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CONCLUDING REMARKS

**Closing Session of the Third International Conference on Small Island
Developing States**

Apia, Samoa - 4 September 2014

Honourable Prime Minister Tuilaepa,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Talofa,

We have now completed our work here in Samoa.

The outcome document you have adopted – SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action – the Samoa Pathway - represents an enduring legacy for this historic Conference.

The Samoa Pathway embodies the renewed political commitment of the international community to the sustainable development of SIDS. Bearing testimony to this are the hundreds of partnerships launched by governments, UN system organizations, the business sector and the civil society.

We take pride in this extraordinary accomplishment.

Let us recognize once again the extraordinary leadership of Samoa, the collective engagement of SIDS, and the unwavering support of SIDS partners.

The international community has heard SIDS voices, loud and clear.

SIDS have been hurt by many adverse effects including climate change, the global economic crisis, growing trade imbalances, and increased indebtedness. All combined, these hamper the ability of SIDS to sustain growth.

These are but a few major challenges facing SIDS. Throughout this conference we have heard your concerns, and your recommendations on how to tackle these challenges.

Scanning SIDS vulnerabilities, many delegates underscored the critical importance of preserving healthy oceans and seas, SIDS ecosystems and biodiversity.

Many speakers called for strengthening disaster risk reduction, including through the post-Hyogo framework, to help build SIDS resilience.

Similarly, many participants pointed out that renewed efforts by SIDS at domestic resource mobilization, must be matched by innovative measures from global financial institutions to promote SIDS debt sustainability.

Others highlighted the urgent need to increase the share of renewable energy, advance the green economy, and spur innovative solutions.

Many of you pointed to social issues. You called for robust efforts to enhance the quality of education, improve public health and reduce the high prevalence of communicable and non-communicable diseases.

You also emphasized the multi-faceted nature of the challenges and the need for integrated action. You stressed:

- The need for an integrated approach to poverty eradication, social justice and environmental protection;
- The need for a people-centred post-2015 development agenda that will measure progress – not merely by GDP – but through a holistic approach that takes into account vulnerabilities, as well as priorities, of SIDS.
- The need for a legal agreement on climate change in Paris in 2015.
- And the need for gender empowerment and the elimination of any form of discrimination and violence against women;

On the way forward, you called for:

- A monitoring and accountability mechanism to review progress in implementation;
- An integrative intergovernmental review process through the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, and the recently created High-level Political Forum; and
- Strategic partnerships, including North-South, South-South cooperation, built on mutual trust, accountability and transparency.

And, there was a strong emphasis on:

- New and additional and predictable resources – including ODA – for accelerated implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action, the Mauritius Strategy, and the Samoan Pathway; as well as

- Enhanced capacity building and transfer of technologies

Distinguished Delegates,

With Island Voices being heard, Global Choices being made through the Samoan Pathway, and hundreds of partnership initiatives, we must move on to the next stage of our work. That is accelerated implementation.

Allow me to share with you some ideas:

First, my Department has been entrusted to monitor all the commitments, pledges and partnerships made here in Samoa. We will prepare a report to the General Assembly on the implementation progress.

Second, as called for by the Secretary-General at the CEB meeting in Samoa, the UN family will redouble efforts in follow up to the conference, and provide coordinated support for the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway and the various partnership initiatives.

Third, on the critical issue of financing, we will ensure that your concerns and suggestions will form important inputs to the preparations of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held in Addis Ababa, in July next year.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As so often emphasized during this Conference, SIDS are on the frontlines of global challenges, in particular climate change.

Sustainable development is the only viable option for them; and indeed, for humanity as a whole for our shared planet for our common future.

Let the spirit of partnership and commitment – renewed here in Samoa – be with us all, as we continue our shared journey to a sustainable future.

I take this opportunity to sincerely thank, once again, the government and people of Samoa, all delegations, my UN colleagues, and major groups, for your unfailing support and friendship.

As we bid farewell to Apia, I wish you a safe journey home.

May the Spirit of Genuine and Durable Partnerships be with you!

Thank you, and SOIFUA!
