



PERMANENT MISSION OF SAMOA TO THE TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Remarks by
H.E. Aliioaiga Feturi Elisaia, Permanent Representative of Samoa
to the United Nations
during Inaugural meeting of the Steering Committee on Partnerships for
Small Island Developing States [SIDS], 25 February 2015.

Co-Chairs of the Steering Committee on Partnerships for SIDS,
Under Secretary-Generals Mr. WU Hongbo and Mr. Chandra Acharya
Ambassadorial colleagues,
Dear Friends and supporters of SIDS,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today's occasion is groundbreaking. And why not, after all, through the establishment of the Steering Committee, we are effectively laying the foundational block upon which the successful implementation of the SIDS-specific 2030 sustainable development agenda articulated in the SAMOA Pathway, will be dependent upon.

The Steering Committee is an important deliverable, a much-needed signpost in SIDS journey over the next 15 years. To appreciate its significance, let's not forget that the overarching theme of the 3rd SIDS Conference was "*The sustainable development of SIDS through genuine and durable partnerships*".

To ensure that the "partnerships" theme took centre stage at the SIDS Conference, we broke with UN tradition. We insisted on having 3 days of Partnerships Dialogues, rather than the usual side-events as was the norm then. And we reminded everyone that the partnership dialogues were not for self-promotion, rather it was to provide a window for SIDS circle of partners, public and private, NGOs and civil society to launch partnerships that were SIDS-specific, measureable, achievable, reportable, time-bound and transparent for all partners concerned.

But we went further.

We promised that partnerships launched in Samoa were not going to be a once-only affair, promoted as a deliverable to be signed off the minute the conference concluded and left to be forgotten forever. We insisted that all partnerships launched during the SIDS conference would have a life well beyond Samoa. As SIDS, we deserve to know whether partnerships launched then were truly genuine, which ones can be replicated in other SIDS sub-regions and what were the lessons learnt from these experiences so that we don't repeat the same mistakes over and over again.

To ensure that partnerships launched in Samoa will be reported on in subsequent years to SIDS and the international community, including new partnerships to be launched from time to time, that is where the Steering Committee's role become all the more critical.

Partnerships, ultimately, will be an important "means of implementation". To implement the 2030 agenda, the SAMOA Pathway, SDGs and other global frameworks, SIDS cannot achieve any of them on their own. They need durable and genuine partners, and lots and lots of them. Different partnerships will be forged and developed depending on SIDS priorities from time to time. They can be the traditional North-South, the emerging South-South, the well-tested triangular or even the novel SIDS-SIDS partnerships. Importantly, every partnership matters and none is inferior or subservient to the other. And when you belong to the UN group with special challenges and vulnerabilities in the context of sustainable development, you cannot afford to be choosy.

This is why Samoa views the Steering Committee as a "catalyst" to reach out and to advocate to potential partners both public and private, as a "magnet" to attract and bring them in to appreciate SIDS challenges, and as "glue" to ensure that they work together cohesively and cooperatively for the attainment of SIDS development needs.

We have a long way to go. But at least we have taken this first critical step, so important in our joint journey.

Let me conclude by thanking the Ambassadors of Italy and Maldives for their assumption of the Co-Chairmanship's role and to reassure them of Samoa's full support for the pivotal work expected of the Steering Committee in the months and years ahead.

Thank you.