

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

**MR WU HONGBO
UNDER-SECRETARY GENERAL FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND
SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SMALL
ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES**

**FLAG LOWERING
Apia Samoa, 4 September 2014**

Reverend Minister,
Honourable Prime Minister Tuilaepa,
Excellencies
Distinguished Delegates
Ladies and Gentlemen

Talofa!

Today, the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States has concluded successfully in Apia, the Independent State of Samoa.

Today, we – each and every one of us – have made history.

Some say this is a bitter-sweet moment.

Sweet, because our work is finished, our friendship cemented, and our lives enriched.

Bitter, because it is a moment to finish up, and to say goodbye to each other.

For me, this is a moment for reflection with delight.

We reflect on the past years of our outstanding collaboration.

We have learned many lessons and acquired new insights.

The UN-Samoa partnership has reached new heights. Many friendships have been borne.

In this closing ceremony, we look at this collaborative journey with pride. The world knows Samoa better, and the better Samoa knows the world.

For me, this is a moment for celebration with great joy.

We celebrate what we have achieved together.

And what we have achieved marks a new milestone in advancing the sustainable development of SIDS.

For me, this is a moment for looking ahead with a strong sense of responsibility.

This ceremony marks the start of our shared new journey – the journey towards the future – a sustainable future, a future we all want.

And for me, this is a moment to say thank-you with all sincerity.

Thank you, Prime Minister, for your leadership and personal dedication.

Thank you, members of Cabinet, the Chief Executive Officers, and the National Taskforce of Samoa for your extraordinary work and tireless devotion.

Thank you, all the delegates and participants, for your genuine and durable support and contributions.

Thank you, all my UN colleagues, for your outstanding performance and team spirit.

Thank you, all the volunteers. You do so many things that we take for granted.

You provide so many services that we are now used to.

You are the unsung heroes.

People say, Samoa is a small country. I say, it has a great heart, and that heart comes from those who serve.

Honourable Prime Minister,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Samoa is a country where big differences can be made. The recent example is that Mr. Ban-Ki moon arrived in Samoa as the Secretary General of the United Nations, and left as an Honourable Chief of the Independent State of Samoa.

We believe that the SAMOA pathway adopted by this conference in this country, will make a big – if not bigger – difference for the SIDS, and the international community as well.

I am convinced that Samoa and the United Nations will remain, forever, true partners.

I salute the national flag of the Independent State of Samoa; I salute the flag of the United Nations.

May the Samoa Spirit of Genuine and Durable Partnership be with us, now and forever.

THANK YOU, and SOIFUA!