



**HIGH-LEVEL STATEMENTS BY MEMBER STATES
THIRD CONFERENCE ON AVIATION AND ALTERNATIVE FUELS (CAAF/3)**

**STATEMENT BY DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND
CIVIL AVIATION, HON. VILIAME R. GAVOKA**

Monday, 20 November 2023

**Hilton Dubai Al Habtoor City
Dubai**

President of the International Civil Aviation Organisation, H.E. Mr. Salvatore Sciacchitano,
Secretary-General of ICAO, H.E. Juan Carlos Salazar,

Members of the ICAO,

Distinguished Guests,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Bula vinaka and a very good afternoon.

It is a great pleasure and honor to represent Fiji at the Third Conference on Aviation and Alternative Fuels – and for giving me the floor in today’s high-level forum.

My special appreciation as well to our hosts, the Government of the United Arab Emirates, for the warm hospitality.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Before traveling to Dubai, I asked my team what the outcomes of the previous conference in 2017 was. I was told Fiji was not in attendance. In fact, this is the first time we are at the table.

This forum, it was thought, was for larger economies. Economies with deeper pockets and greater capacity for the cutting-edge technologies and innovation. Much is true for most Pacific Small Island Developing States.

The question begs, how can a nation – that relies so heavily on air connectivity – not be part of global discussion that impacts its economy, its ability to sustain itself in the future.

So, we are here. Not with demands nor with reasons not to. We are here to ensure our voices are heard and that any policy or regulation that comes of this Conference, considers Small Island Developing States such as Fiji.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Sustainable Alternative Fuels has had its milestone achievements. I read in an IATA article SAF's remarkable journey since the first test flight with bio jet fuel in 2008 by Virgin Atlantic and the achievement of producing 300 million litres in 2022.

This was the culmination of our long-term global aspirational goal to have international aviation emissions of net-zero by 2050.

We share this vision. Fiji was the seventh country in the world — and the first Small Island Developing State — to pass climate legislation inclusive of a net-zero emissions goal.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are living testimony to the impacts of climate change. We live it every day. It is no longer a topic for discussion, but a crisis that calls for action. Rising sea level, villages relocating, the bounty of the land and sea, sources of livelihood diminishing.

The good (and unfortunate) news is that the Pacific, with smaller aviation industries, is only responsible for 0.03 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions and are still disproportionately affected.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are doing our part. Fiji has established a fuel management program to lower jet fuel. Our national airline, Fiji Airways, has invested in new fuel-efficient aircrafts with the latest addition of two A350 aircraft added to the fleet.

A milestone achievement is the 100,000USG blended Sustainable Alternative Fuels by Fiji Airways uplifted from Changi airport and consumed between Singapore and Fiji. Plans are also in place to build on this every year to reach our target of 10 percent Sustainable Alternative Fuels by 2030.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our strides do come with challenges. Sustainable Alternative Fuels is not inexpensive. If we are to make international commitments, we need to ensure there is a level playing field with equal opportunities.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

One of our main exports is sugar. Fiji's sugar industry produces sugar for export as well as for our domestic consumption. The idea of producing ethanol from sugar cane has been floated and I believe this can assist in the production of Sustainable Aviation Fuel.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Over the next few days, we will review the 2050 ICAO Vision for Sustainable Aviation Fuels, including Lower Carbon Aviation Fuels (LCAF) and other cleaner energy sources, in order to define an ICAO global framework in line with our shared vision of *No Country Left Behind*.

While we call upon States to adopt policies supporting the production and the use of SAF and LCAF – our goal should be creating the right frameworks that takes into account the diverse circumstances and capabilities of each State.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Partnership is key for us — it's the reason we're here. We require the right resources, the right expertise and the right partnerships that not only support policy formulation but implementation.

Thank you.