



With breaking stories and
newswire products from

UN NEWS CENTRE



Pacific island nations at UN meeting call on world to fulfil aid commitments



Pacific island nations meeting in Port Vila, Vanuatu

9 February 2010 – Fourteen island developing nations in the Pacific Ocean wrapped up a United Nations-backed meeting today with a call to the global community to honour its commitments to help them weather the fallout from global economic crises and recent natural disasters.

“External assistance, through development aid, debt relief and foreign investment, is needed to support the Pacific on its path to equitable economic growth,” UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (**ESCAP**) Executive Secretary Noeleen Heyzer told the high-level forum in Port Vila, Vanuatu.

“Pacific island economies are vulnerable for a number of reasons. They are isolated, small in size, lacking in resources, subject to a high frequency of natural disasters and vulnerable to rising sea levels,” she said, noting that global economic crises and recent natural disasters had affected the islands’ halting recovery from the earlier food and fuel crises.

“In order to move forward, we must first understand the social, economic and environmental impacts these new risks and vulnerabilities have had on the region. With this knowledge we can then develop appropriate strategies for recovery and long-term plans for sustainable development.”

Strategies adopted at the two-day meeting, organized by ESCAP and the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (**DESA**), include a call on the international community to honour their commitments, adoption of green growth policies, strengthening of implementation mechanisms, and adequate budget allocation.

The outcome will be discussed at a three-day Pacific Conference on the Human Face of the Global Economic Crisis beginning in Port Vila tomorrow, when Ms. Heyzer will be joined by UN Development Programme (**UNDP**) Administrator Helen Clark.

Ministers and senior officials from the Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu participated in the meeting.

News Tracker: past stories on this issue

Pacific island nations gather for UN meeting to review development goals