

Human Rights Council – 41st Session

Item 3 General Debate on 1 July 2019

Joint Statement on Youth Employment and Education

In this 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, I have the pleasure of delivering this statement on behalf of 16 Pacific nations: Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

In the Pacific, the proportion of youth is double the global average and youth face higher unemployment rates than older workers. Ensuring that all youth, including young women and girls, reach their potential and have access to sustainable employment is key to the enjoyment of human rights in the region and economic success in the decades ahead.

Women, children and youth are priorities for the implementation of the *Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific 2017-2030*.

In addition, under the *Pacific Youth Development Framework 2014-2023*, we take a coordinated approach to youth-centred development in the Pacific. This includes: greater employment opportunities through increased access to education and training; improved health; governance structures that empower youth in decision-making processes; and stronger youth engagement in environmental action.

A number of Pacific states have also implemented strategies at the national level to combat youth unemployment or prioritise youth development by improving educational outcomes, opening labour markets, forming partnerships with the private sector and NGOs, promoting entrepreneurship, increasing access to funds, and preparing youth for jobs at home and abroad.

We encourage all states to invest in the future and share in our vision to achieve sustainable communities where young people are safe, respected, empowered and resilient.

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