

PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS FORUM

Fostering Private Sector Partnerships for the Sustainable Development of SIDS

Samoa Conference Centre
Apia, Samoa 30-31 August 2014

Co-Chairs' Summary

H.E. Tuilaepa Lufesoliai Sailele Malielegaoi, Prime Minister of the
Independent State of Samoa

Mr. Denis O'Brien, Chairman, Digicel Group



On 30 and 31 August, 2014, a Private Sector Partnerships Forum (PSPF) was convened at the Samoa Conference Centre in Apia, Samoa. The PSPF was jointly organized by, the Government of the Independent State of Samoa, in partnership with the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS) and the Samoa Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

On 31 August a High-level Dialogue between the Private Sector, Governments, UN entities and International Financial Institutions, and Intergovernmental Organisations was convened. This high-level dialogue was the pinnacle of the PSPF, a pre-conference event. At the high-level segment, under the guidance of Co-Chair H.E Prime Minister Tuilaepa Lufesolai Sailele Malielegaoi, statements were made by the United Nations Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon, The President of the 68th General Assembly, H.E Ambassador John Ashe, European Commissioner for Development H.E. Mr. Andris Piebalgs, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Australia, H.E. Ms. Julie Bishop, and welcome remarks were made by UN Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDS, Mr. Gyan Chandra Acharya.

High Level Dialogue - In his Welcoming Remarks to the session, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS) Mr. Gyan Chandra Acharya, underscored the importance of sustainable partnerships. He emphasised that financing is a major requirement for Small Island Developing States (SIDS), and that international support measures from development partners and international organizations are instrumental to ensure that SIDS achieve their sustainable development objectives.

In his Opening Remarks H.E Prime Minister of Samoa Tuilaepa Lufesolai Sailele Malielegaoi highlighted the collaboration between the Government of Samoa, UN-OHRLLS and the Samoan Chamber of Commerce in the organization of the Private Sector Partnerships Forum. The Prime Minister remarked on the number of substantive sessions that had taken place over the two-day event which would contribute to support of an enabling environment for the development of the private sector in the SIDS.

In his Keynote Address to the session, the United Nations Secretary-General H.E Mr Ban Ki-moon acknowledged the collaborative efforts of the partners involved in convening the forum. The

Secretary-General noted that it was a collective responsibility to protect the small islands given the numerous challenges they face, in particular the negative impact of climate change.

He remarked that SIDS Conference is timely given that the Climate Change Summit will convene in New York in September. He noted that Member States are progressing toward consolidating the future development agenda, which should reflect the unique challenges and aspirations of the SIDS.

He reiterated the outcome of the Rio +20 Conference on Sustainable Development, where it was recognised that collective action was impossible without partnerships. He highlighted that partnerships formed the backbone of collective action. He remarked that the Third UN Conference on SIDS was an opportunity to move the planet toward a sustainable path.

The SG highlighted that SIDS 2014 had already delivered more than 300 multi-stakeholder partnerships involving more than 150 governments, United Nation Agencies, Programmes and Funds international organisations and others groups.

He further emphasized that renewable energy is critical as it lessens countries' dependence on fuel while providing employment opportunities and a revitalisation of the economy. He applauded the government of Samoa for leading the initiative of matching technology providers and financial investors with the local communities.

He remarked that this conference recognises commitment to **"Blue Growth for SIDS"**.

H.E Ambassador John Ashe, President of the 68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, highlighted the important role that Partnerships including those with private sector stakeholders have in implementing priorities for SIDS Member States. This is in recognition that governments alone cannot advance sustainable development on their own. In regard to the Post 2015 development agenda he expressed the view that there was a need to have concise goals and a specific role for private sector in the implementation of these goals.

In his remarks European Commissioner for Development H.E Mr Andris Piebalgs noted that individual Member States cannot implement on their own but require partnerships to realise goals. He noted that the European Commission has committed 50 million Euro to support the development of the private sector. He added that private sector initiatives contribute to achieving sustainable development in European Union partner countries,

adding that economic development depends on a thriving private sector. The leveraging of private sector initiatives and finance to achieve sustainable development in the SIDS is crucial.

In a statement the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Australia, H.E. Ms. Julie Bishop, emphasized that the Private Sector Partnerships Forum was an important event as it would frame the SIDS 2014 Conference. She noted that Australia is a supporter of economic development in the Pacific region as this is key to achieving in-roads in the challenge against poverty. She reiterated that the private sector was a vital tool in this process. The Minister noted that Australia has globally diverse interests within the Asia and Pacific region and highlighted a number of concrete examples of Australian support to private sector development. She underscored that there is a strong push for cruise tourism in the Pacific, and that the region should identify effective and smart ways to enhance this growing sector. She announced the establishment of an investment hub for the Pacific SIDS region.

In a video message, Sir Richard Branson highlighted the daunting challenges faced by SIDS. He called for the reduction and transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy. He mentioned his collaboration with island leaders, in particular the Ten Island Challenge which he explained is an initiative with pioneering island economies to reduce dependency on fossil fuels through the acceleration of commercial opportunities on islands, attracting expert engineering firms and investment. He also referred to his Branson Entrepreneurship Centres that help build capacity of entrepreneurs and that he is looking to scale these up around the world.

Interactive Dialogue

Co-Chair of the High Level Dialogue Mr. Denis O'Brien (Digicel Chairman) moderated the interactive dialogue.

- Mr. O'Brien noted that the Private Sector Partnerships Forum had been a major success based on the ideas and interaction that took place over the two-day event. He recommended that there is a need for similar interactions on a yearly basis to ensure accountability and to assess the evolution of the economic situation among small islands. He stressed that connectivity remained key to economic development. There was also room for a fresh approach to managing the issue of debt owed by SIDS and that a 'Marshall Plan' was needed to create economic growth.

Pertinent Issues raised during the interactive dialogue:

- Digicel Chairman, Denis O'Brien, called for an undersea cable from Papua New Guinea through the Pacific, to increase connectivity by providing access to broadband services for all. World Bank Vice President Rachel Kyte indicated that the World Bank would consider supporting, if Digicel were to lead such a project.
- The private sector was identified as a key partner of the SIDS in their individual and collective efforts toward sustainable development. Participants stressed the need for concrete partnerships, but also recognised that due to the lack of economies of scale, attracting foreign investment remains an impediment for private sector engagement in the SIDS.
- The political climate of a country is a key consideration for the private sector and businesses need to be assured that a country's leadership is committed to private sector growth. At the same time development partners and the private sector should subscribe to greater accountability and transparency when partnering with small island economies.
- The role of the private sector was crucial in the sustainable use of oceans, connectivity, and energy, among others.
- Participants also raised the importance of actively engaging private sector in the development agenda of national SIDS governments. It was noted that sustainable business practices should at the outset be embedded in any private sector partnership.
- The importance of increasing revenue in order to build resilience among the small islands in order to address their particular vulnerabilities was also high on the agenda of delegates. Two integral elements to partnerships include accountability and integrating solutions for small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Focus on SME competitiveness was also noted.
- Tourism, which forms the pillar of economic growth in many of the small islands, was seen as key sector that could be targeted for improvement by greater investment in

infrastructure. In 2000, 28 billion USD export earnings were earned from tourism, in 2014 it has increased to 61 billion USD. There is a need to ensure that these earnings are harnessed for the local development of the SIDS and that proceeds from tourism are retained.

- Participants highlighted the role of an ‘ocean’ economy, which would focus on reaping the rewards of the oceans in a sustainable manner within the context of sound regulatory frameworks and cooperation among Member States.
- The deleterious impact of climate change was highlighted as a key concern that threatened to undo some of the development gains achieved by the small islands.
- Related to energy, it was expressed that affordable and reliable energy was a key tool if SIDS were to consolidate their production output.
- The active engagement of women in partnerships translates to empowerment which in turns contributes to reducing poverty. It is as important to ensure that the active participation of women is done on a sustainable basis. Gender equity undergirds successful collaboration between the public and private sector.

On 30 and 31 August, prior to the convening of the High-level Dialogue, the PSPF focused on seven thematic areas: Oceans and Marine Resources, Connectivity (through ICTs and Transport), Sustainable Agriculture, Sustainable Tourism, Disaster Risk Reduction, Renewable Energy and Financing & Support Measures for SIDS Private Sector. While these areas are not new nor are they emerging issues for SIDS, they do however remain high on the development discourse for SIDS. The Forum took a holistic approach in recognising the cross-cutting nature of these thematic areas including issues concerning: women in business, informal sector integration, capacity development, ease of doing business and access to inclusive finance.

The PSPF brought together some 400 participants from the Private sector, Governments, Civil Society, Intergovernmental Organisations and the UN System. Some 20 concrete partnerships, initiatives and recommendations were announced and made during the two days. A SIDS Global Business Network was also established.

The hosting of the Private Sector Partnerships Forum as one of the major pre-conference events is testament to this recognition of the role of the private sector in fostering entrepreneurship and innovation along with supporting sustainable, inclusive and equitable economic growth. It was the first time that a dedicated two day forum focused on the private sector and its supportive role in sustainable development aspirations of SIDS was organised on the margins of a SIDS conference.

The dynamic discussions that took place over the two-day Forum are summarised as follows:

Oceans and Marine Resources - SIDS continue to be especially vulnerable to ocean and coastal environmental degradation and require extraordinary partnerships and actions to sustainably manage ocean and maritime resources. SIDS which are committed to marine conservation measures require new partnerships with the private sector including through the provision of cutting-edge technology to support marine conservation efforts and in mapping and monitoring of coastal and ocean spaces. The potential for SIDS to benefit from such technology in the monitoring and surveillance of illegal unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing in their vast ocean spaces is of high priority.

SIDS partnerships with organisations that set standards for sustainable fisheries, linking SIDS fisheries to international food distributors and the consumption of seafood needs to be further supported and enhanced. Likewise there remains the need for partnerships to allow for SIDS-owned fisheries companies to meet conditions that have been set to attain international sustainable fisheries certification. In this regard the need for enhanced partnerships within SIDS regions to ensure that such conditions are met and sustained is key to the future viability of SIDS-owned fisheries.

Traditional methods of coastal marine conservation in a number of SIDS need to be further strengthened and supported through tangible partnerships. In this light, actions to close Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) to commercial international fisheries interests are an extension of such cultural and traditional practices – albeit at a larger scale. The shift from a dependency on distant water fishing nations which carry out fisheries activities in SIDS EEZs, and the forgoing of associated licensing fees, to an economy that is based on ocean conservation and related tourism are important future considerations for SIDS. SIDS continue to require partnerships with various stakeholders including the private sector to support marine conservation efforts.

Partnerships, Initiatives and Recommendations

- Google and Palau informed of their collective effort with Palau in utilizing technology and mapping ocean spaces to monitor their vast ocean spaces. They are willing to use technology and their expertise to expand Sea Vision programme in cooperation with other island countries.
- The Waitt Foundation called for more private sector support for marine conservation and community livelihood in SIDS and they informed of their collaboration with the National Geographic Society, and Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP).
- Solander Ltd. called for more collaboration between SIDS to ensure that conditions for Marine Stewardship Council certification are met and sustained in the sustainable use of marine resources.
- National Geographic Society called for more 'no-take' zones as a form of marine conservation efforts in which they expressed their commitment to collaborate with SIDS.

Connectivity – Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and Transport are essential elements in the economic development of SIDS. Despite hard won gains, connectivity remains an obstacle for sustainable economic development in SIDS, particularly those in the Pacific. In regard to ICTs, new partnerships are needed to tackle specific problems such as the availability of ICT hardware which – for the business community - is an essential tool for accessing the international marketplace.

Recognising that connectivity is a cross-cutting theme which unites various thematic areas of importance to SIDS including sustainable tourism, social development, environmental management, sustainable agriculture, disaster risk reduction and oceans management, access to connectivity for all is conducive to stimulating economic growth and this access needs further enhancement in SIDS. There remains a need to mainstream policies and research on connectivity and to examine strategies to enhance ICT connectivity between the SIDS regions and international markets.

Partnerships of various kinds including public/private partnerships need to be supported through a multi-stakeholder approach including the pooling of resources to improve inter-island connectivity. This

can be achieved through regional partnerships in for instance laying and connecting submarine cables. The private sector will play a crucial role in establishing and maintaining ICT systems while satellite companies operating in SIDS have an important role to play in complementing those areas where submarine cables are absent.

International Financial Institutions (IFIs) are encouraged to support the connectivity aspirations of SIDS and IFI's should work with various partners including SIDS governments and the private sector to build the necessary infrastructure required to increase connectivity in SIDS.

Aside from ICTs, connectivity through transport is an essential enabler for SIDS' socio-economic prospects and achieving sustainable development. Nonetheless, the shipping sector remains a high risk sector both for the private sector and SIDS governments given the high fuel costs, infrequent schedules and both the lack of and high cost of building and maintaining modern infrastructure.

Connectivity through aviation also remains crucial for SIDS. As modern aircraft become widely used in SIDS regions, so too is the need to upgrade aviation infrastructure to ensure safe operating environments and ensuring compliance with international safety standards. Partnerships are crucial in this regard as the cost of upgrading aviation infrastructure remains high for SIDS. Given the heavy reliance by SIDS on aviation, a single aviation accident can have a substantial knock on effect for SIDS economies. SIDS therefore require international support and partnerships to ensure modern aviation facilities are installed and operated to guarantee economic stability.

Partnerships, Initiatives and Recommendations

- Digicel will increase investment in SIDS to promote connectivity and support private sector and economic growth.
- Matson has 're-entered' the South Pacific and is looking to service shipping routes connecting Pacific SIDS with each other better with new connections and hubs.
- The need for investment in infrastructure that support connectivity between SIDS should be given high priority and there should be coherence in the policies between governments, development partners and IFIs.
- Enabling environment and strategic partnerships will need to be further strengthened.

Sustainable Agriculture - Issues of food security and agriculture continue to be major challenges for SIDS. Of particular concern is the over-reliance on and quality of imported food, often to the detriment of the nutrition of local communities and national agricultural production systems. A key obstacle to the development of the agricultural sector in SIDS is the lack of investment in agriculture. A greater number of innovative partnerships are needed, which would facilitate enhanced access for local farmers to international markets. The successful partnership between the Samoan-based Women in Business Development Inc. (WIBDI) and The Body Shop is illustrative of one such partnership. Of equal importance is the transfer of knowledge and entrepreneurial skills, which would greatly improve the capacity of local businesses to develop and trade high-end value added products in order to target regional and international niche markets.

Given the relatively modest scale of agricultural production in many small islands, joint business ventures should be cognisant of the need to build resilience into partnerships to address vulnerabilities and reduce exposure to external shocks. By linking agriculture to recreation and tourism, the private sector has the ability to attract the active engagement of women and youth in the agricultural sector.

Partnerships, Initiatives and Recommendations

- A new partnership between the Pacific Island Private Sector Organization (PIPSO) and the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) is set to strengthen the agri-food systems in the Pacific by supporting agribusiness development and transformative partnerships.
- The Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) in partnership with the Pacific Island Private Sector Organisation (PIPSO) will host an annual agribusiness forum that will bring together farmers and entrepreneurs. The forum will raise awareness of opportunities to boost the contribution of agriculture to Pacific Island economies.
- CTA and the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) will launch a research & development programme on climate-change adaptation and resilience building for fishers and farmers that will engage

regional partners including SPC and SPREP.

- Body Shop-Australia announced that it would continue to include the involvement of youth and local villages in its projects.

Sustainable Tourism– The Sustainable Tourism Sector remains a driver of economic activity in SIDS and tourism represents more than half the value of export in service. The session on sustainable tourism focused on how SIDS can facilitate sustainable tourism that benefits all and the pathways necessary to achieve this. Partnerships at the national, regional and international levels – including PPPs - play a crucial role in achieving sustainable tourism and ensuring sustainability of outcomes that supports livelihoods in SIDS.

Sustainable tourism is a crosscutting sector that has the ability to address broad issues affecting and achieving sustainable development in SIDS. However, unless carefully managed, tourism can be a major global threat to the environment and to local culture and industry. To address these risks and harness tourism as a source for sustainable development and poverty alleviation, various partnerships are needed including those between big business, ICT providers, transport, trade associations, farmers and fishermen. Partnerships are key to accessing local markets, resources and governments. The importance of trust and commitment in private sector partnerships to build up new businesses in new destinations is crucial. Partnerships will not work if it is not a win-win situation, with trust as a vital tool to develop a tourism destination. Genuine and durable partnerships can result in higher value tourism, protected environmental and cultural resources and greater involvement of communities and their connections to appropriate markets.

Partnerships, initiatives and Recommendations:

- World Travel and Tourism Council announced the formation of the Global Travel Association Coalition to address issues of statistics, to streamline economic and employment reporting in tourism in SIDS.
- Sustainable Travel International announced the Sustainable Destination Alliance of the Americas and the South Pacific Destination Alliance with the South Pacific Tourism Organisation, Royal Caribbean Cruise Ltd., Samoa and Palau - for development of destinations

across the Pacific region.

- National Geographic Expeditions announced Pristine Seas Initiative. The Pristine Seas team will begin a new expedition in Palau supporting the world's first nationwide marine reserve. Efforts will promote conservation and help marine life, while increasing awareness and visitation. They also intend to expand to other SIDS.
- Samoa Women in Business Incorporated announced a farm to table initiative.
- The Samoan based company Polynesian Xplorer announced a partnership with Digicel in support of its Samoa Smart Guide mobile application.
- Carnival Cruise Australia announced a job scheme to enable Vanuatu and other Pacific island citizens to be employed on their cruise liners.
- United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) launched the Green Passport Campaign, which encourages demand for sustainable tourism products and services and greater sustainability within the supply chain.
- South Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO) announced a partnership with the Cruise Liners International Association (CLIA) Australasia to create a platform of information and insights for developing a coordinated and collaborative strategic plan for cruise tourism in the Pacific that would promote the sustainable growth of cruise tourism in the region.

Disaster Risk Reduction - for SIDS requires a broad alliance of actors including the private sector to ensure more resilient SIDS communities. SIDS have the highest risk to disasters and achieving sustainable development will contribute to greater resilience for SIDS. The private sector in SIDS plays a crucial role in working with governments, civil society, UN system and other partners both pre-disaster risk interventions and post-disaster recovery. This includes improving technology for early warning systems and ensuring business continuity during and

after a disaster. Education and awareness raising are crucial components for efforts in reducing disaster risk and in this regard the private sector plays an important role in outreach and disseminating information to the public.

Many SIDS are reliant on tourism and agriculture as mainstays of their economies, thus mainstreaming disaster risk reduction strategies into these sectors will ensure quicker and more effective recovery. The finance and banking sector acknowledge that natural disasters will occur. One of the practical ways they have proactively responded to this fact is to secure disaster alternate sites in each country. The use of robust structures included converted shipping containers and other structures that are cyclone proof, allowing for customers to set up for service transactions and access to customer cash in times when disasters strike.

Partnerships, Initiatives and Recommendations

- Involvement of the private sector in investment for building resilient infrastructure.
- Digicel announced that free access would be granted to its telecommunications towers in all SIDS where it operates for the installation of early warning system equipment.
- ANZ Bank informed of their initiative to continue banking services during times of disasters in SIDS including through the construction of alternative banking facilities in less disaster prone locations.

Renewable Energy - SIDS economies are especially affected by high fossil fuel prices and price volatility. Focussed attention is required on how to enable the transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy. At the same time, SIDS have the potential to access several renewable energy sources, such as solar, wind, geothermal and tidal. Hence, SIDS have the prospects to be forerunners in switching to renewable energy by adopting national renewable energy strategies and building the enabling environment, scaling up existing initiatives, establishing new partnerships, adopting new technologies and having better access to financing. Importantly, SIDS are in a unique position to transition from fossil fuel dependency to renewable energy sources relatively quickly. SIDS can not achieve this on their own, but require

partnerships through a multi-stakeholder approach which includes the buy-in from the private sector.

New renewable energy technologies are available for SIDS to access and likewise private sector partners stand ready to partner with SIDS to facilitate the transition from fossil fuel dependency to sustainable renewable energy solutions. New technologies and companies ready to partner with SIDS include Altaeros Energies' Buoyant Airborne Turbine (BAT) which leverages proven aerospace technology to lift a wind turbine into the strong, consistent winds beyond the reach of traditional towers, LED lights and solar LED lights, submersed wave energy conversion systems and hybrid projects for off-grid communities. Besides focusing on energy generation energy efficiency should be an inseparable part of the transition to renewable energy. Despite efforts by SIDS, lack of funding and low capacities to access available funds remains a significant challenge in forging ahead with deploying new technologies and paving the way to energy transition.

The importance of having a clear policy framework, which is stable and forward-looking is crucial for attracting new investment. Due to their small size, SIDS need to also find a way to aggregate projects to create value and incentivize investment. Furthermore, power utilities need to be included in the planning process to ensure that all actors share and work towards the same renewable energy goals.

Partnerships, Initiatives and Recommendations

- The Enel Group offered to work with interested SIDS in the field of renewable energy, including the development and deployment of power plants harnessing the potential from wind, solar PV, geothermal, hydro and biomass resources of these states. Enel also made available its cutting-edge wave energy technology and hybrid renewable-storage systems toward providing sustainable energy solutions to isolated communities.
- Altaeros Energies outlined partnership opportunities for interested SIDS in deploying their Buoyant Airborne Turbines (BAT) to provide both energy and connectivity/site monitoring.
- Philips Lighting will enhance its programme for energy efficiency in SIDS.

principles upon which financial and other support measures to enhance economic and private sector growth are founded. The channelling of more resources to better assist smaller nations in enhancing trade is crucial in furthering their sustainable development discourse. Furthermore, business legislative reforms, including those governing 'ease of doing business' and promotion of financial growth are essential ingredients for promoting private sector growth in SIDS. The economic empowerment of women, development of competition policy and State Owned Enterprise reforms are factors that enable economic and private sector growth in SIDS.

The use of electronic registration for businesses and the role of credit corporations and micro financing are synonymous with inclusive economic development in SIDS. Resources that are intended for projects that have social and environmental impacts are also avenues through which SIDS could focus their attention. Likewise the individual challenges and constraints of individual SIDS needs to be taken into account

Small businesses in SIDS have made an important contribution to economic development. However, the lack of business skills and access to finance has often lead to the failure of these small businesses. SIDS require assistance to transition from small businesses and from micro financing to commercial banking. Further discussions are needed on the potential hindrances that land tenureship could have on issues of collateral for commercial loans. On the issue of financial inclusion, the establishment of national finance inclusion taskforces have allowed for lessons learned at the regional level and developing national strategies and initiatives that cater to national circumstances. The availability of new resources from SIDS development partners specifically targeted to enhancing the private sector in developing countries remains a high priority for SIDS. The need for SIDS to strategize to access these newly available resources is paramount and the need for collaboration remains key.

SIDS need to develop bankable project proposals and will likewise require assistance on this issue. On the other hand the need for effective implementation of bankable projects is equally important. Standardisation of private sector practices can also contribute towards facilitating movement between markets and encourage trade and economic growth. Achieving value added chains and ensuring appropriate returns on investment need to be supported.

Finance and Support Measures For SIDS Private Sector - Political leadership, will, and an enabling environment are the core

Partnerships, Initiatives and Recommendations

- Announcement of 600million euro through the EU-ACP to enhance private sector growth in developing countries, including SIDS.
- European Investment Bank (EIB) committed to promoting small business, access to finance, and development of business partnerships in SIDS and will promote capacity of SIDS private sector to access EIB funding.
- Asian Development Bank (ADB) expressed its commitment to help promote business law reforms and economic empowerment of women in SIDS.
- International Finance Corporation (IFC) expressed its commitment to promote upstream business reforms, PPP guidelines and technical assistance to promote commercial investment in SIDS.

UN-OHRLLS Partnership with iTunes - To coincide with the Third United Nations Conference on Small Island Developing States in Apia, Samoa, and also as part of a broader outreach campaign to shine the spotlight on the 2014 International Year of SIDS, UN-OHRLLS partnered with Apple's iTunes which will feature a brand new Small Islands category as part of its music offerings. The Small Islands music category was launched on 25 August, 2014 and featured on the iTunes front page for two weeks (including the duration of the conference).

In this partnership, collaboration with the world's largest online music store is an opportunity to showcase to the world the extraordinary and vibrant musical heritage from SIDS and bring about increased awareness of new and emerging music artists from SIDS.

South-South Technology Transfer Facility - The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC), in partnership with UN-OHRLLS launched the South-South Technology Transfer Facility for the SIDS on 30 August 2014. The launch was formally announced on 1 September 2014 during the Multi-stakeholder Partnership Dialogues Session on "Sustainable Economic Development".

The primary purpose of setting up this facility is to transfer appropriate technologies from providers to recipient SIDS, in an effort to improve SIDS' access to global market. The facility also aims to improve

access to financing by setting up an investment scheme. Utilizing a Public-Private-partnership approach, technology providers and investors from both Southern and Northern countries can be matched with the relevant business opportunities in SIDS.

As an initial offering of the Facility, UNOSSC hosted an online and on-site business Matchmaking Space, which offered participants an opportunity to network and to communicate their needs and offers over the two-day duration of the forum. As a result of this service, 48 enterprises from 15 countries participated, representing a range of sectors including tourism, agriculture, clean and renewable energies, telecommunications and financial services. Three service agreements were signed which will help connect participating companies to the wider SS-GATE network currently spanning over 39 countries and 49 operational centres.

Partnerships, Initiatives and Recommendations

- Launch of the South-South Technology Transfer Facility for SIDS, a partnership between UNOSSC and UNOHRLLS
- A partnership MOU was signed between UNOSSC and the Pacific Islands Private Sector Organization (PIPSO) to strengthen SS-GATE's regional presence in the Asia Pacific.
- Discussions between the UN Office of South-South Cooperation and the Samoa Chamber of Commerce in establishing a Country Centre for SS-Gate in Samoa