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Opening remarks

First meeting of the Steering Committee on Partnerships for Small Island Developing States

ECOSOC Chamber, 25 February

Ambassador Ahmed Sareer,
Ambassador Sebastiano Cardì,
Under-Secretary-General and High Representative Gyan Chandra Acharya,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honoured to join you today at the first Steering Committee meeting on partnerships for Small Island Developing States.

This Steering Committee has grown directly out of the Third International Conference for SIDS, held in September 2014 in Samoa.

The overarching theme of the Conference "The sustainable development of small island developing States through genuine and durable partnerships", has by now taken hold, and the "spirit of Samoa" is informing our approach to SIDS sustainable development, and indeed in the wider context of the 2030 Agenda. I want to take this opportunity to express once again our deep gratitude to the Government of Samoa.

The Samoa Pathway broke new ground and made a number of specific calls to the United Nations system and to the international community. Paragraph 101 called for preparation of recommendations for a SIDS Partnership Framework to monitor and ensure the full implementation of pledges and commitments through partnerships for SIDS.

In response to the mandate, DESA and OHRLLS, working under the guidance of AOSIS, prepared a set of recommendations in close consultation with Member States. Last December, during the 70th session of the General Assembly, Member States formally established the SIDS Partnership Framework.

The GA resolution (70/202) requested the Secretariat to assist in setting up a Steering Committee on partnerships for SIDS with a view to supporting the follow-up of existing, and promote and advocate for the launch of, new SIDS partnerships.

Our dialogue here today is thus not an end but rather a beginning, the first step toward elaborating a concrete framework for the implementation of the SIDS partnerships.

I look forward to working in continued collaboration with colleagues in UN-OHRLLS, UNDP and other UN entities, as well as multi-stakeholders from outside the UN system.

I want to take this opportunity to thank AOSIS for its leadership and Italy for its longstanding support to SIDS. We would not have arrived at this new turning point without the able leadership of Ambassador Ahmed Sareer, and Ambassador Sebastiano Cardi. It is only fitting that they are to serve as the co-chairs of the Steering Committee.

Excellencies,

As you recall, over 300 partnerships were announced at the SIDS Conference. Many are making encouraging progress, including those involving the private sector.

I strongly believe that the Steering Committee, under the leaderships of the co-chairs, will provide a strong momentum for the full implementation of the partnerships for SIDS, and spur new initiatives advancing SIDS sustainable development.

As part of this undertaking, DESA, in consultation with the co-chairs, is developing a reporting template and upgrading the online platform for the SIDS partnerships to regularly report on their progress made.

I believe that this reporting system will be a useful tool to ensure that all important work for SIDS is successfully implemented and is reported to stakeholders in a transparent manner. We will share this with you in more detail in the following presentation.

DESA, working with OHRLLS, UNDP and other colleagues, will redouble our efforts to support the Steering Committee of the SIDS Partnership Framework.

Excellencies,

Last September, world leaders adopted the historic 2030 Agenda, with 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) at its core.

The 2030 Agenda in its preamble section highlights “5Ps” as important elements for sustainable development. Partnership is one of the “Ps”.

The Agenda commits us to mobilize the means required to implement the SDGs through a revitalized Global Partnership for Sustainable Development and highlights the importance of inter-linkages and integrated nature of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Samoa Pathway predated the 2030 Agenda by more than a year, providing a timely contribution to the preparation of the 2030 Agenda.

DESA is committed to continue supporting Member States for the implementation of the Samoa Pathway and the 2030 Agenda in a coherent and synergistic fashion, through strong, resilient, innovative, forward-looking and results-oriented partnerships.

Thank you.
