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HUMAN RIGHTS  
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER  
Pacific Regional Office

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## Pacific leaders commit to championing children’s rights and give children the best World Children’s Day gift

### United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child Celebrates Positive Outcomes in the Pacific

**Apia, Samoa - November 24, 2023** - Pacific Island Countries’ representatives have come together to commit to strengthening child rights, following the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child’s successful Follow-Up Visit to the Pacific, supported by UN Human Rights (OHCHR), UNICEF and SPC.

“We need to set things right for children of the future,” said 11-year-old Semisi Boomy loane speaking on day one. “Don’t do it for us, do it for them so that our children can have- as the title said – a clean, happy, healthy and safe environment for them to live in.”

The three-day workshop in Samoa with representatives of 12 Pacific Island Countries, followed three separate country visits to Tuvalu, Cook Islands and Federated States of Micronesia, where members of the CRC committee met with children, governments and civil society to see firsthand how their earlier recommendations were fairing. Government representatives then joined the CRC members and regional and international stakeholders in Samoa to discuss progress and challenges, and to make commitments for the way forward to champion children’s rights in the Pacific.

“The regional meeting of representatives of States was a great platform for experience sharing,” said Chair of the CRC Committee Ms Ann Skelton. “There were discussions about the challenges of changing attitudes, but there were also moments of breakthrough as delegates stepped up to be champions in taking children’s rights forward.”

On World Children’s Day, 20<sup>th</sup> November, the Committee also hosted the Pacific Launch of the [General Comment no. 26 on Children's Rights and the Environment with a Special Focus on Climate Change](#). On this day, the Committee Members were joined by school children to discuss children’s rights and celebrate World Children’s Day as well as the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Ultimately, the follow-up visit concluded with a shared commitment among participants to accelerate efforts in implementing the CRC Convention and to enhance States' actions arising from recommendations of the CRC Committee. The governments of Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu collectively affirmed their dedication to children's rights.

Key highlights from the outcomes document include:

- **Accelerating Implementation:** Commitment to intensify efforts in implementing the CRC Convention and taking action to follow-up on the CRC Committee’s recommendations.

- **Wide Dissemination of Recommendations:** Pledging to translate and widely disseminate the CRC Committee's recommendations to relevant stakeholders, while engaging in consultations for developing actionable national plans.
- **Protection of Children's Rights:** Reaffirming commitments to safeguarding children's rights, addressing issues like corporal punishment, domestic violence, sexual exploitation and child justice.
- **Peer-to-Peer Learning:** Embracing positive engagement and peer-to-peer learning among Pacific Island Countries for better compliance with international standards of children's rights.
- **National Mechanisms:** Committing to establishing and strengthening 'National Mechanisms for Implementation, Reporting, and Follow-up' in accordance with the Pacific Principles.
- **Multi-Stakeholder Engagement:** Creating an enabling environment for multi-stakeholder engagement and for better ownership of children's rights at regional, sub-regional, national, and community levels.
- **International Collaboration:** Actively engaging with international and regional partners for technical assistance and capacity-building for enhanced implementation of the CRC Convention.
- **Climate Action:** Rising to the challenge and committing to make best use of the CRC Committee's **general comment no. 26**, emphasizing children's rights and participation in the context of climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts.
- **Championing Children's Rights:** Reaffirming commitment to international standards for the protection and promotion of all children's rights in all circumstances.

The CRC Committee acknowledges the active engagement and commitment of the Government participants and expresses gratitude to the Pacific Island Countries for their dedication to children's rights. Organizations supporting the visit commit to continuing their support by providing technical assistance and capacity-building for improved engagement with the CRC and enhanced implementation of the Convention and its recommendations.

The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child looks forward to the sustained progress and collaboration in advancing the rights and well-being of children in the Pacific region.

You can access the full outcomes document [here](#).

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#### **About UNICEF:**

UNICEF works in some of the world's toughest places, to reach the world's most disadvantaged children. Across 190 countries and territories, we work for every child, everywhere, to build a better world for everyone. For more information about UNICEF Pacific and its work for children, follow [UNICEF Pacific](#) on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

#### **About UNOHCHR**

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) is the leading United Nations entity on human rights. Established by the UN General Assembly in December 1993 through its resolution 48/141, the mandate of the OHCHR includes promotion and protection of human rights for all. OHCHR Pacific Regional Office, based in Fiji, covers 16 countries in the Pacific. For more information on OHCHR Pacific Regional Office, visit the [OHCHR website](#). Follow OHCHR Pacific Regional Office on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

### **About UN Samoa Multi-Country Office**

The UN Multi-Country Office in Samoa serves the Cook Islands, Niue, Samoa, and Tokelau. Led by the Resident Coordinator, it convenes and coordinates over 15 UN agencies that form the UN Country Team Samoa working collaboratively on joint development programmes aligned to complement and support national development priorities of the Cook Islands, Niue, Samoa, and Tokelau. From 2023 to 2027, the UNCT Samoa development support will be guided by the newly endorsed UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, outlining the vision, actions, and resources of the UNCT Samoa to contribute to a sustainable planet, where all the people of these four island states thrive prosperously and living in peace.

### **About SPC**

The Pacific Community (SPC) is the principal scientific and technical organisation in the Pacific region, proudly supporting development since 1947. We are an international development organisation owned and governed by our 27 country and territory members. SPC supports sustainable development by applying a people-centred approach to science, research and technology across all of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We serve our members by interweaving and harnessing the nexus of climate, ocean, land, culture, rights and good governance; through trusted partnerships; investing in Pacific people; and understanding Pacific contexts. For more information on SPC's work in the Pacific region visit the [SPC website](#)