

# Pacific Women in Leadership Weekly Digest

AS NAVIGATORS, IT'S IN OUR BLOOD TO KNOW WHEN TIDE IS  
TURNING, MARSHALL ISLANDS AT COP29



The voice of the Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI), a nation of coral atolls only two metres above sea level at its highest point, has reverberated at the 29th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP29) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Baku Azerbaijan.

The President of Marshall Islands, Hilda Heini, called for a shift in ambition on climate finance to address the cost of the climate crisis, threatening lives in her beloved country.

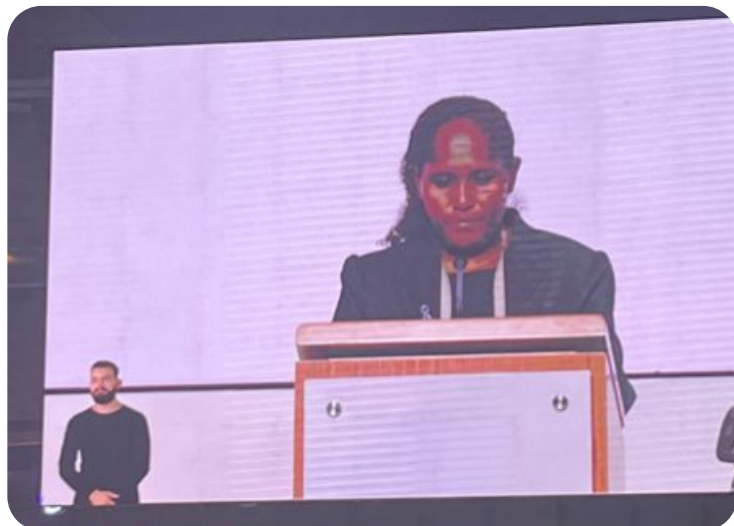
"With the explosive increase in the cost of the climate crisis, it is obvious to everyone that the system isn't working. We can no longer afford to be unrealistic and unresponsive about the costs of the crisis - which we all know are in the trillions of dollars per year," she said.

"Anyone who is here to fight over who pays for just a small share of those needs, rather than engage in a collective effort to find the trillions, is no friend to islands like mine. Nor can we afford empty promises. Those that have benefited from extraction have an obligation to provide the climate finance that is desperately and urgently needed."

-POST COURIER

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## SI ATTEND CONFERENCE TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN IN COLUMBIA



The Solomon Islands has participated in the inaugural Global Ministerial Conference to End Violence Against Children.

It was held in Bogota, Colombia from 7-8 November 2024.

The event brought together global leaders, policymakers, and advocates committed to ending violence against children, with a focus on announcing concrete pledges and sharing proven strategies to ensure the safety and well-being of children worldwide.

Representing the Solomon Islands, Director Loretta Ta'ake from the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children, and Family Affairs (MWYCFA) announced three ambitious national pledges that reinforce the nation's commitment to eliminating violence against children (VAC).

The pledges, which reflect the nation's dedication to advancing children's rights and safety, include plans to raise the legal marriage age to 18, expand child protection services to all provinces, and integrate child protection into climate resilience and disaster preparedness.

These initiatives were developed in collaboration with government agencies, civil society, young people, and international partners, with support from Save the Children and UNICEF.

-SOLOMON STAR NEWS

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## CLIMATE FINANCE PROMISES MUST BE KEPT, COMMONWEALTH SECRETARY-GENERAL TELLS COP29



Commonwealth countries must unite and use their collective voice to demand that climate finance promises are kept preventing human suffering, the Commonwealth Secretary-General, Patricia Scotland said at COP29 in Baku Tuesday.

At an event to highlight the upcoming launch of the Pacific Resilience Facility (PRF), the Secretary-General said that Commonwealth member states would continue to support the region in its fight against the ravages of climate change.

The PRF is due to launch in 2025 and will help communities become more resilient to climate change and natural disasters. Based in Tonga, the facility is aiming to raise more than US\$1.5 billion to help limit global warming above the 1.5 degrees agreed at COP21 in Paris.

The Commonwealth Secretary-General said: "The Pacific Resilience Facility is an idea whose time has come: a Pacific-owned, Pacific-led solution which will help communities to achieve both at once, and it aligns so well with the support which the Commonwealth offers the Pacific.

"Community-centred, transformative, inclusive, agile, and capable of unlocking vital support, and we can harness the Resilience Facility model, along with the Commonwealth's voice and convening power, to send the one of the clearest signals in the history of multilateralism: That climate finance promises must be kept."

-PINA NEWS

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## MORE WOMEN ENCOURAGED TO JOIN PNGDF



More PNG Women have been encouraged to Join the Papua New Guinea Defence Force (PNGDF).

Major Grace Kitoneka, Acting Director for the PNGDF Gender office made this statement during the family sexual violence action committee meeting.

Ms Kitoneka revealed that women make up only 4 percent of the entire Defence Force, which is about 140 to 150 women from the total 3,000 active force on the ground.

"The defense force is a gender-equal employer. There is really nothing stopping women from applying to the Defence Force. I see that it will go back to individual women how they perceive themselves, what they believe in, what they can achieve, and the area of interest where they want to serve in," Major Kitoneka said.

Although most would think that joining the army is all about going to war Ms Kitoneka said the force has different areas where women can work in, "We have health services we, health drivers, clerks, trainers, instructors, doctors, nurses and dentists."

While encouraging women into the PNGDF, she also revealed that it is not just another Job opportunity, those who wish to join have to be mentally strong and have a strong mindset, a purpose and a goal.

"It is not just another job opportunity. It is something that comes from deep within your heart, it is serving your country," she said. -POST COURIER

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## 'WE DESERVE TO BE SAFE' – WITH BETTER ACCESS TO GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE SERVICES, WOMEN IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS ARE SPEAKING UP



"Women run to us crying, saying [perpetrators] are coming to get them. But in Neo Island, where we live, there is no police presence; there is no hospital," says Sophie Rolyn, who lives in the eastern Solomon Islands.

Rolyn works as a team leader at the local Family Support Center, a crisis centre for women and girls facing gender-based violence.

Some days, she sets off from Neo Island at 6 a.m., bringing women on an hour-long boat journey to the island of Santa Cruz, where they can access police and a hospital, and counselling services at the crisis centre.

Globally, one in three women experience violence in their lifetime. In Solomon Islands, a national study in 2009 revealed a higher prevalence of violence against women, with nearly two in three women aged 15 to 49 reporting physical or sexual violence—or both—by an intimate partner.

Most women suffered in silence, with few seeking help from public services; and when they did, it was typically after the abuse had become caused serious injuries.

To curb this epidemic of violence, seven government and nongovernmental service providers—including the police, hospitals, and crisis centres—joined forces to establish SAFENET.

-UN WOMEN

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