



## UDAUNE DECLARATION

ON

### CLIMATE CHANGE BY MEMBERS OF THE MELANESIAN SPEARHEAD GROUP (MSG)

#### PREAMBLE

The Members of the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG), consisting of Fiji, Front de Liberation Nationale Kanak Socialiste (FLNKS), Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, at the 22<sup>nd</sup> MSG Leaders' Retreat held on 24<sup>th</sup> August 2023 at the Havannah Boat House, North Efate, in the Republic of Vanuatu:

**RECALLING** the 1988 Agreed Principles of Cooperation among Independent States in Melanesia, and the objects and purposes of the MSG enunciated in the Agreement Establishing the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG);

**REAFFIRMING** the principles of respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all States, non-interference in the domestic affairs of States;

**BELIEVING** in the need to change the security narrative that is being imposed on the region due to the intensification of geostrategic competition, and to focus the security conversation on Climate Change and the vulnerability and special needs of the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in particular, Melanesian Countries and call for international support to take full and concrete action to address these vulnerabilities and needs through international, sub regional and bilateral cooperation;

**NOTE** with serious concern the current low global climate ambition under the Paris Agreement further accelerating the vulnerability of the Pacific in particular, the Melanesian sub-region which is located in the climate hotspot;

**RECALLING** Pacific Islands Leaders identifying climate change as the single greatest existential threat facing the Blue Pacific Continent and subsequent Declaration that the Pacific is in a state of Climate emergency;

**RECALLING** their commitments to strong regional action, harnessing shared stewardship of the Blue Pacific Continent, through such Regional Agreements as the 1986 Convention for the Protection of the Natural Resources and Environment in the South Pacific, the Noumea Protocol concerning Cooperation in Combating Pollution Emergencies in the South Pacific, the Rarotonga South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty, the Lakatoro Declaration on Oceania Cooperation regarding Denuclearisation in the South Pacific, the Waigani Convention on the ban on importation into Forum Island countries of radioactive wastes and to control the trans-boundary movement of hazardous wastes, and the Boe Declaration, the Blue Pacific's Call for Urgent Global Climate Change Action through the Kainaki II Declaration for Urgent Climate Action Now, the 2010 Framework for Pacific Oceanscape, the Pacific Islands Framework for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas, the Cleaner Pacific 2025 Strategy;

**RECALLING** also their international commitments under such International Agreements as the United Nations (UN) Charter, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) – Part XII on

**RECALLING** also their international commitments under such International Agreements as the United Nations (UN) Charter, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) – Part XII on Protection and Preservation of the Marine Environment, the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL), the IMO 2020 Regulations on Sulphur content of marine fuels, the 1972 London Dumping Convention, the 1989 Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, the Kyoto Protocol (reduction of emissions of greenhouse gases) , the Paris Climate Accords/Paris Agreement;

**COGNISANT** of the ongoing efforts that are being made under the auspices of UNEP, COP, Our Oceans Conference, the International Maritime Organisation (IMO);

**DESIRING** to bolster efforts and raise ambitious actions under the Paris Agreement and the commitments made at COP 27 to limit temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius below the pre-industrial level, to encourage further radical Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) in particular greenhouse gas reduction targets, to hold businesses and institutions to account on their climate change actions, to pursue efforts towards 30X30 conservation goals;

**DETERMINED** to insist at the COP28 on developed countries responsibility to mobilise more financial support for developing countries towards such funding arrangements as Green Climate Fund (GCF), the Adaptation Fund, the LDC Fund, Special Climate Change Fund and Loss and Damage Fund;

**ASPIRING** to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050 as agreed to in the 51<sup>st</sup> PIF Leaders Meeting in Suva in 2022;

**DETERMINED** to collectively refocus the security narrative and draw attention towards our real security threat of Climate change and environmental degradation;

**CONSCIOUS** of their responsibility to improve the environment of present and future generations of the people of Melanesia;

**AWARE** that their responsibilities to preserve and improve the environment can be met only by cooperative effort among regional players based on the understanding of the needs and capacities of all parties;


**RECOGNISING** the interconnectivity of the world's oceans means that marine pollution requires the involvement of all countries and peoples to be effectively addressed;

**NOTING** with deep concern the proposal by Japan to discharge Advanced Liquid Processing System (ALPS) Treated Nuclear Water at Tokyo Electric Power Company's (TEPCO's) damaged Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station into the Pacific Ocean;

**ACKNOWLEDGING** the ongoing constructive dialogue between the Japanese Authorities, IAEA Authorities and Pacific Islands Forum (PIF);

**AWARE** of the desire by countries to engage in seabed mining, the ongoing discussions at the ISA on the appropriate mining code for seabed mining, and the focus of interest in the Clarion-Clipperton Zone;

**ACKNOWLEDGING** that very little is known of the effects of seabed mining to the ecosystems of the oceans and sensitive to the ways in which initiatives by one country can affect development prospects, including the natural environment beyond national boundaries, including the common heritage of humanity;



**APPRECIATIVE** of the support rendered by the UN membership on the UN General Assembly Resolution for an Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on the obligations of States in respect of Climate Change;

**BELIEVING** that serious consideration of a Non-Proliferation Treaty on Fossil Fuel would precipitate serious investment and efforts towards alternative green energy sources;

**DETERMINED** to undertake actions nationally and collectively as MSG to demonstrate leadership and collective resolve to protect our environment;

**DO HEREBY AGREE TO:**

**RECOMMIT** themselves towards undertaking robust actions, legislatively and politically, to address the Climate Change issue, and undertake review of their NDCs with a view to upscaling their commitments, including concrete REDD plus initiatives;

**PURSUE** the International Court of Justice (ICJ) Advisory Opinion on Responsibility of States vis-à-vis Climate Change to its conclusion;

**UNDERTAKE** to make national submissions to the ICJ on the nefarious impact and effect of climate change;

**ENCOURAGE** work to be undertaken collectively in earnest on the Non-Proliferation Treaty on Fossil Fuel initiative on the basis of the principle and approach of **just transition** as part of the Port Vila Call for a Just Transition to a Fossil Fuel Free Pacific;

**URGE** Japan not to discharge the treated water into the Pacific Ocean until and unless the treated water is incontrovertibly proven scientifically to be safe to do so and seriously consider other options like use in concrete;

**REGRETS DEEPLY** the decision by Japan to dump ALPS in the Pacific Ocean, which has inter-generational and transboundary impact on our ocean, economy, livelihood, and future and on the basis of improved science and technology urged Japan to consider other options for disposal of ALPS;

**UNDERTAKE** not to allow Underwater Seabed Mining to be carried out in their jurisdictions;

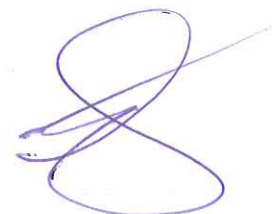
**CALL** for more rigorous and transparent environmental scientific research on seabed mining and call for a Pacific region wide moratorium;

**CALL** on developed countries to submit more ambitious climate targets and additional measures at COP 28 towards limiting temperature rise to below 1.5 Degrees Celsius levels through making bold and practical solutions based on the NDCs;

**COMMIT** themselves to aggressively pursue at COP and the UNFCCC discussions and practical commitments towards greater focus on Adaptation and Mitigation measures with their attendant financial requirements;

**REAFFIRM STRONGLY** their commitments to further take actions in support of their current ban of single use plastic products.

**CALL** on Industrial States and Large Emitters to take lead in undertaking concrete ambitious action programmes on Mitigation and avoid "green-washing" schemes;



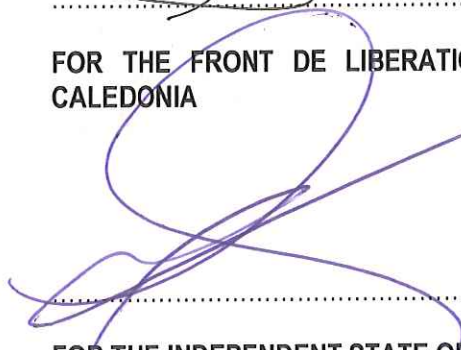
**DEMAND** that developed countries demonstrate more urgency and increased commitment to mobilize requisite financial support for developing countries, including the promised US\$100 billion per year by 2020 that remains unfulfilled; and

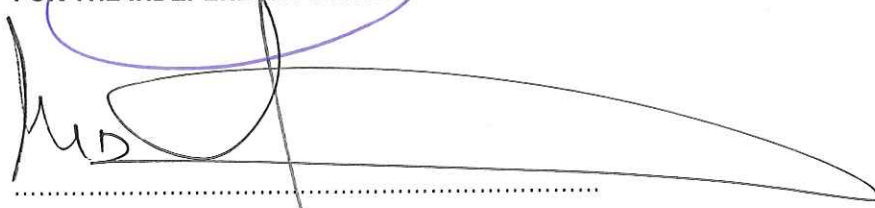
**DEMAND** that the international community in particular, developed countries take lead in providing and mobilizing support for greater resources and finances on Loss and Damage, GCF, Adaptation Fund, LDC Fund and Special Climate Change Fund that is easily accessible to those most affected, such as the Small Island States; and urge Parties to the UNFCCC to conclude at the COP28, the discussions on the funding arrangements to assist developing countries in responding to loss and damage.


**DONE AT HAVANNAH BOAT HOUSE, NORTH EFATE IN THE REPUBLIC OF VANUATU, this 24<sup>th</sup> day of August in 2023.**

  
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**FOR THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI**

  
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**FOR THE FRONT DE LIBERATION NATIONALE KANAK SOCIALISTE (FLNKS) OF NEW CALEDONIA**

  
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**FOR THE INDEPENDENT STATE OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA**

  
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**FOR THE SOLOMON ISLANDS**

  
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**FOR THE REPUBLIC OF VANUATU**