

**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI BY H.E. MRS. NAZHAT KHAN,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF FIJI TO THE UNITED NATION ORGANISATIONS IN  
GENEVA, AT THE 1<sup>ST</sup> PREPARATORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE 3<sup>RD</sup> WORLD  
CONFERENCE ON DISASTER RISK REDUCTION**  
Geneva, Monday, 14 July 2014

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Co-Chairs,

1. Allow me to congratulate you and the members of your Bureau on your election to guide our work in the process leading up to the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction to be held in 2015. My delegation assures you of our full cooperation and support with a view to achieving a successful outcome.
2. As a small island State, Fiji is highly vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change and other natural disasters. Both phenomena pose significant threats to the livelihood, security and well-being of our people.
3. The negative experiences and adverse impacts of natural disasters have enjoined us in the global effort to address these phenomena. We have become parties to various regional and international instruments geared towards harnessing our collective efforts to tackle both the root causes and impacts of different types of disasters.
4. As a party to the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA), and the Pacific Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management Framework for Action adopted by Pacific Island countries in 2005, Fiji has either achieved or is working towards achieving certain targets in the last cycle. These include:
  - Reviewing our Disaster Risk Management (DRM) arrangement in order to include climate change and other vulnerable groups, such as youth, gender or disability, that are currently lacking in Fiji's existing law and national disaster management plans;
  - Integrating DRM and climate change to allow both issues to be addressed by one agency operating from one physical location. In this regard, a meeting in Fiji to

establish a National Platform for DRM and climate change is scheduled for 25 – 29 August 2014 to harmonise the two programmes and find mutual ground to maximize their processes;

- Increasing the Government’s budgetary allocation for disaster risk reduction to address emergency and response, as well as rehabilitation;
  - Under Fiji’s newly established Green Growth Framework, the benchmark for our Government on environmental, economic and social issues, include climate change and disaster risk as thematic areas placed on equal footings with nine other issues.
  - The offering of post-graduate qualifications in disaster risk management and climate change at two universities in Fiji (USP and FNU). This contributes to the specialization of tertiary students in Fiji and the Pacific region; and
  - The introduction of the comprehensive hazard and risk management (CHARM) process in disaster risk assessment outlined in Fiji’s Green Growth Framework, to compliment environmental impact assessments and vulnerability assessments that are already in place.
5. A milestone achievement in Fiji’s actions on disaster risk mitigation and climate change adaptation was the relocation in 2012 of an entire village community from its traditional coastal location to higher grounds in the northern part of Fiji. Being a co-shared venture between Government and the community, the relocation was necessary to reduce climate impacts that caused coastal erosion and flooding. In reality, more local communities are in the pipeline to go through similar processes of relocation within Fiji.
6. The increasing intensity and frequency of natural disasters, coupled with the ever-increasing cost of rehabilitation, remind us always that we can never be complacent and must remain vigilant in our efforts. Fiji is therefore supportive of this preparatory

process. In addition, like all other Small Island Developing States, Fiji is actively engaging in the preparatory process that will culminate in the Third International Conference on SIDS to be held in the Independent State of Samoa in September this year.

7. In terms of the substantive elements of the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction, much of what we consider ought to be included are outlined in the Outcome document of the 6<sup>th</sup> session of the Pacific Platform for Disaster Risk Management that was held in Fiji early last month (in document number A/Conf.224/PC(I)/9)). In the interest of time, I will not wish to repeat them here.
8. Let me conclude by reaffirming that Fiji is firmly committed to improving our disaster risk management efforts and effectively responding to climate change impacts. It is the only way to ensure the protection of our national sovereignty and assure us of the sustainability of our livelihood and that of our children.

Thank you.