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Media Release

13/10/07

(24/07)

Pacific Human Security Framework Needs to be Rights Based

The Pacific Human Security framework must be rights-based says Setareki Macanawai, Executive Director of the Pacific Disability Forum (PDF).

“In an era where the human rights of individuals and groups are being protected under various international human rights instruments, a Pacific human security framework must therefore be rights-based by way of design, scope, content and application.” He told participants of the Pacific Regional CSO Forum this afternoon.

According to Macanawai, human security will be difficult to realise without the recognition, protection and advancement of the rights of all citizens.

“Of particular importance are the rights of those groups of individuals within our Pacific communities who are generally marginalised or vulnerable. The rights of persons with disabilities fall within this category as well as those of women, children, and youth.”

Moreover, Macanawai said human security framework must be inclusive to prevent the framework from excluding some of its intended beneficiaries. And he says there would be a in danger of only addressing the human security needs of those groups which are more vocal, visible, dominant and powerful.

“A group of people often excluded and neglected from such initiatives are people with disabilities. An inclusive human security framework will ensure that issues of minority and neglected groups within the Pacific society such as people with disabilities are indeed accommodated.”

The Executive Director added that the development and implementation of policies and strategies concerning human security, especially in relation to urbanisation, law enforcement, as well as mitigation and management of natural disasters should be disability inclusive.

For this to eventuate, Macanawai said a proper and better awareness of disability issues must be gained by relevant authority.

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All correspondence to be addressed to Executive Director

“By putting on a disability lens, policy makers and implementors are able to incorporate disability dimensions to their policies, strategies and programmes which can add value to such initiatives in terms of being inclusive and cost-effective.”

With the Pacific Plan having provisions on Good Governance, Macanawai on behalf of all people with disability has urged Pacific Island countries to positively consider signing and ratifying the newly adopted United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

“The Convention, described as the first human rights treaty of the twenty-first century prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities in all areas of life, and includes specific provisions related to rehabilitation, habilitation, education, employment, health and access to information, public facilities and services.”

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