**Opening Remarks by Dr. Andrew Jones, Director, Geoscience Energy and Maritime Division**

**Second meeting of the Steering Committee of the Pacific Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency, Novotel Hotel, Lami, Suva**

**12th December 2017**

* H.E. Ambassador Mr. Bernhard Zimburg, Ambassador Extraoridnary and Plenipotentiary of Austria to Australia and Fiji
* Mr. Mark Mineo, USA Embassy
* Deputy Executive Director of the Pacific Power Association
* Representatives of the PCREEE National Focal Institutions and heads and CEOs of national energy divisions and power utilities
* Representatives of the PCREEE Thematic Hubs and the development partners
* Representatives of Japan and the Asian Institute of Technology
* Representatives of sister CROP agencies other regional and international agencies
* Representatives of the private sector
* Ladies and gentlemen

Good morning, Bula and welcome to this second meeting of the PCREEE Steering Committee.

SPC is currently going through a prioritisation process and as you would probably know by now, the Economic Development Division, which housed the regional energy programme and the PCREEE is now merged with the Geoscience Division. We therefore now have a Geoscience Energy and Maritime Division and I have recently been recruited to head this new Division. Under this new Division, we have a Georesources and Energy Pillar which is the host of the PCREEE.

We are working on the finer details of the new Division and I will ensure that the PCREEE will continue to well integrated into the functions, systems and the work programme of the new Division.

SPC is home to a few Centres. The Centre for Pacific Crops and Trees or CePaCT is a world class centre that conserves the region’s genetic resources, with priority given to the region’s staple crops such as taro, yam, sweet potato, banana, cassava and breadfruit and making them available for growers throughout the Pacific to use.

On Wednesday / tomorrow, we will have the Official launch of Maritime Technology Cooperation Centre or MTCC. The MTCC-Pacific will be a regional centre of excellence promoting a low carbon maritime transport that supports the sustainable development goals of Pacific Small Islands Developing States and Least Developed Countries.

At the 10th Conference of SPC in July this year, the leaders agreed to establish across SPC’s work programmes a *Pacific Community Centre for Ocean Science or PCCOS*. The PCCOS will serve as an information and data platform for ocean science, management and governance and maritime governance.

The PCREEE, which is the subject of your meeting is one of these centres and I want to assure you all of SPC’s commitment to ensure that all these centres of excellence will be sustainable and will serve the best interest of its members countries and territories as well as those of its co-hosting agencies and partners.

The success of the PCREEE will be very much determined by the countries and partners taking ownership of it, driving it and contributing to its long term operations, either financially or through technical expertise and partnerships.

I take this opportunity to thank you Your Excellency, Ambassador Mr. Bernhard Zimburg, for the initial 4 years funding by your government and UNIDO to the PCREEE. I also wish to thank the host country of the PCREE, Tonga, for making a commitment to support the PCREEE over a six years period – 2 years more than the 4 years of the First Operational Phase of the PCREEE. I am glad to note that SPC has made a commitment to support he PCREEE over the same 6 years too.

As I have said earlier, the success of the PCREEE will depend on how well members are driving it. You meeting today is therefore crucial, as you will have an opportunity to shape the PCREEE through inputs to its Business Plan as well as its Work Plan and Budget for 2018.

There are already a number of existing and future partnerships for the PCREEE – with UN ESCAP, Korea, University of Papua New Guinea, the Pacific Regional Infrastructure Facility or PRIF, the pacific Power Association, the sustainable Energy Industry Association of the Pacific islands or SEIAPI and Japan and the Asian Institute of Technology – and you’ll get to learn and comment on these during the course of your meeting. Genuine and Durable partnerships are vital to the success of the PCREEE.

As a private sector and business community-focussed entity, I am glad to acknowledge the participation of private sector representatives in this meeting. I thank you for taking time out during this very busy time for businesses in order to contribute and ensure PCREEE serves your needs and priorities.

I wish you all the best in your deliberations today. I hope you will all have bit of time to look around Suva and do a bit of your Christmas shopping while here.

May you all have a good break with your loved ones during the Festive Season.

It is now my pleasure and honour to declare the Second Meeting of the PCREEE Steering Committee open.

Vinaka vaka levu