

# **Final Statement by Hon. Polycarp Paea to the Resumed Second Session of the United Nations Habitat Assembly**

Executive Director Rossbach, fellow ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honor to address this Assembly on behalf of Solomon Islands. As a Small Island Developing State, rapid urbanization—particularly in Honiara—poses significant challenges, straining services and infrastructure. Our vulnerability to climate change and natural disasters makes sustainable urban development essential. We appreciate UN-Habitat's support, which has led to key achievements, including the National Urban Profile, National Urban Policy (2020-2035), and the Honiara Urban Resilient Project, securing a sustainable future.

Addressing informal settlements in Honiara and Gizo is a priority due to lack of basic services and tenure security. Our squatter settlement policy, including the Temporary Occupation Licence (TOL) Conversion project, aims to regularize tenure and provide Fixed Term Estates (FTEs), alongside strategies to enhance informal settlements.

UN-Habitat's support has advanced Local Planning Schemes (LPS) for Honiara, Auki, and Gizo, guiding urban growth. Housing remains a challenge, but initiatives such as Mamara, South Honiara, and Tasahe C subdivisions aim to address affordable housing, backed by the National Housing Policy and SINPF partnership.

Despite progress, challenges persist. Strengthening technical capacity across all levels of government is crucial for effective urban planning. Outdated legislation and regulations hinder progress, necessitating urgent reform. Securing adequate financial resources remains difficult, as local authorities depend heavily on national and donor funding. Increasing internal revenue and mobilizing external resources are key.

Our efforts are guided by participatory and integrated planning, strengthened governance, and partnerships across government, civil society, and the private sector. In closing, we remain committed to building peaceful, resilient, inclusive, and prosperous urban areas. We welcome continued collaboration with UN-Habitat and the international community in realizing these goals.

Thank you.