



NEPAL

Statement by His Excellency Durga Prasad Bhattarai, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary/ Permanent Representative of Nepal to the United Nations in New York and Head of the Nepalese Delegation to the third United Nations Conference on the Small Island Developing States (SIDS), 01-04 September 2014

Apia, Samoa, 03 September 2014

(Please check against delivery)

Your Excellency Mr. Tuilaepa Lupesoliai Sailele Malielegaoi, Prime Minister of the Independent State of Samoa and President of the Conference;

Your Excellencies the Heads of State and Government; Honorable Ministers;

President of the General Assembly, Ambassador John Ashe; the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon; President of UN-ECOSOC, Ambassador Martin Sadjik; Secretary-General of the Conference Mr. Wu Hongbo, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Namaskar! Talofa! Good Afternoon!

On behalf of the Government of Nepal, I have the honour to extend to you, Mr. President, and the Government of Samoa, our most sincere congratulations for hosting this third United Nations Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and assuming its Presidency. We salute the Samoan people's determination to shoulder this responsibility in a larger cause and admire the excellent arrangements made for the Conference under your watch. I bring with me warm greetings and best wishes from Nepal for the smooth conduct and a successful conclusion of this historic event in 2014, the International Year of the SIDS.

In the same vein, I wish to express my gratitude to the Government and people of Samoa for the ever-cheerful welcome and hospitality that have made us all feel at home since our arrival in this beautiful city of Apia.

I associate my statement with the statements of the Group of 77 and China, Group of Least Developed Countries and Group of Land-Locked Developing Countries.

Mr. President,

Nepal takes this opportunity to renew its unwavering support to the SIDS agenda and to express strong solidarity in the cause of this Conference. Nepal joins forces in seeking to effectively address the SIDS' special vulnerability and challenges that have rendered the progress of their sustainable development efforts fragile and uneven. We believe, now is the time for honest and meaningful action by the international community to yield more positive results on the ground so that the SIDS' small size, limited resources, isolation from markets, and the exposure to climate change cease to further inhibit their socio-economic development. We are equally mindful that the multiple global crises should not be unfairly allowed to undermine the SIDS' efforts to combat poverty and hunger, social exclusion and environmental degradation. Nothing should come on the way to their resilience building.

We heard loud and clear from the SIDS' Heads of State and Government and Ministers over the past three days that, of all the challenges the SIDS face, ranging from aid to trade and debt, human resources development to human development, productive capacity building to sustainable socio-economic prosperity, education and health to clean energy and green economy, the challenges from climate change are of overwhelming concern to them. The international community is clear on how climate change undermines the sustainable development aspirations of SIDS and also poses existential threat on many of them. The science is clear on how that could, and should, be handled. What is increasingly frustrating, though, is the lack of requisite collective political will without which little can be done in addressing the SIDS' requirements, including their loss and damage and adaptation needs. In the absence of a comprehensive effort with commensurate means of implementation to address the challenges posed by climate change, based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibility, the numerous programmes of action for SIDS at various levels lack the teeth they need. This Conference should be a game changer in bridging this gap.

Mr. President,

The SIDS agenda is not the agenda of SIDS alone and most of the problems SIDS face are not limited to SIDS alone. The sustainable development challenges have been no less formidable for the least developed and land-locked mountain countries as well. Nepal is already enduring the sharp pinch of erratic weather pattern every year. Only last month Nepal lost over 100 lives when an entire village slid down to a swelling river. The increasingly rapid melting of Himalayan glaciers and the resulting floods and landslides have been devastating to the fragile mountain ecosystem, lives and livelihoods of millions of people and the hard-gained development infrastructure. But, at a different plane, the direct contribution of this phenomenon to the rise in the sea-level, thus endangering SIDS like the Maldives, cannot be overemphasized. As is increasingly becoming clear, the fate of mountain nations and island states is irrevocably intertwined.

In fact, no one can be immune from the ill effects of climate change in the long run. Clearly, to deal with the climate change, our coalitions must be broad in coverage and holistic in approach. Strong partnerships should be the order of the day. Only genuine and innovative partnerships with and among private sector, civil society organizations, information and communication technology leaders, international organizations and governments in all forms of networks and groupings can help us rise to the daunting challenge. What is needed is a sustainable partnership of causes and convictions, and of resolves and real action- all with people at the centre. Climate change is a global common problem and it needs global solutions. It is encouraging to note in the course of this Conference how keenly the process of building right partnerships is being pursued in the SIDS.

My delegation believes the timing of this Conference, just before the Climate Summit in New York later this month and in the run up to the formulation of sustainable development goals and the ongoing post-2015 development agenda process, is most opportune to take solid action, including in providing for new, additional and predictable financial resources and in forging reliable partnerships. Nepal fully supports the outcome of this Conference, Samoa Pathway, and is confident that it will be an excellent vehicle to carry forward the commitments made to the SIDS over the years, in the spirit of Barbados and Mauritius instruments in place. We must make sure no one is left behind in any of the social, economic and environmental pillars of sustainable development.

My delegation lauds the hard work of the co-chairs of the preparatory committee, Ambassadors Karen Tan of Singapore and Philip Taula of New Zealand and other working group conveners as well as all delegations, which came to fruition well ahead of time. We also commend the invaluable guidance of the General Assembly President, Ambassador John Ashe, the unfaltering support of UN Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, the overall facilitation by the Secretary-General of the conference, USG Wu Hongbo, as well as the invaluable advocacy initiatives of the High representative for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS, USG Gyan Chandra Acharya, and the role of the entire UN system, private sectors, and other organizations that have contributed to make this Conference a success.

To conclude, Mr. President, we should spare no efforts in the days ahead in implementing the Samoa Pathway, ensuring its proper reflection in the outcome documents of the forthcoming high-level events, in full cooperation of all development partners of SIDS. I wish to assure you that Nepal will continue to work closely together with SIDS and all others to make that happen.

I thank you.

