

**Government of Solomon Islands Ministerial statement, 28 Nov 2014,
Bangkok**

Honorable Ministers

Distinguish delegates

Ladies and Gentlemen

Chair, my delegation wish to first acknowledge and congratulate all the countries present.

The Solomon Islands Government Islands has been pleased to be part of the political commitments already made in the Pacific regarding CRVS actions, through the declarations from the Pacific Islands Ministers of Health (in 2011, 2013, and 2014), and the Heads of Planning and Statistics meeting in 2013.

Chair, the sum of these Pacific regional declarations outlined that center of gravity around which, the Government of the Solomon Islands locates its commitment to the importance that CRVS offers for national governance and planning.

Chair, my Government is part of a Pacific Island community of small islands countries and territories, which are working under the auspices of the Pacific Vital statistics Plan. It provides us with a framework and thus guidance for improving systematically the assessment, implementation and monitoring of our CRVS country activities.

Chair, at this juncture, my Government would like to acknowledge the Honorable Minister Nandi Glassie, Minister of Health of Cook Islands, and the former Minister of Health of Fiji, Dr Neil Sharma who have been important champions in the Pacific for this agenda.

In recognizing the multi-sectoral nature of the work, the Solomon Islands has established a national CRVS committee, whose mandate provides for the development of a national improvement plan and its implementation.

In this regard, we have benefited from the technical support of our partners and we acknowledge their efforts in particular the Brisbane Accord Group, whose members include, the WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, Australian Bureau of Statistic, University of Queensland, and Secretariat of the Pacific Community, amongst others.

In particular, the Solomon Islands acknowledges the work of UNICEF and WHO to improving our systems in reference to birth registration, legislative framework, registration, collection and improving the quality and availability of

data, and improving our inter agency coordination.

Chair, our physical geography, 450 – 500 islands, depending whether its low tide or high tide, (28 000 sq Km of land scattered across 1.35 million sq Km of sea), and cultural diversity (600 000 people speaking 89 languages) demand that Government recognizes the engagement of Civil society, Religious, cultural and Community leaders in advancing this CRVS agenda.

Furthermore, the Solomon Islands is mindful of the need to be both realistic to manage the present, and ambitious to secure the future in setting targets and goals. Reaching these targets in the Pacific Islands will require significant investment both at national level, and the regional level.

Therefore, the Solomon Islands recommend that the Regional Action Framework continues to take account of the unique small island settings in the Pacific and the various cultural contexts in which we live.

Finally, coming from an island state, this Framework 2015 – 2025, offers that important common platform upon which, the Pacific aligned its challenges to a wider sense of common solidarity on this issue. It offers meaning to why we are a member of the ESCAP – Asia Pacific.

The health sector of Solomon Islands, in particular recognize that investment in the CRVS agenda offers a unique opportunity, we must not be complacent about and around; as it beckons to real efforts to improve our health information systems and therefore improve our data for decision making.

Chair, please be assured of the support of the Government of the Solomon Islands, and we endorse the Regional Action Framework,

Thank you