



*Statement delivered by His Excellency the Honourable Baron Waqa, M.P.,
President of the Republic of Nauru*

United Nations Post 2015 Development Agenda Summit

Saturday 26th September, 2015

Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates

Mr. President,

I congratulate you on your assumption to the Presidency of the 70th session of the United Nations General Assembly. I take this opportunity to also recognize the excellent stewardship of the President of the 69th session, His Excellency Mr. Sam Kutesa, in recommending, “Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, for its adoption.

We further convey our appreciation to Secretary General Ban Ki Moon, for his leadership and vision of the post-2015 development as one that embraces “a life of dignity for all” and “leaving no one behind.” This vision has contributed to the success of Agenda 2030.

Mr. President,

As one of the smallest members of the United Nations family, we are of the view that leaving no one behind is a powerful tenet for a new Agenda – and a bedrock for the paradigm shift we look to achieve in the next 15 years.

On this point, I call on the United Nations to recognise the government of the Republic of China-Taiwan as one of our long-standing development partners to be included and involved in the implementation of this universal Agenda. The Republic of China- Taiwan has played a key leadership role in the development of our Pacific Region and we should not leave them behind.

We must get universality “right” and universality does not mean a uniform approach. It must be fit for purpose whether addressing the challenges by the largest or smallest among us. This means fundamentally changing the way we think and act. We must consider the 2030 Agenda holistically, rather than looking at each issue in isolation. Failing to achieve some of our lofty goals can undermine or prevent the achievement of others.

In this regard, we continue to remain alarmed with the lack of ambitious actions by our developed partners and the international community to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Climate change remains one of the greatest challenges of our time and will continue to pose an existential threat to our island and undermine our efforts to achieve our sustainable development. We therefore insist on a legally binding agreement in Paris that is guided by a long-term temperature goal of well below 1.5 degrees Celsius and consistent with our vision for a safe and secure world for us all.

Living in a vulnerable small island, we often experience the consequences of decisions made globally more severely than others and so can see more clearly the path international inaction is setting us on. This further exposes us to the growing risks of climate-related disasters and we will require targeted and sustained support to establish a risk informed development. For this reason, we are excited with the United Nations Development Programme’s (UNDP) 5-10-50 flagship initiative that aims to build our resilience in the face of disasters and we would be interested to participate as one of the fifty countries for this program. Moreover, we should ensure that our development remains risk-informed and sustainable.

Mr. President,

Nauru with the support of Pacific SIDS advocated the need for a dedicated sustainable development Goal (SDG) on oceans and seas. There is no sustainable development without healthy, productive and resilient oceans. This is, of course, a critical environmental imperative, but there are vital economic and social reasons that are deeply embedded and go to the heart of whether we will be able to develop or not.

For my country, the ocean is the source of almost all development possibilities. Unlike larger countries, we do not have a diversified portfolio of industries. Phosphate mining and fishing constitute the bulk of economic opportunities along with less than a handful of other sources of income.

It is for these reasons that we are pleased that oceans have a central role in the 2030 Agenda and that the need to increase benefits to Small Island developing States from the sustainable use of marine resources is specifically included.

Mr. President,

The SDGs are an opportunity to improve the quality of lives for our people. However, we need to empower our people to be active participants in their own development. Institution building at the national level is critical. And we want to create an environment that is conducive to providing equality and justice for our people, one that respects human rights with an effective rule of law and good governance at all levels.

On a practical side, we need a full and speedy implementation of the Agenda 2030 as it takes effect on January 1st, 2016. An early acceleration period would support our efforts to integrate the SDGs into our national and regional priorities.

We need to *transform* the way we do things -- business as usual is no longer sufficient for a sustainable future. As we recommit ourselves to be good partners for sustainable development, it is also essential that our efforts are matched in a spirit of trust, mutual respect, and equal partnership. We therefore call on our development partners to honor their

official development assistance (ODA) commitments, facilitate transfer of technology and mobilize necessary resources to support us in realizing Agenda 2030.

Mr. President,

In this endeavour, you have the full assurance and support of the Government and people of Nauru for its commitment to action.

God bless the Republic of Nauru and God bless the United Nations.

Thank you.