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Statements by intergovernmental and other organizations

Dr Audrey Aumua – Deputy Director General, Pacific Community (SPC)

Your Excellency, the President of the Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction;
Honourable Presidents and Prime Ministers of States,
Your Excellencies the Heads of Delegations,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

The Pacific Community (SPC) is grateful for the opportunity to present a statement to the United Nations Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction 2017.

With five Pacific Island countries in the top twenty at risk in the world, and Vanuatu and Tonga the top two countries most at risk, the Pacific Island region faces many challenges to reducing disaster risks. These challenges are increasing with the Pacific on the front line of the impacts of climate change. Two Category Five Tropical Cyclones have made landfall in the Pacific in the last two years, resulting in disastrous consequences for many of our Island nations.

Despite these challenges, the Pacific Island countries are taking concrete steps to address disaster and climate risks and implement the *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015- 2030*. For the Pacific, building and strengthening our resilience is not only urgent, it is key to the achievement of sustainable development and improved livelihoods.

Pacific Island countries have taken leadership as a region to endorse the first regional framework in the world to fully integrate climate change and disaster risk management. The *Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific, An Integrated Approach to Address Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management (FRDP) 2017 - 2030* provides high level strategic guidance to different stakeholder groups on how to enhance resilience to climate change and disasters, in ways that contribute to and are

embedded in sustainable development. The FRDP is a vehicle to implement international frameworks including: the *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction*; the *Paris Agreement on Climate Change*; and the *Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development*. The framework places emphasis on the importance of inclusive actions, decision-making, partnerships, and prioritizing the needs and respecting the rights of the most vulnerable members of society.

At the national level, Pacific Island countries are taking steps to build resilience such as improving water security, food security, and coastal management, as well as through improved preparedness, response and recovery. Many Pacific Island countries are updating their national disaster plans, legislation and policies with many utilising an integrated approach to address climate change and disaster risk management in Joint National Action Plans. Public-private partnerships, such as the Fiji Business Disaster Resilience Council and regionally the Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation (PIPSO) are strengthening coordination for preparedness, response and recovery from disasters.

SPC is committed to supporting Pacific Island countries in their leadership to build resilience to climate change and disasters through policies, plans, on ground action, building partnerships and empowering communities. SPC can support Pacific Island countries in developing national disaster loss databases to support assessment of global and national targets for the *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction* and utilise the Pacific Damage and Loss Information System (PDaLO), managed by SPC, for these purposes.

As the principal scientific and technical organisation in the Pacific region, SPC utilises a multi-sector approach in responding to Pacific Island country's development priorities with a lead regional role in disaster risk management and technical expertise across the resilience agenda. SPC's many programmes and projects, supporting Pacific Island countries, are across sectors including food security, water security, disaster risk management, climate change, environmental conservation, fisheries, education, human rights, and public health. Our support extends to technical support during times of disaster and for the development of Post Disaster Needs Assessments.

Through strong partnerships with other regional organisations including the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat (PIFS), the Secretariat for Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) and the University of the South Pacific (USP), we collectively work towards building a safer and more resilient Pacific.

Chair, I thank you.