**HON PM BAINIMARAMA ADDRESS AT UNDER2 COALITION SIGNING CEREMONY**

**6/14/2017**

Governor Brown,
Your Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Bula vinaka and a very good afternoon to you all.

Friends, I’m delighted to join you here in California, where climate action is alive and well, thanks to the remarkable leadership of your great Governor, and my friend, Jerry Brown.

If there is one thing we have all learned over the last two weeks, for every action -- there is a reaction. And, my friends, the leadership represented in this room, and people of all walks of life from across America, have spoken very loudly -- telling the world that America will continue to tackle climate change, continue the clean energy revolution, continue to create jobs and grow its economy so that it can thrive in the 21st Century.

This message has been warmly received, and as the incoming President of COP23, it gives me hope and enthusiasm for what we can achieve together.

Make no mistake, we are not slowing down, and as incoming COP President, Fiji will work with all of those who are willing to work towards a more sustainable, prosperous future for the planet. There is a home for you in the international climate process.

You are the heart of the Grand Coalition we are building together. Our Grand Coalition is bigger than any one meeting or event. This is a movement that is built to last -- and a critical evolution of the international climate process. I commit to you as incoming COP President that I will do everything in my power to ensure that our Grand Coalition receives the attention it deserves throughout Fiji's Presidency.

So thank you Governor Brown. And thank all of you, who are leading these efforts to create an unstoppable force.

Now, we actually have some business to attend to today.
I am honoured on behalf of the Government of Fiji and the Fijian people to formally endorse the Under2 Coalition. Today, Fiji becomes the first Small Island Developing Nation to endorse this important Coalition of over 170 subnational governments from around the world, all committing to take decisive actions to achieve net zero economies by 2050 in line with the goals of the Paris Agreement.

I know some of my Pacific Island neighbors are considering joining this Coalition, and I intend to reach out to all of my Pacific Island neighbors and other Small Nations around the world to encourage them to join the Under2 Coalition. Together, the small nations can show the world that, while our economies and our emissions may be small, we will do our part and we never shy away from the challenges that face us. We will lead and we will inspire others to do the same.

Now, we all know that Governor Brown was the driving force behind the creation of the Under2 Coalition -- and he has continued to lead the way since its inception. So, when I thought about the one leader I needed to help mobilise the states and regions as a critical pillar of our Grand Coalition, the choice was obvious. That is why I am particularly pleased to announce that I am today appointing Governor Brown as Special Envoy for States and Regions for the COP23 Presidency. In this role, I will lean on Governor Brown to continue the great leadership he has demonstrated time and time again, and to mobilise a strong contingent of like-minded leaders from around the world -- to show the world that we mean business! Governor, are you with me?? Welcome on board Governor. I look forward to continue working with you.

Friends, I have shared previously Fiji's vision for COP23 when I was in Bonn a few weeks ago, the details of which we have posted on our website -- COP23.com.fj. But in summary, Fiji's vision is for a Presidency that is transparent and inclusive of all, advances the Paris Agreement and accelerates climate action for all vulnerable societies, drawing on our own experiences as a Small Island Developing State in the Pacific.

A central pillar to this vision is to forge a Grand Coalition to accelerate climate action before 2020 and beyond between civil society, the scientific community, the private sector and all levels of government, including cities and regions. I think we are off to a great start here today!

Now, I have the honour of introducing our COP23 Special Envoy for States and Regions -- Your Governor, Mr. Jerry Brown.

Vinaka vakalevu. Thank you.