



## UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

### PRESS RELEASE

#### **Three-day Pacific workshop on SIDS and LDCs participation in Human Rights Council concludes with adoption of "Nadi Declaration Towards 2022"**

GENEVA/NADI (21 November 2019) -Participants at a first of its kind meeting in the Pacific region have concluded a three-day workshop in the Nadi after having adopted the "[Nadi Declaration Towards 2022](#)" aimed at enhancing participation of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in the UN Human Rights Council.

More than 30 delegates from across the Pacific region gathered in Nadi from 19 to 21 November 2019 to exchange information and best practices to further the capacity of SIDS to effectively participate in Geneva-based Council meetings. Participating in the unique gathering, supported by the [LDCs/SIDS Trust Fund](#), was Ambassador [Coly Seck](#) of Senegal, President of the Human Rights Council, marking the first time the President of the Geneva-based rights body carried out an official visit to the region.

The Nadi Declaration sets out a series of recommendations and priorities looking towards 2022 when the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights will produce a report outlining the activities of the Trust Fund. Among the priorities agreed on are concerted efforts to improve the function of the Trust Fund, which has been operational since 2014, and ensuring relevant topics to the Pacific SIDS were discussed at the Council.

Taking place against the backdrop of the election of a second Pacific small island State to the Human Rights Council - the Republic of Marshall Islands -, the [workshop](#) also encouraged further efforts to develop the capacities of SIDS and LDCs without permanent representation in Geneva, and to increase their engagement and cooperation with the Council.

Ambassador Seck, the first President of the global human rights body from an LDC, stressed, "All voices from all the continents should be heard at the Human Rights Council in order to effectively confront the many emerging and pressing human rights challenges that the international community is facing amidst an interconnected globalized world. No one should be left behind", he stressed.

The Nadi Declaration recognizes the Pacific Workshop is the second of a series of four of such gatherings to be organized before 2022, when the Trust Fund will be celebrating its 10th anniversary. In this vein, meeting participants requested the convening of a universal session of the Human Rights Council on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the Trust Fund in March 2022.

The document also recalls the “milestone” reached in March 2018 when all 12 Pacific region SIDS attended the 37<sup>th</sup> regular session of the Human Rights Council.

Addressing the opening of the three-day event, Ambassador Nazhat Shameen Khan, Permanent Representative of Fiji in Geneva who is currently serving as one of the four Vice Presidents of the Human Rights Council, stated: “This workshop served to enlighten us on how we can improve our engagement with the Human Rights Council through the LDCs/SIDS Trust Fund. It also enlightened us on the achievements, challenges and lessons learned in ascertaining how Small Island States and Least Developed Countries may access the Trust Fund to facilitate closer and more effective engagement with the Human Rights Council.”

## **Background**

The workshop was organized pursuant to Human Rights Council [resolution 34/40](#) of 6 April 2017. This resolution, the second most sponsored resolution since the establishment of the Human Rights Council, attracted the support of 120 countries including all 12 member States of the Pacific SIDS.

That resolution encouraged the Trust Fund to hold a series of workshops prior to its tenth anniversary in March 2022, in the three geographical regions that the Trust Fund supports, namely Africa, Asia, the Pacific and the Caribbean regions. The objectives of the workshops include: reflecting on its achievements; identifying where further improvements might be made; and assessing the value of its activities in fulfilling its training and capacity-building in support of the engagement of LDCs and SIDS in the work of the Council and its mechanisms.”

**ENDS**