

We are gathered here today not just as representatives of governments, but as stewards of a shared future—one where the health of our planet is paramount, and where the actions we take now will echo through generations to

come. Our commitment to this cause is underscored by our collective participation in the Jaipur Declaration on 3R (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) and the Circular Economy (2025-2035), as well as the regional consultation on the Cleaner Pacific 2035 strategy.

The 3R principles and the Circular Economy are not just abstract concepts, but practical, actionable solutions that can, and will, transform the way we approach waste, consumption, and resource management in the Pacific. The Jaipur Declaration provides a strong foundation for us to move forward, and we, the small island developing states (SIDS) of the Pacific, are uniquely positioned to embrace this vision.

However, let us not forget that the road ahead is not without its challenges. While we face capacity issues, we are acutely aware of the vulnerability of our islands to the impacts of climate change, environmental degradation and plastic pollution. Yet, this is also a reminder that our actions today—our investments in cleaner technologies, our commitment to sustainable consumption patterns, our focus on minimizing waste, and our adjustments in lifestyles —are not just about safeguarding our environment, but also about ensuring the long-term viability of our societies and economies and reliance of our precious coastal and marine ecosystems on which our livelihood security and tourism industry is largely dependent on.

The Cleaner Pacific 2035 strategy is a key pillar in this journey. As we embark on the consultation process, it is

essential that we recognize the importance of a regional, collaborative and partnership approach. The solutions we seek must be context-specific, inclusive of local knowledge, and scalable for diverse island communities. We cannot afford to take a one-size-fits-all approach; our challenges and opportunities are as diverse as the islands we represent.

This strategy along with the Jaipur Declaration, which are designed to address regional waste management and pollution issues, offer a forward-looking framework that aligns with global goals, such as the SDGs, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS (ABAS) [2024-2034], and the outcomes of the 3rd UN Ocean Conference in Nice, France in June'2025 - the political declaration "Our Ocean, Our Future: United for Urgent Action" and the Nice Ocean Action Plan.

As a Pacific island nation, Fiji is deeply committed to ensuring that our region remains a leader in environmental stewardship. We are proud to be part of this larger movement, and we believe that through continued collaboration and capacity building, we will collectively create a cleaner, more sustainable Pacific.

In closing, I would like to reaffirm Fiji's unwavering support for the goals of the Jaipur Declaration and the Cleaner Pacific 2035 strategy. Our journey may be long, but the path we walk is one of hope, resilience, and determination. Together, let us move forward with the courage and resolve needed to protect the Pacific, our planet, and our future.

Last but not the least, I sincerely thank all the co-organizers – UNCRD/UN DESA and SPREP, and all the supporting organizations.

Thank you.