

SOUTH PACIFIC FORUM COMMUNIQUE.

The fifteenth South Pacific Forum was in Funafuti, Tuvalu from 27-28 August 1984. The meeting was attended by Heads of Government from Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia (as an observer), Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and Western Samoa. Solomon Islands was represented by the Minister for National Planning and Development and Tonga by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defence. The Prime Minister of Tuvalu, the Rt Honourable Dr Tomasi Puapua, chaired the meeting and the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance assumed the Tuvalu seat. The main issues discussed were:

D colonisation

The Forum reviewed developments since its last meeting in relation to New Caledonia and adopted the following decision: The Forum took note of the progress made since its last meeting in the process of decolonisation of New Caledonia. It expressed its disappointment that the French Government had not been able to respond to the proposal for a Forum mission but asked France to provide Forum countries with information on a continuing basis.

The Forum reaffirmed its support for the transition of New Caledonia to independence in accordance with the wishes of its people and in a manner which guarantees the innate and active rights of the Kanak people and the rights, interests and aspirations of all its inhabitants. It urged the French Government and all political and community groups, including the Independence Front, to keep talking to ensure that this transition to an independent multi-racial New Caledonia is achieved speedily and peacefully within a shorter time scale than present envisaged.

It was the Forum's view that the process of decolonisation would be advanced by a public statement by the French Government that independence was the desirable, logical and acknowledged outcome of the Act of Self-determination currently planned for 1989, and that this referendum should be brought forward by agreement between all the parties involved.

The Forum believed that France should transfer additional political and administrative powers to the territory to ensure that it is adequately prepared for independence and take the practical steps necessary to guarantee the full and active participation of the Melanesian community in the territory's educational, vocational and administrative institutions.

The Forum decided that the question of seeking re-inscription of New Caledonia on the United Nations list of non-self-governing territories should be kept under continuing review. It was further agreed that Forum members might, individually, bring their concern with the situation in New Caledonia to the attention of the United Nations. In this context, a number of Forum leaders indicated that their missions in New York would circulate this communique and that their general debate statements would make appropriate mention of New Caledonia.

Forum leaders agreed that a five member group, at ministerial level, should discuss these issues with the Independence Front and with the French authorities to ensure Forum views are fully understood.

Regional nuclear matters

Following the decision of the previous meeting, the Forum gave further consideration to the concept of a nuclear free zone in the region, and in particular a draft set of principles regarding its establishment submitted by Australia. It also had before it a proposal from Nauru regarding action to amend the London Dumping Convention to prohibit totally the dumping of nuclear waste.

The Forum noted the importance of the initiative for a nuclear free zone in the region in the context of the disappointing lack of progress in international disarmament negotiations. It was felt that efforts should be intensified to encourage the conclusion of a comprehensive test ban treaty which would outlaw all forms of nuclear testing by all states in all environments. The Forum also noted that 1985 was a year of review of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Progress towards a nuclear free zone in the region could make a useful contribution to maintaining the momentum of international debate on disarmament and arms control.

Forum members also considered the report of the joint New Zealand, Australian and Papua New Guinea scientific mission that visited the French nuclear testing site on Moruroa Atoll in October 1983 at the invitation of the French Government.* They noted that, while the findings of the mission allayed to some degree the concern that had been expressed about the short-term effects of the French nuclear tests, they provided no reassurance about long-term consequences nor in any sense diminished Forum opposition to testing in any environment. They accordingly reiterated their strong opposition to continued nuclear testing in the South Pacific region by France or any other country.

After discussion of the various interrelated aspects of nuclear activity in the region, the Forum agreed on the desirability of establishing a nuclear free zone in the region at the earliest possible opportunity in accordance with the principles set out in the Australian working papers. These principles were:

- that South Pacific countries should be free to live in peace and independence and to run their own affairs in accordance with the wishes and traditions of their people;
- South Pacific, countries should enjoy peaceful social and economic development free from the threat of environmental pollution;
- South Pacific countries acknowledge existing international treaties, organisations and regional arrangements, such as the Charter of the United Nations, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Law of the

Sea Convention, which contribute to their objectives;

- there should be no use, testing or stationing of nuclear explosive devices in the South Pacific;
- no South Pacific country would develop or manufacture, or receive from others, or acquire or test any nuclear explosive device;
- nuclear activities of South Pacific countries should be in accordance with applicable international principles and treaties, notably the NPT and take into account regional arrangements; and
- that South Pacific countries retain their unqualified sovereign rights to decide for themselves, consistent with their support for these objectives, their security arrangements, and such questions as the access to their ports and airfields by vessels and aircraft of other countries.

Reference was made to the particular importance of the principle of freedom of navigation and overflight and the treaty obligations of Forum members.

A working group of officials was appointed to meet as often as may be required to undertake an examination of the substantive legal and other issues involved in establishing a nuclear free zone in the region with a view to preparing a draft of a treaty for consideration by the Forum meeting in 1985. The working group is to be chaired by Australia and would be convened in consultation with the Director of the South Pacific Bureau for Economic Co-operation (SPEC). All members of the Forum would be entitled to attend.

The Forum agreed that the proposals by Nauru to strengthen the London Dumping Convention would also be examined by the group. The dumping and disposal of nuclear waste in the region was intolerable and unacceptable and Forum Governments were strongly committed to this aspect of the convention and protocols being negotiated under the auspices of the South Pacific Regional Environment Program (SPREP).

The Forum also supported a suggestion that Governments continue to protest individually, as well as collectively, to France over its persistent nuclear testing and to Japan over proposals to dump nuclear waste in the Pacific.

The Forum also welcomed the declaration on French nuclear testing at Moruroa Atoll made by member states of the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (PCSP) on 6 July 1984. They regarded the declaration as a

further expression of the united opposition by countries of the Pacific to French nuclear tests in the South Pacific. The Forum was also of the view that it would be useful for SPEC and the PCSP secretariat (representing Chile, Columbia, Ecuador and Peru) to maintain contact on the question of French nuclear testing.

Single regional organisation

The Forum received an interim report from the committee of Foreign Ministers established by the fourteenth Forum to examine the implications of establishing a Single Regional Organisation (SRO).

The committee had not been able to complete its consultations with metropolitan countries and their Pacific territories or completely assess all the implications of an SRO. A number of members of the Forum expressed the view that while an SRO may be a desirable goal in principle in the longer-term, the benefits received from the existing regional institutional arrangements should be safeguarded. The consensus reached was that the committee should complete its work and report back so that the matter could then be properly considered.

Regional co-operation as it affects smaller Forum members

The Forum discussed a proposal from the Government of Kiribati that special attention be accorded the problems faced by smaller Forum members. The Forum recognised the seriousness of the issue raised and the need to identify practical solutions to problems in the areas of transportation, trade, food and water supply, communications and energy among others. The Forum decided to set up a committee of officials to examine the problems, recommend solutions and report to the sixteenth Forum. The Governments of Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Tuvalu and Western Samoa would be represented on the committee.

Regional trade

The Forum received the report of the third meeting of the regional committee on trade, held in Kiribati in July 1984. It noted that while total trade under the South Pacific Regional Trade and Economic Co-operation Agreement (SPARTECA) had increased during its three years of operation, exports from most of the larger island countries had grown while exports from some small island countries had actually decreased.

The Forum noted the relevance of this situation to its decision on the question of regional co-operation as it affects smaller Forum members. It also welcomed moves initiated by the regional committee on trade with regard to modifying the rules of origin and increasing Forum island countries apparel exports to Australia. The Forum noted the relevance of discussions at the political level to solving difficult trade problems which might arise between its members.

The Forum agreed in principle to promoting duty free and unrestricted access for handcrafts traded between Forum island countries, to be implemented on a bilateral basis.

Pacific Forum Line

The Forum received a progress report on the Pacific Forum Line and noted with satisfaction the continuing improvement in its trading and financial situation. The Forum reaffirmed its strong support for the regionally-owned shipping line as a key vehicle for providing regular reliable and economic shipping services to its shareholders. Appreciation was expressed for the services rendered by the retiring Chairman of the Line, Mr H.L. Julian.

Energy

The Forum received a report representing in broad terms potential options for improvement in the terms of petroleum pricing and supply arrangements to Pacific island countries. It agreed that exploration of the options be continued and the results presented for consideration at its next meeting.

Trade embargoes in fisheries products

The Forum noted a paper presented by Solomon Islands regarding events arising from the arrest of the Purse Seiner, *Jeanette Diana* which was fishing illegally in Solomon Islands Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). The Forum expressed its continuing concern at the failure of the United States to recognise the applicability of 200 mile EEZ to tuna and at the fact that that country endeavoured to enforce its position on this issue through embargo legislation.

The Forum considered that the satisfactory long-term solution to this problem lay in the conclusion of a multilateral agreement with the United States, and called for a prompt and successful outcome to negotiation to that end scheduled to begin in Suva next month.

Law of the Sea Convention

The Forum reaffirmed the importance of the Law of the Sea Convention for the orderly and rational use of the world's oceans and their resources and its significance to the countries of the South Pacific. Note was taken of the fact that the convention remains open for signature until 9 December 1984. The Forum urged all countries to sign the Convention and take active steps towards its ratification.

Reports

The Forum accepted the reports of the pre-Forum SPEC committee, the Director of SPEC's Annual Report for 1983-84, the report of the Director of the Forum Fisheries Agency and the report of the Vice-Chancellor of the University of the South Pacific.

Federated States of Micronesia

The President of the Federated States of Micronesia reported to the Forum on progress in negotiations with the United States on a compact of free association. Negotiations, which had extended over fourteen years had been pursued in a spirit of co-operation. Following the establishment of a compact, which is expected to take place early next year, his country would enjoy sovereignty over its foreign policy, internal matters and rights over its 200-mile Economic Zone. The President observed that the principles of the proposed nuclear free zone concept were consistent with the compact.

Next Forum session

The sixteenth Forum will be hosted by the Government of the Cook Islands on 4-6 August 1985.

ANZUS COMMUNIQUE

The 33rd meeting of the ANZUS Council took place in Wellington on 16 and 17 July 1984. The United States Secretary of State, George Schultz, the Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Bill Hayden, and Minister for Defence, Gordon Scholes, and New Zealand's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Warren Cooper, and Minister of Defence, David Thomson, represented their respective Governments.

During their visit the leaders of the United States and Australian delegations called on the Prime Minister, Rt Hon. Sir Robert Muldoon, and Mr David Lange, MP, Prime Minister-elect.

Council members reaffirmed their commitment to the maintenance of peace, stability, and democratic freedoms. They expressed their belief that the ANZUS partnership, based as it is on common traditions and shared interests, contributes to this. They welcomed the increased exchanges that had taken place on political, economic, security and defence issues and agreed that defence co-operation, including combined exercises, visits and logistic support arrangements, played an essential part in promoting mutual security. Access by allied aircraft and ships to the airfields and ports of the ANZUS members was reaffirmed as essential to the continuing effectiveness of the alliance.

Council members reviewed a broad range of global issues and regional developments of concern to the alliance. These included the persistent Soviet arms build up in the Pacific region as well as in Europe; the need for early resumption of arms control negotiations; the continuing repression and occupation by Soviet forces in Afghanistan; and Vietnam's occupation of Kampuchea.

The Council members gave special attention to arms control and disarmament issues. They recognised that arms control agreements which produced balanced, effective and verifiable reductions in armaments would assist in reducing international tensions and in strengthening international security. They agreed that the early conclusion of such agreements was of the highest importance. Among arms control measures, a substantial reduction of nuclear weaponry to balanced, more stable levels was of the greatest urgency. Council members expressed concern at the Soviet Union's refusal to resume the START and INF talks and called for the resumption of those negotiations without delay.

They endorsed efforts by several countries, including the United States and Australia, to establish a political dialogue with the Soviet Union and to make progress on arms control. The New Zealand and Australian Council members welcomed the readiness of the United States to resume negotiations at any time and without preconditions on reducing nuclear weapons and its agreement to discuss effective and verifiable limits on anti-satellite weapons with the Soviet Union.

The Council members reaffirmed their strong commitment to preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and agreed to intensify their efforts to strengthen the international non-proliferation regime through multilateral and bilateral measures. They noted that the Third Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is to take place in 1985. Progress in fulfilling all the Treaty commitments, including Article VI which commits parties to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date, is important to the international non-proliferation regime and the review conference.

In this context they reaffirmed the commitment of their Governments to work towards the goal of a comprehensive and fully verifiable nuclear test ban treaty. They expressed satisfaction that the Western group of countries in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva had agreed on a draft mandate for the nuclear test ban ad hoc committee. They urged the Conference to move promptly to re-establish the ad hoc committee under this mandate.

The Australian and United States members affirmed the important contribution of the joint Australian-United States defence facilities to arms control verification, effective deterrence, mutual security and maintenance of the stability of the strategic balance.

The Australian and New Zealand Council members indicated that they shared fully the concerns of other countries of the South Pacific region on nuclear issues, including French nuclear testing. They gave an account of the progress made in the discussions among members of the South Pacific Forum on a South Pacific nuclear free zone. The ANZUS partners also noted that the proposed South Pacific nuclear free zone would be discussed further at the 1984 meeting of the South Pacific Forum in Tuvalu.

The Council members agreed that a convention to prohibit the development, production, stockpiling, transfer and use of chemical weapons, with adequate provisions for compliance and verification, would be an important disarmament measure. The use of chemical weapons in the Iran-Iraq war and evidence of their use elsewhere reinforced the need for urgent conclusion of a convention to ban chemical weapons. The Australian and New Zealand Council members welcomed the recent initiative taken by the United States Government in the Conference on Disarmament.

They noted the contribution to world peace and security made by the Antarctic Treaty which is the basis of international co-operation in Antarctica and bans all military activities and nuclear weapons there. They expressed their continued commitment to the Antarctic Treaty system.

The Council members agreed that the political and strategic outlook would be greatly influenced by the economic environment and that it was crucial to sustain the economic recovery and to spread its benefits more widely. Equally the debt problem which many countries were facing needed to be managed effectively. The threat to the world trading system posed by the spread of protectionist measures also needed to be resisted. This was particularly so in the field of agricultural trade which suffered from long-standing protectionist measures and the emergence of export subsidization on a scale which threatened markets for many countries.

Council members welcomed the emphasis placed by the major industrialised countries at their recent summit meeting in London on the importance of global economic interdependence and expressed the hope that the recognition of this interdependence could form the basis for future action. The importance of interdependence was nowhere more evident than in relation to the debt problem which required a careful and balanced approach. Economic adjustment in the debtor countries was seen as an essential condition for solving debt problems. At the same time a co-operative approach was required from the industrialised countries. Assistance to the debtor countries had to be provided under conditions that recognised the political and social difficulties faced by these countries.

The increasingly important and central role in the management of debt problems played by the International Monetary Fund was welcomed. Now that some of the most heavily indebted countries were undertaking the first, necessary domestic adjustments, international attention was focussing increasingly on longer-term changes that may be required to strengthen the open trade and payments system, with special attention being paid to the closely linked problems of debt and trade. The work being conducted on these issues by a variety of groups reflected an encouraging convergence of views. Council members considered that this had opened the way for discussion and early agreement on practical approaches to these issues.

The Council members reviewed developments in the South Pacific. They welcomed the fact that the area remained one of peace and co-operation and that it was firmly attached to democratic systems and traditional values. Change was being accommodated and new opportunities were being taken up. The independent and self-governing countries of the region were strengthening relationships with one another and with organisations and countries outside the region that had constructive contributions to make.

Council members welcomed progress towards self-government in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. They wanted to see ratification of the compact of free association and termination of the trusteeship concluded without delay and looked forward to the Micronesian states expanding their links with countries and organisations in the Pacific region.

Council members agreed that significant progress has been made in constitutional evolution in New Caledonia, but noted there was a need for continued participation of all parties in the constitutional process. Peaceful resolution of the situation in that territory was of great concern to all countries in the area and Council members noted that it was important for France to maintain and expand its dialogue with South Pacific Forum members on this issue.

The Council members agreed on the importance of effective regional institutions in the area. They noted the major political role of the South Pacific Forum in which Heads of Government of island nations and Australia and New Zealand were able to work toward shared approaches on current issues. Maritime matters, such as fisheries co-operation and development, and possible nuclear waste dumping were of major concern to countries of the region. Council members commended the valuable work being undertaken in these fields by the Forum Fisheries Agency and the South Pacific regional environmental program. Members agreed they would continue supporting and encouraging these regional co-operative endeavours through financial contributions or other means.

The Australian and New Zealand Council members underlined the significance of the 1982 Convention on the Law of the Sea for the countries of the Pacific region and stressed the importance of wide adherence to it.

Recognising that political stability and co-operation are underpinned by economic security, Council members expressed admiration for the resilience and good management of island nations which had, overall, enabled island nations to cope with the effects of global economic recession and natural disasters. They recognised, nevertheless, that continued bilateral and regional aid, and encouragement of trade and investment were essential to ensure the well-being of the people of the area, and that such help would be mutually beneficial.

Council members reaffirmed their desire to work with the governments of the Pacific Island countries in the interests of the stability and security of the region. Australia and New Zealand intend to maintain and develop their bilateral defence co-operation programs with, and assistance to, island governments in fields such as maritime surveillance, civil action, emergency and disaster relief and training. The United States, for its part, will continue to provide assistance in these areas.

The Australian and New Zealand members provided details of recent national initiatives designed to reinforce the maintenance of regional security and stability. The New Zealand member explained that the New Zealand Defence Review completed in 1983 placed greater emphasis on the role of the New Zealand Armed Services to provide assistance if requested to South Pacific countries. The Australian member informed the council that the Australian Government's offer to develop a Pacific patrol boat to meet the island countries' expressed maritime surveillance needs had been accepted by several South Pacific countries.

Council members emphasised their continuing support for the Association of South East Asian Nations and welcomed the contribution ASEAN makes towards the stability and economic progress of the region. The council members also noted the increasing significance of their own economic and political links with the ASEAN members.

Council members expressed full support for the principles adopted by ASEAN in the search for a lasting settlement in Kampuchea. They reaffirmed their conviction that the conflict in Kampuchea should be settled by peaceful means. They agreed that a negotiated settlement should be based on respect for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Kampuchea, should take into account the desirability of national reconciliation and should recognise the legitimate security interest of all parties concerned. To this end, they again urged the early withdrawal of Vietnamese troops under conditions that would allow for a peaceful transition and a comprehensive settlement which would enable the Khmer people freely to decide their own future. Members welcomed the continuing humanitarian assistance offered by the international community to the Khmer people.

Council members' trade within the Asian-Pacific region is now larger than with any other group of countries. This reflected not only the continuing strong growth in their trade with North East Asia, but also an increasingly dynamic element in economic relations with the ASEAN countries. They agreed that the growing strength of trade and investment ties with ASEAN reinforced the importance of political relationships.

Recent visits by President Reagan and Prime Minister Hawke to China were discussed. The Council members agreed that China's continued commitment to modernisation and to constructive relations with others in the region was a positive development which should be encouraged.

The Council members welcomed the steps taken by Japan to move towards liberalising access to its market and expressed the hope that this process would be maintained and accelerated to the benefit of international trade as a whole. The Council members noted the strengthening of Japan's ties with the nations of South East Asia and the South Pacific, including its contribution in the field of development assistance. They also noted Japan's commitment to an enhanced capability for self defence purposes.

Council members reaffirmed their commitment to the sovereignty and independence of the Republic of Korea. They called upon the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to renounce its policies of hostility towards the Republic of Korea, as evidenced by last year's bombing in Rangoon, and to accept proposals aimed at reducing tensions on the peninsula through the implementation of practical confidence-building measures. The Council members reaffirmed their view that direct negotiations between the two Koreas provides the only realistic basis for a durable reconciliation. Noting that a reduction of tensions would considerably enhance regional security, they called upon the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to enter into negotiations with the Republic of Korea as a genuinely equal participant.

Council members reaffirmed their opposition to the continued Soviet occupation of Afghanistan and condemned the recent Soviet offensive which had caused considerable suffering and loss of life among the Afghan people. Council members called on the Soviet Union to withdraw its forces in accordance with successive United Nations resolutions.

Council members exchanged views on developments in the Indian Ocean region and noted the strategic significance of the region. The Australian Council member informed the meeting that the Australian Government had adopted guidelines for a comprehensive and integrated approach to Indian Ocean issues which included support for an Indian Ocean zone of peace.

The Council members expressed their concern at the serious loss of life and the risk to peace and security in the Gulf resulting from continuation of the war between Iran and Iraq. They deplored all attacks on shipping in the areas and called on both countries to respect the right of free navigation for all non-belligerent shipping. They expressed their support for the security and territorial integrity of all states in the area, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. The council members also urged Iran and Iraq to act with restraint and expressed the hope that the two countries would seek ways of bringing the conflict to an end and restoring peace to this area.

It was agreed that the next Council meeting would take place in Canberra in 1985 at a date to be decided.

POSTPONEMENT OF ANZUS COUNCIL MEETING *

As host of the ANZUS Council due to meet in Australia in July the Government has decided that it is necessary at this point to announce the postponement of the meeting.

The serious difficulties between the United States and New Zealand have arisen following the New Zealand Government's decision on United States naval vessels.

In the light of the New Zealand decision, the United States response to that decision, and other recent developments including the curtailing of intelligence exchanges between the United States and New Zealand, it is clear that the holding of a regular ANZUS Council Meeting at the present time would be impracticable.

These developments need to be kept in perspective. As I said at the White House on 7 February, an important aspect of the ANZUS relationship has become a matter of close concern. But the ANZUS Treaty remains. It needs to be emphasised that this point is not in dispute between any of the ANZUS partners.

The pre-eminent responsibility of the Government is to ensure the protection of Australia's essential national security interests, and it will now do this through bilateral channels with both partners while the present circumstances prevail.

In the case of the United States, the Australian Government has been reassured by views expressed to it publicly and privately by President Reagan and other senior representatives of the Administration, that the Australian/United States Alliance under ANZUS remains as strong as ever.

In the case of New Zealand, we propose to pursue our important defence relationship on a bilateral basis reflecting both our traditions and the common need to respond to regional security requirements.

Further announcements on specific arrangements in regard to both relationships will be made shortly.

* (This is a text of a statement dated 4 March 1985 by the Prime Minister of Australia, the Hon. R.L. Hawke).