



**PACIFIC SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES**  
**United Nations Member States**

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**Statement by Dr. T. Suka Mangisi**  
**Deputy Permanent Representative and Chargé d'Affaires a.i.**  
**Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Tonga to the United Nations**  
**Chair of the Pacific Island Developing States (PSIDS)**  
**On Agenda Item 82: United Nations Programme of Assistance**  
**in the teaching, study, dissemination and wider appreciation of international law**  
**at the Sixth Committee of the 70<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly**

**New York, Friday, 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2015**

*Check Against Delivery*

**Mr. Chairman,**

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the twelve Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) represented at the United Nations namely the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, and my own country Tonga.

Given this is the first time the PSIDS are taking the floor in this Committee, I would like to first congratulate you on your election as Chair, and extend similar sentiments to your Bureau. I am confident that we are in good stead under your leadership this 70<sup>th</sup> Session.

**Mr. Chairman,**

At its 69<sup>th</sup> Session, the General Assembly through its resolution 69/117 authorized the Secretary-General to continue to further develop activities specified in his report and to finance this activity from provisions in the regular budget, as well as, where necessary, from voluntary financial contributions. Given these financial sources have not been sufficient in recent years, the General Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to include additional resources under the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017, in particular for the organization of the Regional Courses in International Law for Africa, the Asia-Pacific, and for Latin America and the Caribbean each year, and for the continuation and further development of the United Nations Audiovisual Library of International Law. The General Assembly also reiterated its request to Member States and interested organizations, institutions, and individuals, to make voluntary contributions for the International Law Fellowship Programme, and the United Nations Audiovisual Library.

**Mr. Chairman,**

The PSIDS would like to take this opportunity to emphasise the importance of this work. When discussing the issue of the rule of law at the international level, States have continuously affirmed the importance of developing and maintaining cooperation within the international community through international law and the three pillars of the UN: international peace, socioeconomic development, and human rights. These issues are directly linked with the 2030 Agenda that our Leaders endorsed only a matter of weeks ago, the sustainable development goals contained therein, and the search for multi-stakeholder and partnership approaches, all of which are of great importance to PSIDS.

The PSIDS receive great benefits in working in international law, especially from the regional courses in international law, the international fellowships, and the audiovisual library and publications. The Programme of Assistance is a core tool for training of government officials in particular, in international law.

**Mr. Chairman,**

In light of this, the PSIDS consider that the General Assembly's decision in resolution 69/117 to request additional funds for this area, as essential. The current demands on the Programme of Assistance cannot be met under the existing budget. The system of voluntary Member State contributions has not been successful at meeting the additional financial demands of this Programme either. Last year, I expressed here in this Committee our concern on the continued insufficient finances and lack of regular budgetary funding for the Programme of Assistance, which led to the cancellation of the Regional Courses in International Law for the Asia-Pacific. In fact, the last one was held in 2012.

We therefore welcome the fact that pursuant to resolution 69/117, additional resources have been proposed in the programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017 for the Regional courses in International Law and the Audiovisual Library of International Law. If this new funding is confirmed, it is anticipated that a Regional Course in International Law for the Asia-Pacific will take place in Thailand, both in 2016 and 2017, and that this may be set up as a permanent venue for such training activities in the future.

In addition to this allocated budget, PSIDS also urge Member States to take necessary and timely measures to include the Programme of Assistance in the regular budget of their organizations to ensure sufficient funding for all aspects of the Programme's work.

On this note, I would like to express the PSIDS' particular gratitude to Italy for funding the inaugural capacity building project for PSIDS known as the PSIDS-FOS or PSIDS Fellowship on the ocean and seas, due to be implemented in January 2016. This project is part of the ongoing cooperation between the PSIDS, and Italy, Spain, Luxembourg, and Austria at the United Nations, known as the Joint Committee. The fellowship will bring to New York for a year, young civil servants from our region who work in the areas of foreign affairs, fisheries, and prosecutions, amongst others, for academic and practical training and experience at all ocean and law of the sea-related meetings and events. The invaluable knowledge and experience will thus be transferred back to the region at the conclusion of the fellowship. The PSIDS look forward to a successful project and hope that the success of the fellowship will be continued. Without the voluntary contributions through the genuine and durable partnerships between the PSIDS and its donor partners within the Joint Committee however, this opportunity would not be possible.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Finally, PSIDS has already stated the importance of international law's progressive development and its core role in the appropriate conduct of relations among States. Thus, the dissemination of the knowledge, study and teaching of international law is of central importance for our members, and for the international community in its quest to achieve a world based on the rule of law.

We accordingly look forward to the confirmation of additional budget being allocated to the work of the Programme of Assistance, and of thus ensuring that the United Nations can continue to offer support to developing countries such as ours in the Pacific, in this area that is essential to the achievement of the United Nations' goals.

I thank you.