



**Remarks
by
Honourable Tuilaepa Lufesoliai Sailele Malielegaoi
Prime Minister of Samoa
at
High-level side event of the UN Chief Executive's Board
Manono Media Centre, Conference Room 1, 4.45pm, 1 September 2014**

Afioga Tupua BAN Ki-moon,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I'm deeply appreciative of your kind invitation Mr. Secretary-General to address members of your Chief Executives Board.

For a SIDS leader, this is a rare opportunity that comes only once-in-a-decade.

Thank you for bringing the whole UN family to Samoa. Their presence is a welcome and fitting gesture on many grounds;

- The world's focus over the next few days will be on the unique challenges and special vulnerabilities of SIDS;
- The priority will be on finding joint solutions to implement SIDS sustainable development as captured in the SAMOA Pathway Outcome Document;
- Partnerships launched during the conference demonstrates the importance of partnerships as a reliable and durable means of implementation of SIDS diverse needs and priorities;
- As an international conference of the UN on SIDS issues, and not a SIDS only conference for SIDS, it stands to reason that UN should be well represented.

Mr. Secretary-General,

We are very appreciative of the support the UN system has been extending to SIDS in the overall work of the United Nations in the field of development, peace and security, human rights and respect for the rule of law.

But this is our reality.

Small island states need, more than ever, to work with a coordinated UN system because we need to move quickly to identify and implement programs which will help our nations deal immediately with the threats of sea-level rise and the intensification of tsunamis and other weather abnormalities.

We do not have the luxury of time; we cannot await the lengthy negotiation of emissions and their trading; we need the brains and innovativeness of your staff to deal with these issues now.

We SIDS do not have the people to spare to work out which one of your organizations should be partnered with your sister bodies, as well as with the private sector and civil society, to help us get moving on the road to sustainability and climate resilience.

So we need your support Mr. Secretary-General to ensure that the comprehensive review of the SIDS specific UN institutions is responsive and supportive to SIDS in our collective efforts to address their sustainable development aspirations in the post 2015-development agenda and beyond.

This is an era of increased connectivity and collaboration so it should be possible to achieve a marked improvement in such support for our needs.

We also call for the establishment of a robust global monitoring system that will strengthen the accountability at all levels and ensure adequate and timely analysis of the implementation of the BPOA, MSI as well as the SAMOA Pathway.

The High Level Political Forum will feature as a key point in monitoring the progress of and possibly updating the SAMOA Pathway's implementation and its links to the post-2015 development agenda. How the UN coordinates to accurately reflect progress and reporting this to the HLPF is critical and needs to be a subject of serious efforts by the SIDS Unit and the Inter-Agency Consultative Group and our respective regional agencies and member countries etc.

Closer home, I want to reiterate our region's request on the need for our regional Commission to give closer focus in terms of attention and allocation of resources to our priorities. In the regional scheme of things, our priorities can easily get sidelined given our relatively small population sizes and distance from where the decisions are made.

I also want to raise the possibility of a better distribution of countries and UN agency representation to be served by UN multi-country offices, including Apia. Decisions on such issues should not be taken in isolation without an input from host countries and the island countries that are likely to be affected.

Mr. Secretary-General,

In a crowded mix of partners, the UN agencies should not just talk about the importance of the UN "Delivering as One" they should walk it and practice it all the time. UN agencies are an extension of our national governments, and that reality should not be lost on all of us. SIDS priorities are a matter of record. The time for debate has long gone. We need action. We need implementation of the SAMOA Pathway. We need the UN Board to rise to the challenge and work as one, not in competition with each other over limited and finite resources.

If there is a single take-away message for you from this conference, it is the fact that as a group of UN member states, all SIDS matter irrespective of their economic status, size, and political clout. This often requires tailored and localized approaches which sometimes are not typically deployed by UN agencies elsewhere. Some of you are from SIDS or with close associations and connections with SIDS. Look for solutions. Look for a way around your own agencies procedures to be able to help and assist. Be innovative, be daring and be bold.

Secretary-General and members of your team,

We are delighted to see you here because my fellow leaders know over the coming days you will be able to show us the way to go and identify the means we need to fuel our journey.

Our Conference theme song is "**There is Hope**". Let's use the SAMOA Pathway and the "2014 International Year of SIDS" as starting points of a new era of SIDS work in the United Nations.

I challenge all of you to help turn "**SIDS island voices**" into "**Global choices**" so that there is indeed hope for SIDS today, tomorrow and the future.

Faafetai ma ia manuia.