

Welcome remarks of Hon. Parveen Kumar Bala, Minister for Employment, Productivity, Industrial Relations & Youth and Sports, Government of Fiji

Pacific Regional Sports Forum

4th—6th November 2019

University of the South Pacific

Suva, Fiji

Honorable Ministers,

The Vice Chancellor and President of the USP, Professor Pal Ahluwalia,

Representatives of Regional and International Organisations,

USP Management and Staff,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you so much for your warm welcome.

I am delighted to welcome all the delegates who have traveled from near and far for the Pacific Regional Sports Forum.

Your presence here is indicative of the shared commitment to realize the potential of the sports industry as a driver of economic growth.

The Government of Fiji has taken an active role in achieving a regional policy framework on sports development.

With the endorsements from Finance Ministers at FEMM 2018, the inaugural meeting of the Pacific Regional Sports Taskforce was held on 16th & 17th April 2019 at the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat in Suva, Fiji. The Taskforce includes representation from Forum Member Countries, including the Honorable Baklai Temengil and the Honorable Jean Pierre Nirua present here today, UN agencies, CROP agencies and ONOC.

The Pacific Regional Sport Forum will provide the basis for the Pacific SPAPE Action that is being developed by the Taskforce which will meet in December.

Therefore I welcome open dialogue with regional sport movements towards a Pacific Sport and Physical Activity Action Plan, and a regional coordination mechanism to maximize the contribution of sport to health, well-being and inclusive development of our Pacific people.

I also wish to extend our gratitude to all the donors and stakeholders and those who have worked tirelessly to make this forum a successful one.

The Taskforce is co-chaired by UNESCO and the UNESCO Bangkok Office contributed immensely to resourcing this consultation and the Taskforce meeting.

Thank you all and I wish you a successful conference.