

Chairs' Summary of the PALM Third Ministerial Interim Meeting  
Tokyo, JAPAN  
17 January 2017

*Overview*

1. The PALM Third Ministerial Interim Meeting was held in Tokyo, Japan, on 17 January 2017 in order to follow up on the outcomes of the Seventh Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM 7) as well as to prepare for PALM 8.
2. The Meeting was attended by representatives from Japan and 16 Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) member countries, as well as the PIF Secretariat. The Meeting was co-chaired by H.E. Mr. Fumio Kishida, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan and the Hon. Mr. Lorin Robert, Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Federated States of Micronesia, as Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum.
3. The Ministers underlined the importance of the robust partnership between Japan and PIF, and reaffirmed the centrality of Forum Island Countries to the PALM partnership, a partnership underpinned by historical bonds, respect for international law and mutual trust, in addressing a wide range of common challenges. The Ministers shared their intention to further discuss the PIF's expanded membership at PALM 8.
4. The Ministers shared the goal to maintain free, open and rules-based order in the region and achieve self-sufficient and sustainable development. Recalling the Seventh Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting Leaders' Declaration ("Fukushima Iwaki Declaration"), they reaffirmed their firm determination to further strengthen this partnership through dialogues and cooperation based on the PALM process.
5. The Ministers emphasized the importance of the Forum Island Countries' leadership and ownership of development. Minister Kishida expressed his determination to continue supporting Forum Island Countries in areas that best reflect their needs, utilizing means that leverages Japan's strength.
6. The Ministers welcomed the success of the Forty-Seventh Pacific Islands Forum in Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia held between 7–11 September 2016, and looked forward to working together on key issues of mutual interest taking into account the Forum Communique.
7. The Ministers also took note of the important role of sub-regional efforts in addressing

common challenges of respective sub-regions and expressed their intention to pursue closer coordination with such efforts. Minister Kishida noted the “Small Islands States Regional Strategy 2016-2020”, which was adopted by PIF as the basis for articulating Small Islands States regional priorities and aspirations within the Framework for Pacific Regionalism.

#### *Follow-up of PALM 7*

8. Minister Kishida provided the update on Japan’s commitment made at PALM 7 to contribute more than 55 billion JPY in development assistance and to support human resources development and people to people exchanges for 4000 people for three years. To date, Japan has contributed approximately 61 billion JPY in development assistance and carried out human resource development and people-to-people exchanges for approximately 3200 people.
9. The Ministers of the Forum Island Countries expressed appreciation for the smooth and expeditious implementation of Japanese assistance and welcomed Japan’s long standing record of consistent implementation of commitments.
10. The Ministers welcomed the progress made through people-to-people exchange programs such as the “Pacific-LEADS” and “JENESYS programs”. They shared the view that the people-to-people exchange serves as a bedrock for the long standing partnership between Japan and the Forum Island Countries. Minister Kishida expressed his intention to further contribute to the human resource development of the Pacific island countries in various fields including disaster risk reduction, climate change, environment, trade, investment, tourism and marine resources.
11. Minister Kishida expressed his deep appreciation to Forum Island Countries for their generous support for recovery of the remains of the war dead from World War II, and requested their continued close cooperation with Japan. The Ministers shared the view to cooperate on memorial services including the maintenance of government-built monuments of war dead as appropriate.
12. The Ministers welcomed the efforts to undertake unexploded ordnance clearance activities in the region and requested continuous support.

#### *Self-Sufficient and Sustainable Development*

13. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to continue cooperation towards the universal implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa

Action Agenda on financing for development. They also recognized the important work of the PIF Secretariat, co-convening events such as the November 2016 workshop held in Fiji on effective financing for the Sustainable Development Goals in the Pacific. They reaffirmed commitments in the “SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (S.A.M.O.A) Pathway” including its effective implementation and review.

14. The Ministers shared the view that the goal to achieve self-sufficient and sustainable development will include efforts to:
  - (a) address environmental challenges including climate change, natural hazards and oceans, and other related issues; and
  - (b) promote trade and investment to support economic growth and encourage business development to achieve higher level of self-sufficiency.
  
15. The Ministers shared the view that climate change poses a continuing and urgent threat to the sustainable development of the Pacific island countries and underlined the importance of close cooperation to mitigate and adapt to the causes and adverse effects of climate change. They welcomed the entry into force of the Paris Agreement by Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and emphasized the importance of its effective implementation.
  
16. The Ministers welcomed the steady progress towards the construction of the Pacific Climate Change Center as a shared resource for regional collaboration on climate change. They further stressed the importance of climate financing in ensuring Forum Island Countries’ adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change and disaster risk and welcomed Japan’s continued financial support in this regard. The Forum Island Countries Ministers expressed appreciation for Japan’s contribution to the Green Climate Fund (GCF). They welcomed the approval of projects totaling 165 million USD for Forum Island Countries by the GCF Board to date, as well as strong progress made by the GCF in 2016, including the December 2016 Board Meeting held in Samoa. They shared their intention to continue making efforts to improve access to the GCF. They also welcomed Japan’s continued support for the introduction and effective use of renewable energy.
  
17. The Ministers noted the imminent conclusion of the Pacific Environment Community (PEC) Fund, and expressed appreciation to Japan for its support to Forum Island Countries’ efforts in climate change mitigation. Ministers of the Forum Island Countries underscored the value of direct access to climate change mitigation finance.
  
18. The Ministers stressed the importance of strengthening cooperation for disaster risk

reduction, especially for building resilience, noting the launch of the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP) at the 2016 PIF meeting in Pohnpei and the expectation that like-minded partners will support its implementation. They reaffirmed commitment to cooperate closely toward the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. The Ministers also welcomed Japan's continuous support for development of economic and social infrastructure resilient to natural hazards, and capacity building. They also welcomed various initiatives under "World Tsunami Awareness Day" including High School Students Summit on "World Tsunami Awareness Day" which was held in Kuroshio, Japan in November, 2016.

19. The Ministers reaffirmed the importance of environmental issues including waste management and welcomed Japan's intention to continue its support. They also reiterated the importance of conservation of ecosystems and biodiversity for sustainable development.
20. The Ministers shared the intention to redouble their efforts to further explore cooperation to promote trade and investment and to develop local business in the Pacific island countries as an important means to achieve higher self-sufficiency. From this perspective, they welcomed the economic missions dispatched from Japan to the region, and expressed appreciation for the role played by the Pacific Islands Center. They shared the recognition that the improvement of the business environment and enhancement of intra-regional connectivity are important in tapping the economic potential of the region. They also highlighted the prominent role which the tourism industry can play in driving growth.
21. The Ministers reiterated the critical importance of integrated approaches to sustainable development, management and conservation of marine resources and the marine environment, while at the same time utilizing fishery resources and other marine resources to promote economic development. They reconfirmed the need to continue cooperative relationship in fisheries between Japan and the Forum Island Countries. They emphasized the importance of cooperation for taking necessary measures to eradicate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. They expressed their intention to continue cooperation in the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), including identifying possible opportunities for development of joint proposals on issues of key importance. They stressed the importance of developing a well-balanced legally binding instrument on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ) under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) which will fully respect relevant existing legal frameworks.

They reaffirmed that these areas will continue to be one of the priorities between Japan and the Forum Island Countries.

#### *Upholding Free and Open Maritime Order*

22. The Ministers emphasized the importance of maintaining free, open and rule-based maritime order in the Pacific Ocean in accordance with the universally recognized principles of international law, including UNCLOS and its relevant Implementing Agreements, as an important foundation for peace, stability and prosperity in the region, and reaffirmed their intentions to promote cooperation in this area. They underscored the importance of all states respecting rights under international law including freedom of navigation and overflight. They further emphasized the importance of making and clarifying their claims based on international law, not using force or coercion in trying to advance their claims, exercising restraint and resolving disputes by peaceful means in accordance with international law.

#### *Cooperation in the International Fora*

23. The Ministers shared the view to support the hosting and chairing of international conferences by Forum Island Countries, including the co-hosting of the United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 in 2017 as well as the presidency at the 23<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP23) by Fiji; and the 2018 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meeting hosted by Papua New Guinea. Minister Kishida welcomed such Forum Island Countries' initiatives within the international fora.

24. Minister Kishida expressed his deep appreciation for the Forum members continued support to Japan's initiatives and efforts within the international fora as well as multilateral institutions. The Forum Island Countries Ministers requested Japan to support, in particular, Forum Island Countries' initiatives and efforts in International Financial Institutions on the definition of fragile states.

25. The Ministers reaffirmed the need to further enhance the legitimacy, effectiveness, and representativeness of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to better reflect the realities of the international community in the 21st century. They also expressed their determination to engage constructively in the work of the intergovernmental negotiations towards an early realization of the reform, including through its expansion of both the permanent and non-permanent categories. In this regard, Forum Island Countries Ministers reiterated their support for Japan's bid for permanent membership of the

Council.

26. The Ministers condemned in the strongest terms North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programs, which are in violation of the relevant UNSC resolutions. They strongly urged it to refrain from any further provocation, to fully comply with the relevant UNSC resolutions and the Six Party Talks Joint Statement and to abandon its nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction programs in a complete, verifiable, and irreversible manner. They called for sustained and comprehensive implementation of the relevant UNSC resolutions by all member states. They also urged North Korea to respect and ensure the welfare and inherent dignity of people in North Korea and to resolve the abductions issue.
27. The Ministers underlined their strong commitment to promoting nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy toward the success of the 2020 NPT (Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons) Review cycle which starts this year.

*Vision towards PALM 8*

28. The Ministers underlined the importance of continuing to explore new fields of cooperation, such as in disability and sports taking into account the 2019 Rugby World Cup as well as the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games and other major international sporting events hosted by Pacific island countries, with a view to adding further depth to the partnership towards PALM 8.
29. Minister Kishida announced that the next PALM (PALM 8) will be held in Iwaki, Fukushima on 18-19 May, 2018 and the Ministers shared their intention to continue close consultation in preparation for PALM 8.