

**COUNTRY STATEMENT BY SOLOMON ISLANDS**  
**DELIVERED BY HON. NESTOR GIRO**  
**MINISTER OF FISHERIES, MINISTRY OF FISHERIES**  
**AND MARINE RESOURCES, SOLOMON ISLANDS**  
**REGIONAL FISHERIES MINISTERIAL MEETING,**  
**VIRTUAL PLATFORM**  
**26-27 AUGUST 2020**

Honourable Chair;  
Hon. Prime Minister Henry Puna of the Cook Islands,  
Colleague Ministers;  
FFA Director General Dr Manu and Heads of other CROP  
Agencies;  
PNA CEO, Mr Ludwig Kumoro,  
Distinguished Delegates of SPC Countries and Territories;  
Representatives of our regional fisheries organizations;  
Observers;  
Invited Guests;  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

A very good morning to you all.

Hon. Chairman, let me join other colleague Ministers to thank you Chair for chairing and leading us in our deliberations over the next two days, especially in these COVID-19 uncertain times.

Hon Chair, I also wish to take this opportunity to thank our CROP agencies, namely, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, SPC, SPREP, FFA and the PNA for organizing this important meeting.

Hon. Chair, I am happy to note that the discussions today will centre on key strategic issues of importance, including impacts of climate change on the coastal fisheries, impact of COVID-10 on the coastal fisheries, progress of country performance as detailed in the coastal fisheries Report Card and addressing growing threats of marine pollution. These issues coupled with the current global

pandemic climate we are in, make the issues more critical and urgent and therefore demands greater focus from us to find suitable solutions to address these issues.

Solomon Islands like many of us, understands the importance of coastal fisheries as a platform for food and nutritional security for our people. For us, more than 80% of our population depends on coastal fisheries for daily protein and nutritional needs.

Honourable Chair, the key issues we will discuss today have direct bearing on the management of our coastal fisheries. The challenge for us to enable coastal fisheries to contribute effectively to the wellbeing of our people must take precedence. In this regard, Mr Chair, I wish to associate Solomon Islands with the positive decisions we will reach today to ensure our coastal fisheries, continue to be sustainable and be able to contribute to food and nutritional security and wellbeing of our people into the future.

With these few remarks I wish our deliberations every success, Hon. Chair.

Thank you.