

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Erlan Idrissov
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan
at the Third Pacific Islands Development Forum Leaders' Summit
on the theme "Building Climate Resilient Green Economies"
(2-4 September 2015, Suva, Fiji)**

Your Excellency Honorable President Ratu Epeli Nailatikau,

Your Excellency Prime Minister Josaia Voreqe Bainimarama,

Your Excellency Foreign Minister Ratu Inoke Kubuabola,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Bula vinaka and my warm greetings to you all!

It is my great pleasure and honour to be with you today at this important summit.

I want to congratulate the Government and the people of Fiji – and all the member countries – on the launch and success of the Pacific Islands Development Forum.

In a short period of time, the Forum and these Summits have become an increasingly important platform for dialogue and for developing practical actions.

It has also helped focus international attention on the challenges facing the Pacific region and small island nations in general – something in which Fiji has played such a leading role.

Your Excellencies,

I could understand why there might be some surprise that the Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan is speaking at this summit of Pacific Island nations.

After all, Kazakhstan is the biggest landlocked country in the world – and the ninth largest overall – with a climate no one would describe as tropical.

But the truth is that these clear differences mask shared challenges and common goals.

Take, for example, climate change which poses such a terrible threat to island nations.

Kazakhstan, of course, does not risk being flooded by rising sea-levels.

But climate change also poses a huge risk to the quality of life of our citizens and our hopes for the future.

Just over a month ago, for example, unusually high temperatures led to glaciers melting, causing serious flooding in Almaty, our second city.

At the same time, many areas of our country face increased pressure on already scarce water resources because of rising temperatures and more extreme droughts.

It is why the overall theme of this week's summit – Building Climate Resilient Green Economies – is so important not just to Forum member states but all countries, whatever our size or location.

Without determined and coordinated action at a national, regional and, above all, global level to tackle climate change and build sustainable economies, all our futures are under threat.

This requires a new, ambitious and universal agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

It must be effective, durable and comprehensive to ensure carbon emissions are reduced.

While some progress has been made, much more remains to be done to allow agreement in Paris at the end of the year.

This includes global acceptance of our obligations to Small Island developing States.

Your countries face unique challenges through your size, comparative remoteness from the major economies and limited natural resources. And we understand those challenges pretty well. For while we are landlocked, you are sea-locked, in a sense, so the challenges we all face of reaching markets for our products or importing goods we need have different roots in geography yet are similar.

You are also, of course, as I have said, uniquely exposed to the threat from climate change and global environmental challenges.

It is for this reason that UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon rightly told the world that your future is “our collective responsibility.”

In order to achieve a meaningful agreement in Paris in December, renewed focus must be given to five areas: cutting emissions; mobilizing money and markets; pricing carbon; strengthening resilience; and mobilizing new coalitions.

We must see climate action within the wider context of efforts to eradicate extreme poverty and promote sustainable development.

All countries must take domestic action consistent with the global objective to prevent our planet from warming by no more than 2 degrees Celsius.

The new agreement should balance support for mitigation and adaptation, as well as address loss and damage.

Mobilizing sufficient public and private funds for low carbon, climate resilient growth is essential for success.

All countries must work together to harness public and private finance to meet the \$100 billion dollar goal per annum by 2020.

We believe that putting a price on carbon will encourage markets to invest in climate solutions.

Coalitions with participation of governments, business and civil society are needed to tackle climate change challenges.

Your Excellencies,

This Summit – and Fiji’s leadership – will be an important voice in demanding the remaining barriers to agreement are overcome.

Global action will only succeed, of course, if individual countries take the actions needed to achieve the targets on limiting emissions and promoting sustainable development.

This includes countries like Kazakhstan which are fortunate to be rich in gas and oil reserves.

These reserves explain why, at the moment, non-carbon sources provide less than one per cent of our energy.

But we have committed ourselves to increase this to 30 per cent 2030 and 50 per cent by 2050 on our way to meeting our obligations to reduce emissions and achieve our ambitions of joining the greenest economies of the world.

As well as greening our own economy, it is absolutely vital that countries play their role in supporting other countries to grow in a sustainable way.

This is each our responsibility as good global citizens and our obligation to future generations.

It is to help in this essential mission that Kazakhstan has launched the Green Bridge Partnership Programme, supported already by 14 European and Asian countries, to remove the barriers hindering sustainable growth.

We hope Pacific Island states will join the initiative.

We have already agreed, through the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific, to providing funding for a number of small island nations in the Pacific basin.

The aim of the project – which centres on the development of biogas – is to strengthen regional efforts on sustainable energy, waste management, sanitation as well as boosting jobs and incomes.

As some of you may remember, last year we hosted a side-event during the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States in Samoa, where we addressed future energy issues.

Today, I can announce we are building on this initiative by launching – again through ESCAP – a project to promote the institutional development and implementation of green technologies for state agencies.

Distinguished delegates,

We hope as well that EXPO 2017 in Astana – which has the theme of “Future Energy” – will be an important driver in encouraging the spread of green technologies.

It is the first time such an international event will place in one of the former countries of the Soviet Union and in Central Asia.

EXPO 2017 will provide an unprecedented chance to showcase and share the latest developments and knowledge in energy saving and alternative solutions.

I would like to invite all governments present here today to participate in EXPO 2017 in Astana.

In order to help developing states to take part in EXPO, we are putting in place a special programme to provide financial and technical assistance.

Your excellencies,

Along with water and food security, energy are also high on our agenda as we move forward in our bid for a UN Security Council seat for 2017-18.

No country from Central Asia – an increasingly important region – has sat on the Security Council.

As active and committed members of the international community with a strong record of campaigning for peace, disarmament and dialogue, we believe we can make a valuable contribution to the work of the United Nations.

I hope that if you share our goals and our belief in the critical importance of the UN for our world, you will support our candidacy.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Thank you for listening to me and for the welcome I have received today.

Let me finish by wishing you all success and fruitful work at the Summit, as well as prosperity to people of the Pacific region.

Thank you for your attention. Vinaka Vakalevu.