

**STATEMENT BY PACIFIC COUNTRIES AT THE
30TH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES
TO THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION (CWC)**

Chairperson, Director-General, Honourable Ministers, Excellencies

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of States Parties from the Pacific region, namely Australia, Fiji, The Republic of the Marshall Islands, New Zealand, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Vanuatu.

Chairperson,

We live in a world of escalating conflict, scarcity, and crisis, where multilateralism faces unprecedented pressure. Our region navigates a challenging geopolitical and geostrategic landscape, while climate change remains the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security, and wellbeing of peoples of the Pacific. Our countries are joined in their collective commitment for our shared vision and values under the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent for a resilient Pacific Region of peace, harmony, security, social inclusion and prosperity.

We reaffirm the importance of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) to our shared objective of eliminating chemical weapons and chemical threats that undermine the peace in our region. We remain committed to supporting the work of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to ensure the full and effective implementation of the CWC and to uphold its mission to seek a peaceful and diplomatic resolution towards the complete, verifiable, and irreversible dismantlement of all chemical weapons.

The many islands and countries of our Blue Pacific Continent are diverse, with their own unique histories, cultures, and perspectives. However, there is much which unites us – including values of justice, fairness, and shared prosperity. Underpinning this unity is a shared belief in the value of the multilateral system enshrined in the UN Charter and its principles, our regional architecture including the Pacific Islands Forum, and the global disarmament and non-proliferation regimes – such as the CWC – that promote international peace and security.

The Pacific continues to face longstanding legacies of war, including Unexploded Ordnance (UXOs), degraded munitions, and chemical remnants that persist across our land and ocean. We welcome sustained international attention and technical support to address these issues.

Given the Pacific's vast maritime space, climate vulnerabilities and additional challenges to addressing chemical threats, we welcome the OPCW's support through international cooperation, capacity building, technical training and CWC implementation support to further enhance our national implementation. Despite our challenges, we would like to underscore the achievements of our Pacific Island countries in nationally implementing the CWC. Samoa and the Republic of the Marshall Islands reported on the adoption of comprehensive implementing legislation this year, indicating the commitment to operationalising the Chemical Weapons Convention.

We recognise the recent 'Regional Training Course on Preventing Illicit Transfers of Chemicals in the Pacific Region' hosted in Brisbane, Australia, in September of this year, which built on the outcomes of the Regional Customs Conference held in Vanuatu in September 2024. We also support the OPCW's work to assist countries in our region to secure chemicals in the face of climate-induced vulnerabilities.

Chairperson,

Our Blue Pacific relies on the rules-based system that has promoted peace among our global family for over half a century. Pacific countries, therefore, speak in defence of Ukraine's territorial sovereignty and integrity in light of Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine. We reaffirm the importance of the rules-based system and the resolution of international disputes by peaceful means and respect for national sovereignty.

We are deeply concerned by the findings of the OPCW's three Technical Assistance Visit reports, which confirmed the presence of Riot Control Agents (RCAs) on the frontlines in Ukraine. We recall that Article I of the CWC strictly prohibits the use of RCAs as a method of warfare, and we call on Russia to cooperate in good faith with the Technical Secretariat and comply with its obligations under the CWC.

We also reiterate our support for the OPCW's ongoing efforts to monitor any allegations of chemical weapons use and take appropriate action wherever such allegations may arise. In this context, we welcome the cooperation between the interim Syrian authorities and the OPCW to enable the destruction of the remnants of the former Syrian authorities' abhorrent chemical weapons programme. We also commend the ongoing work of the OPCW's Syria missions which, through the newly established Office of Special Missions (OSM), will continue to deliver impartial, thorough and effective work to the benefit of all.

Chairperson,

The Pacific is an Ocean of Peace. As custodians, Pacific countries are committed to upholding the CWC to continue protecting our home, ocean, lands, and common heritage from the scourge of chemical weapons. Consistent with our shared vision under the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, Pacific countries will continue to work with States Parties and the global community to realise the ultimate elimination of all chemical weapons and the threat that chemical warfare poses to humanity.

I end by congratulating and thanking the Director General Fernando Arias for his leadership and especially for visiting our region during his tenure. The Pacific wishes you all the best and we welcome the appointment of the new Director General and look forward to welcoming her first visit to our region.

Thank you, Chairperson.