

# SAMOA



STATEMENT **BY**

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PRIME MINISTER

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TO THE

INTERNATIONAL MEETING TO REVIEW THE

IMPLEMENTATION OF **THE** PROGRAMME OF ACTION

FOR THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL

ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES

MAURITIUS, THURSDAY, 13 JANUARY 2005

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Mr President  
Excellencies  
Ladies and gentlemen

At the outset we acknowledge the travesties of the recent tsunami and extend to all the affected countries, in particular the SIDS members, the heartfelt condolences of my country. This unprecedented tragedy, serves as a stark reminder to us of the fragility of our existence and extreme vulnerabilities that can easily give rise to significant losses, a situation that we as small island developing countries continually face.

Mr President, the Mauritius international meeting provides the opportunity for us to comprehensively review how far we have come in the implementation of the Program of Action for the sustainable development of our small island countries that was adopted a decade ago in Barbados. The review if successfully achieved will ensure that we further reinvigorate the implementation process of the BPoA which remains the blueprint for sustainable development of small islands development states.

We are all too aware that the political will, financial resources and commitment to implement the principles of partnership enshrined in the Program of Action has fallen short of our expectations. We should therefore be more resolute to work closely and collectively with our partners in mapping out an appropriate strategy for the future.

Mr President, we accept that the primary responsibility for the implementation of any strategy towards sustainable development remains with us. However, there is still a critical need for sustained and long term commitment from our partners to focus on the 'special case' situation of SIDS and to take into account their specific vulnerabilities, and the consequential challenges these generate.

We need to be innovative in how we combine resources, efforts and expertise to overcome these challenges and shape the unique processes that are in place for implementation. At the regional level, Mr President, the Pacific Plan, intended to promote greater regional cooperation and integration would complement the implementation of the BPoA.

Furthermore, regional institutions and effective partnerships must strive to tailor strategies and put to action the policy and political commitment agreed to at this Mauritius meeting.

As small island states we need to ensure that education and training benefits of the digital technologies are made available to our countries in the same measure as they are to larger countries. In order to meet that challenge we welcome the proposal for Commonwealth states towards the creation of the Virtual University for small island states. Samoa urges the Commonwealth to take this forward as a matter of priority.

At the national level, Mr President, Samoa has made progress in the implementation of the BPoA and is on target to achieve the Millennium Development goals. However, it is all too evident that there has to be a concentration on the development of natural resource accounting systems which should involve the development of sound information on ecosystems, capacity building and the adoption of relevant technologies. The early implementation of these important initiatives would lay the foundation for a culture of early detection and prevention.

Mr President, we acknowledge the tremendous efforts and consolidated support of partnership initiatives identified as essential to the successful implementation of sustainable development. But it is also our belief that this meeting can only be a true success if collective leadership can demonstrate targeted commitments, appropriate resource allocation for implementation and developing new monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanisms. In this connection we are pleased to acknowledge that the GEF Small Grants Scheme since Johannesburg; has been extended to Samoa and a number of Pacific island countries. The World Bank is assisting Samoa review its institutional arrangements and build capacity so as to improve its capabilities to deal with natural and environmental disaster management. In this regard, we look forward to positive outcomes from the Kobe Meeting in the coming week.

We also invite further support of our development partners through Type II Initiatives and the Kyoto Protocol mechanisms for climate change.

Mr President, I would urge SIDS and regional groups to vigorously engage the donor community to ensure that the outcomes of the BPoA are achieved and further strengthening sustainable development of our respective countries and regions.

Finally Mr President, I wish to congratulate and thank the Government and people of the Republic of Mauritius for having successfully hosted this important international gathering. Mauritius has indeed demonstrated its largesse despite being a small island state as well as its resilience even in the aftermath of the recent disaster.

Thank you.