

Fiji Intervention

Honorable Chairperson, distinguished delegates,

I am grateful to be part of the 6th session of the Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives, which I understand is not essentially attended by Ministers. However, Fiji wishes to demonstrate its leadership and commitment towards this very critical process which ultimately will shape our discussions at UNEA.

Chair, let me start my intervention with a famous Fijian proverb, which reads ‘E sega ni vuka na kaka me biu toka na buina’. When translated, it means, the parrot will not fly leaving its tail in its nest. This Fijian proverb is about remembering things that are essential.

Chair, as we convene to address the pressing challenges of our time, we must recognise the urgency and significance of our collective actions in confronting the planetary crises we face today – ambition, commitment, and action must be our guiding principles at the UN Environment Assembly.

In the face of unprecedented biodiversity loss, escalating climate change impacts, and prevalent pollution, it is evident that our ambitions must be elevated to match the scale of these challenges. We need to set ambitious targets at UNEA and strive for transformative change that ensures the well-being of both our planet and its inhabitants. This requires unwavering political will and bold leadership at all levels of governance.

However, ambition alone is not sufficient. We must also demonstrate unwavering commitment to our environmental goals. Our promises and pledges must be backed by concrete actions, implemented with diligence and urgency. It is only through steadfast commitment that we can truly achieve the 1.5 degree target, safeguard biodiversity and address pollution.

Furthermore, as we address the interconnected crises of biodiversity loss, climate change, and pollution, we must confront the issue of fragmented finance. The inadequate and disjointed allocation of resources poses a significant barrier to our collective efforts. This issue is particularly acute in the context of Pacific Small Island Developing States, where the challenges are exacerbated by limited resources and vulnerabilities to environmental and external shocks.

Therefore, it is imperative that we prioritise the defragmentation of finance, ensuring that resources are channelled effectively to support integrated, and collective approaches to addressing these crises. By mobilising finance at scale, streamlining its access and enhancing coordination among stakeholders, we can maximise the impact of our interventions and accelerate progress towards our shared environmental agenda.

The challenges we face demand nothing less than decisive action. We must harness the power of political will, demonstrate unwavering commitment, and take bold and concerted action to address the planetary crises before us. Let us seize this moment at UNEA as an opportunity to galvanize collective efforts and forge a sustainable future for generations to come.

If progress is stalled at the OECPR, it will be a missed opportunity for our collective progress – climate crisis is already happening in our backyards in the Pacific Islands, and it is crucial that progress is made at the OECPR.

Vinaka vakalevu. Thank you