediate term capacity building assistance in the justice, judicial, financial audit and national planning sectors, transportation for the health and education sectors, as well as a small cash grant to assist with public sector wages.

This assistance is complementing that provided separately by Australia which has deployed Australian Finance and Treasury officials to head the Nauru Department of Finance, and the deployment next month of Australian Police to take command of the Nauru Police Force. Indeed, as I speak, the Parliament of Nauru is considering also a reform budget designed with the assistance of Australian Finance and Treasury officials, which budget adopts harsh if realistic measures as a preliminary but decisive step towards stabilizing and eventually rebuilding the economy and society of Nauru.

For the same reasons, the Government of Nauru has written to the Secretary General of the United Nations in August this year alerting him of the looming crisis on Nauru and to request assistance

from the UN system to assist alleviate the plight of the Nauruan people. His Excellency President Ludwig Scotty and the Foreign Minister, Hon. David Adeang will be visiting New York in the latter part of October to meet with the Secretary General and appropriate UN bodies on this matter and my Government looks forward to receiving positive responses from the UN system in the same manner as the Pacific Islands Forum.

Conclusion

To conclude, Mr. President, the 59th session has critical work ahead of it such as the International Meeting for the 10 year review of the Barbados Plan of Action, the tabling of and deliberation on the finding of the High Level Panel constituted by the Secretary General, the review of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the preparations for the 5 year review of the Millennium Declarations and its Goals, and the continuation of our deliberations on the revitalization of the General Assembly and of the reform of the Security Council just to name a few. As the Secretary General has stated, the UN is at a fork in the road on its relevance as an organisation of nations united to seek common solutions to common problems. The next 12 months will determine if we the United Nations of the world continued on the road where "business as usual" is the mode of operation or followed the road of multilateralism as the principle rule of our engagement. The statements so far indicate the latter, but we have heard this before!

God Bless Nauru and God Bless the United Nations

Thank you for your attention.