

# SAMOA



**STATEMENT BY**

**THE HONOURABLE TUILA'ÉPA SAILELE MALIELEGAOI**

**PRIME MINISTER OF THE  
INDEPENDENT STATE OF SAMOA**

**AT THE**

**SIXTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**New York, 28 September 2007**

**Please check against delivery**

Mr. President,  
Distinguished delegates,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

Samoa congratulates you on your election as President of the General Assembly and lends its full support to the agenda that will guide our work during your tenure.

Samoa, in the same spirit, extends to our new Secretary-General best wishes as he leads our organization in new and uncharted waters during these difficult times.

Mr. President,

The high level meeting on climate change earlier this week underscored two fundamental truths,

- that climate change is solvable, with the solution firmly in our hands,
- and the United Nations continues to be an indispensable institution in our search for answers to the global challenges confronting mankind.

From all accounts, the high level event was a considerable success. But success is measured not in the number of statements delivered, nor in the level of participation, but in the political will to translate undertakings into concrete results on the ground to usher in an effective and comprehensive post-Kyoto Agreement. The time for rhetoric is over. We need to convert our good words into deeds

Mr. President,

Climate change, like many other global challenges, crosses borders uninvited. It has no respect for national sovereignty and does not discriminate countries between rich or poor, large or small, and whether resilient or vulnerable. Its dire consequences are real and everywhere for all to see, including those who would prefer to remain unconvinced. Climate change cannot be wished away, and even those countries which

have been in self denial to date, must surely now accept the weight of scientific evidence and concede that climate change, facilitated largely through human-induced activities, poses one of the gravest threats to humankind and the continuation of life in our world as we know today.

Obviously we have failed badly as custodians of the planet and its future. But apportioning blame for the present state of our environment is itself yet another human failing. It serves no useful purpose. Being judgmental will not restore our environment. Those who exploit the traditional divide between developed and developing countries, and ideological and political differences, do so conveniently to mask their unwillingness to be part of the solution to an impending catastrophe.

Climate change is a societal problem requiring a decisive response from the world community. It is a global challenge that should unite us. In division, there is little we can do. But as a truly united world community, there is a great deal that would be achieved, to at least arrest and even reverse the threat of climate change. A timely example of what can be achieved when the political commitment to cooperate is present, is "*The Pacific Alliance for Sustainability*", an innovative approach by the Global Environment Facility for expedited access to GEF resources by Pacific island countries to meet some of their adaptation and mitigation needs in climate change.

Mr. President,

The United Nations remains our last best hope to provide the political will and the necessary commitment to turn the tide against climate change.

Samoa calls upon those member states of our organization in position of world leadership to lead the charge in finding and implementing solutions to the causes of climate change. As present custodians of our world's environment, we owe it to our children and future generations to do what needs to be done quickly, and decisively, before we run out of time. It is therefore imperative to complete a post-2012 Climate Change Agreement that is effective, binding, capable of

swift implementation and universally owned and respected by the 192 UN member states.

Mr. President,  
Distinguished delegates.

In the global work that needs to be done to address climate change, and indeed in any of the other weighty challenges facing our world, we naturally look to nations in position of leadership to lead by good example.

In the all important pillars of the United Nations in economic development, human rights, peace and security, nations in leadership roles must as a matter of principle protect the interests of the weak and vulnerable. They should accord priority and give their full attention to finding solutions to issues of global concern.

In the same way that nations in leadership roles are called to account in doing the right thing for our world, so must all the member states of the UN uphold their part of the bargain in the work that needs to be done. Without this cooperation from all member states, reaching the objectives we all know should be achieved, would continue to elude us.

Solutions to liberate our world from the tyranny and futility of war, the social and economic inequalities that we are trapped in, and the uncontrolled and wild spread of epidemic diseases, have all been mapped out. These have been discussed, debated, negotiated and in most cases agreed to, over the life of our organization.

As with climate change, global long term challenges that continue to remain unsolved should be approached collectively and positively within the UN framework. An integrated approach is desirable given the interconnectedness and the mutually reinforcing nature of the issues. This calls for visionary and far-sighted leaders, statesmen and stateswomen who are not deterred to make the right decisions.

This is a big ask in a world of unequal resource endowments, size, status and strength where national interests take precedence over the global good, where policy selected is not because it is the correct and right thing to do, but whether it will be acceptable to the voting constituents, how much it will cost and who pays the bill at the end of the day.

But times are changing.

The world is one global family, and no country exists in isolation. Inter-dependence is the norm, and none is immune from the reaches of the global problems challenging our very existence. As history has shown, no one country, however powerful and willing can remain aloof and be able to solve all these problems on its own. The United Nations therefore remains the best means to achieve multilateral cooperation in so many important areas. With unity of purpose and mind amongst our UN membership, we would have every reason to be optimistic in finding solutions to the problems that beset our world.

Mr. President,

This is why Samoa is supportive of the efforts to strengthen and reform the UN and its constituent parts to make them cost effective and efficient when responding to the needs of the stakeholders. Central to the re-organization is a revitalized General Assembly as the primary policy and decision making organ of the United Nations, with a functioning Security Council whose membership should be increased in both categories to mirror present day realities, including those with the capacity and the disposition to contribute to the Council's work and its legitimacy. Moreover, we encourage efforts underway to streamline the work of the different UN agencies to eliminate wastage of resources and unnecessary duplication of time and effort.

In the Pacific region, the long-promised UN presence in island states where the organization is not represented has yet to materialize. This is unfortunate given the time lapse and the importance island leaders attached to the enhanced visibility of the UN to assist in forging

partnerships and building capacity to help sustain the development efforts of island nations.

Mr. President,

Samoa recently hosted the biggest ever South Pacific Games in the event's forty-three (43) year history. The fact that Samoa was able to successfully stage this largest of the Pacific regional events, notwithstanding the paucity of our resources, demonstrated the importance to small island developing states, of working successfully with its development partners. In the particular case of the South Pacific Games, Samoa needed to articulate the importance of sports to the socio-economic development of youth both at the national and at the wider Pacific regional levels in making submission for assistance to its development partners. The Peoples Republic of China was able to respond positively to the call in providing critical infrastructure to meet the Games requirements. Similarly in other key sectors like Education and Health, Samoa's other development partners have accepted our requests and agreed to work with us in our efforts to improve these vital areas.

Mr. President,

The decision by ECOSOC early this year to graduate Samoa from LDC status is clear reflection of the immense value to Samoa of the contribution of its development partners, including Australia, China, the European Union, Japan, New Zealand and a host of multilateral institutions such as the United Nations, World Bank, Asian Development Bank, International Monetary Fund and the Commonwealth, to name some.

As is well known, we argued strongly at the ECOSOC debate and at the UNGA the case of the continued vulnerability of our small isolated island economy with all its attendant disadvantages, lack of natural resources and that it is prone to devastating natural disasters. None of these conditions and risks will disappear after Samoa graduates from the LDC group and we therefore ask our development partners for their continued understanding and support of Samoa's development efforts in future.

Mr. President,

People trapped in the different troubled spots of the world will not be able to experience true peace unless they are consulted and have a voice in any negotiated solution conducted in a spirit of genuine goodwill to find outcomes that create conditions for harmonious co-existence. Samoa therefore welcomes the recent attempt to resume the Middle East peace process and the new hope it rekindles that perhaps a durable solution may finally be achieved where Palestinians live in a permanent and an independent state of their own alongside a secure and safe Israeli state.

Sudan's agreement to the proposed Hybrid UN-African Union peacekeeping force is a courageous start to the humanitarian situation in Dafur and deserves full support. Hopefully this will signal the end to the long and horrific suffering of innocent people caught in the midst of this tragic conflict.

Iraq's early gains through its democratically elected government are being eroded daily by disruptive elements bent on derailing the process to return the country to normalcy. Ultimately, it is the Iraqi leadership that should promote and manage any national reconciliation process to guarantee its long-term sustainability. However, it is also clear that with the wider international community now able to play a more active role in Iraq, their understanding and contributions would be critical in helping with the efforts to bring peace to Iraq.

Mr. President,

I have on previous occasions from this rostrum, expressed Samoa's unwavering support for the United Nations Peace Keeping work. I again reaffirm this support which is underpinned by my country's contribution and involvement in the UN peacekeeping missions in Timor Leste, Liberia and Sudan. Additionally, Samoa continues to be an integral part of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands under the umbrella of the Pacific Forum.

Mr. President,

Terrorist acts committed the world over under whatever pretext or purpose is deplorable and morally unjustified. In its various forms and manifestations, terrorism is responsible for the permanent scars of horror and fear which have gripped international attention in recent years. Terrorism should therefore be condemned in the strongest way possible to send out the message unequivocally that it is neither accepted, nor condoned, and perpetrators should not expect any sympathy for their actions.

Samoa is highly supportive of the UN Anti-Terrorism resolutions and has put in place the legislative framework and implemented measures in line with intergovernmental efforts to combat international terrorism.

Mr. President,

In concluding my statement, I wish to again emphasize the important role of nations in key positions of leadership to the achievement of the objectives of our organization, whether in peace keeping, the environment, poverty alleviation, the fight against terrorism and many other challenges that threaten our world. They must lead by good example, make decisions and take action based on well founded conviction that these are morally and ethically correct for the ultimate benefit and greater good of the world. When nations with leadership role and responsibilities are able to do this, they will find ready support from the rest of our organization's membership.

I thank you.