

**Pacific Islands Forum  
with United Nations Missions**

Australia, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji,  
Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, Palau,  
Papua New Guinea, Republic of Marshall Islands,  
Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu.



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**UNICEF Executive Board Meeting: Item 4**

**Wednesday 8 Feb 2023**

**Pacific Islands Forum Chair remarks**

**Delivered by H.E. Ambassador Satyendra Prasad of Fiji**

Thank you M[x] President,

I take the floor on behalf of the members of the Pacific Islands Forum with presence at the United Nations.

We are pleased to support the Pacific Multi-Country Programme Document presented to the Executive Board for approval.

UNICEF has consulted diligently across the Blue Pacific region to ensure that its programme genuinely reflects national and regional priorities.

We would particularly like to acknowledge the genuine challenges of covering such diverse geographies and needs in one strategy.

Multi-country offices deserve more recognition – particularly when they cover multiple time-zones in an area where travel is difficult and countries whose populations range from 1,500 to almost a million people.

Our regional diversity complicates data collection and service provision in rural and remote communities – which are often those displaying the highest rates of adverse social indicators.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also negatively affected both progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals in our region and our ability to accurately update and respond to changes in key development indicators in these remote areas.

With poverty rates expected to have risen during the pandemic, we know our children and young people and women are particularly vulnerable.

We therefore commend the work of UNICEF staff in the Pacific to the attention of UNICEF Executive Director Catherine Russell.

Excellencies,

The Multi-Country Programme's vision is that 'every child in the Pacific, including adolescents, and especially the most excluded, survives, thrives, learns, is protected and develops to her or his full potential, free from poverty in a safe environment and sustainable climate.'

We particularly appreciate UNICEF efforts, as part of the broader UN strategic planning process, to align its work in the coming five years with the goals of the *2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent* – the overarching regional vision agreed by Pacific leaders at last year's PIF Leaders Meeting in Fiji.

The Multi-Country Programme's emphasis on health and nutrition, education, child protection, climate-resilient water, sanitation and hygiene and social policy components illustrates our shared vision for the future of

our Blue Pacific Continent. We also support the MCPD's emphasis on monitoring, evaluation and ongoing, responsive implementation in our region.

We are therefore pleased to endorse the MCPD and appreciate the work of UNICEF in preparing it. We look forward to working with them on its implementation.

M(x) President,

**I would now like to make some remarks in my national capacity...**