



Samoa's Statement on the Report of the International Law Commission on the work of its 70th Session under Cluster I of Agenda item 82

As this is the first time for Samoa to take the floor, let me congratulate you and the Bureau of the Sixth Committee on your abled stewardship of the committee's work.

Samoa aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Marshall Islands on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum members and in this regard, commends the members of the International Law Commission for their valuable work in the progressive development of international law and its codification.

Samoa welcomes the inclusion of the topic sea-level rise in the ILC's work programme as this is an area that is of major concern to Samoa and our Pacific region given our vulnerability to natural disasters and climate change overall.

For Samoa, sea level rise continues to affect our coastal industries, livelihood of our local communities, infrastructure and ecosystems. Having 70% of our population residing near the coast within erosion, flooding and landslide zones has made Samoa particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

The use of tools such as satellite data and tide gauge managed by Samoa Meteorology Division (SMD) has helped in predicting sea-level changes up to 9 months in advance and providing our local communities and relevant government agencies with early warnings and prediction information in an effort to minimize risks from impacts of changing sea levels. Our Tropical Cyclone and Severe Weather Early Warning System, and Earthquake-Tsunami Early Warning System as well as various credible sources on the effects of climate change has not only helped us in tracking the increasingly adverse effects of sea-level rise but it emphasizes the urgent need for global action on this issue.

This concern is shared by the Pacific region and is reflected in our Pacific Leaders Communiqué of 2018 which recognizes that climate change is the single greatest threat to the livelihood, security and wellbeing of the Pacific people.

Samoa acknowledges the validity of the legal questions raised by ILC and wishes to place on record its firm support of said legal implications on the effect of sea level rise on our baselines and maritime delimitations, on Statehood issues and issues relating to the protection of persons affected by the adverse impact of sea-level rise.

In conclusion, Samoa joins our fellow Pacific Island members in requesting the Commission to move the topic of sea-level rise to ILC's current programme of work in direct response not only to the urgency of this matter but the progressive development of its nature.

I thank you.