



**PACIFIC SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES**  
**United Nations Member States**

Permanent Mission of the Republic of Nauru to the United Nations  
800 Second Avenue, Suite 400A, New York, N.Y. 10017

Phone: 212-937-0074  
Fax: 212-937-0079  
E-mail: [nauru@un.int](mailto:nauru@un.int)

Statement by Mr. Jeem Lippwe  
Deputy Permanent Representative  
Permanent Mission of the Federated States of Micronesia to the United Nations

on behalf of the  
Pacific Small Island Developing States

Eighteenth Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development

Thematic Discussion on Transport

4 May 2010

New York

Check against delivery

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Pacific Small Island Developing States represented at the United Nations, namely, Fiji, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, and my own country, Federated States of Micronesia.

The theme of transport serves to highlight two of the critical vulnerabilities of the Pacific SIDS. First, we are isolated. Our distance from major markets, coupled with the high cost of fuel is a significant challenge to economic development. Fuel costs on SIDS is especially high.

Secondly, we are small, and cannot take advantage of economies of scale in relation to modern container and bulk ships. To provide an example, early this year, the cost of a standard 20-foot container from Nagoya, Japan, to Port Villa, Vanuatu was over four times the cost to Brisbane, Australia, which is a similar geographical distance. Air transport costs are similarly high because of the long distances and low volumes.

Transport is not only essential to trade and economic growth, it is of course essential for provision of basic goods and services, including access to health care.

In addition to the inherent vulnerabilities of our islands, capacity constraints and lack of sustained finance hinder our progress towards reliable and efficient maritime and air services in our region. To unlock our development potential, we are working towards addressing the hurdles towards improving our transport services. An important area where we seek sustained support from the international community is in developing international standard infrastructure in shipping and aviation facilities and, importantly, the capacity to maintain this.

Finally, one of the most serious challenges to transport in our region is the adverse impacts of climate change. Much of our transport infrastructure, including ports, many airports and coastal roads are all vulnerable to rising sea levels. Based on current pledged emission reductions, we are facing a global temperature rise of approximately 3° C, making investment in our transport infrastructure a poor choice and further entrenching poverty in our region. If the world is serious about its promise to reduce poverty and for all countries to attain the MDGs, then we must respond to the climate crisis on a scale commensurate with the problem - and conclude a legally binding agreement in Cancun at the end of this year that ensures the survival of all small island developing States.

Thank you.