Mid-Term Review of the SAMOA Pathway

High Level Political Declaration

(Zero Draft)

PREAMBLE

1. We, the Heads of State and Government, Ministers and High Representatives, gathered at the United Nations on 27 September 2019, to review the sustainable development aspirations and priorities of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) through the implementation of the Small Island Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway reaffirm our commitment to strengthen cooperation and support towards SIDS in the context of sustainable development.

2. We reaffirm that SIDS still remain a special case for sustainable development and commend the efforts of SIDS in implementing their sustainable development agendas and recognize the importance of this High-level Midterm Review to SIDS as an opportunity to highlight and identify the successes, and challenges. faced by SIDS in implementing the SAMOA Pathway. The international community reaffirms its solidarity with SIDS as they face the combined challenges arising in particular from the geographical remoteness of their islands, the small scale of their economies and the ongoing adverse effects caused by climate change.

3. We reaffirm that SAMOA Pathway, which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, is a standalone overarching framework for guiding global, regional and national development efforts to achieve the sustainable development aspirations of SIDS; building on the Barbados Programme of Action (BPoA) for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation (MSI), and is line with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the New Urban Agenda and the Paris Agreement[1].

4. We therefore recognize the need to identify new and concrete measures, initiatives and partnerships, ., at the local , national ,regional and global levels that have the potential to further progress SIDS implementation of their sustainable development agendas..

5. We remain especially concerned about the continued devastation inflicted on SIDS by the adverse impacts of climate change, including slow onset events, and the increasing frequency, scale and intensity of disasters, causing massive loss of life and infrastructure, displacements and other severe negative economic, social and environmental consequences, such as threats to food security which have and continue to undermine sustainable development in SIDS.

[1] Adopted under the UNFCCC in FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1, decision 1/CP.21.

6. We are concerned also that despite progress made by many SIDS in advancing social inclusion, poverty, unemployment, inequality and exclusion continue to disproportionately affect many people, and in particular women and girls, persons with disabilities, children and youth.

7. We recognize that SIDS, many of whom are middle-income countries, still face significant challenges in accessing concessional financing for the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway, including inherent challenges in accessing financing for development as outlined in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. Building resilience to external economic shocks, natural disasters and climate change depends on success in effecting the necessary investments which would reduce vulnerability. We remain concerned about the exclusion of many SIDS from concessionary financial resources on the basis of their status as middle- and high-income countries and the persistent use of per capita GNI as a criterion for determine eligibility for access.

8. We reaffirm that international cooperation and support plays a critical role in supporting SIDS to address their vulnerabilities and sustainable development goals. We are concerned about the recent downward trajectory of this contribution and call on the international community to reverse this trend. Additional resources need to be mobilized at all multilateral levels to support SIDS efforts;

9. We reaffirm the value of Partnerships as a means of supporting the sustainable development of SIDS and in promoting new, durable and genuine partnerships that follow the SIDS Partnership SMART criteria and are based on the principles of national ownership, mutual trust, transparency and accountability and are consistent with national sustainable development priorities.

PROGRESS, GAPS AND CHALLENGES

10. We acknowledge that SIDS continue to demonstrate their commitment to promoting sustainable development, by mainstreaming sustainable development objectives into national development strategies; enhancing political commitments and public awareness of the importance of sustainable development issues and mobilizing domestic and regional resources to meet their sustainable development goals despite their challenges and vulnerabilities.

11. We note the progress made by SIDS in the areas inter alia of gender, health, education and the environment, but are concerned that based on analyses of the implementation of the priority areas of the SAMOA Pathway as aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) indicators, that the overall implementation of the Social pillar of the SAMOA Pathway lags behind the Environmental and Economic pillars and is exacerbated by the limited or non-availability of data for measurement.

12. We reiterate that improved data collection and statistical analysis are required to enable Small Island Developing States to effectively plan, follow up on, evaluate the implementation of and track successes in the implementation of the Samoa pathway and the Sustainable Development goals.

13. SIDS have not achieved sustained high levels of economic growth owing in part to the ongoing negative impacts of external financial, economic and environmental shocks.

14. We are concerned about the social and economic costs of youth unemployment, the impacts of which may include alienation, deprivation and increased incidences of youth crime and recognize that high youth unemployment also poses a threat to the long-term development of SIDS.

15. While noting the progress made by SIDS in the environmental dimension, we remain especially concerned about the adverse impacts of climate change, which have and will continue to undermine sustainable development in SIDS, as projected in the Special Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change on Global Warming of 1.5°C.

16. We recognize that addressing disaster risk reduction is key to advancing sustainable and resilient development, as SIDS experience some of the most severe consequences of escalating environmental risks, thus SIDS must be prioritized and supported by the

international community to build their disaster risk reduction capabilities and disaster resilience.

17. We recognize the progress made in collecting disaster-related data and the data and analysis for the Sendai Framework Monitor, and further recognize the leadership of SIDS in the development of national climate change adaptation strategies linked to national disaster risk reduction strategies as an opportunity to maximize synergies.

18. We reaffirm that successful engagement in international trade is a key driver for economic growth and sustainable development. We are concerned that SIDS continue to face challenges in engaging in the multilateral trading system heighted by high import dependence, limited resource bases and dependence on a limited number of goods and services for export, small internal markets, limited regional and global connectivity, and lack of economies of scale.

19. We remain committed to exploring innovative financing mechanisms and products, such as blue or green bonds, with a view to improving SIDS access to finance, without conferring additional burdens on their economies. We are also encouraged by initiatives such as Debt for Climate adaptation Swaps to assist SIDS mitigate and adapt to the consequences of climate change while trying to reduce their debt burdens, and encouraging consideration of further debt relief steps, where appropriate.

20. We note that SIDS continue to lack the capacity to fully exploit their renewable energy potential, and as such, remain highly dependent on fossil fuel imports, placing a significant strain on their economies. In this regard, we welcome all initiatives and the strong momentum made towards the promotion of renewable and sustainable energy in SIDS, and call for further work and enhanced support.

. PRIORITY AREAS OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

21. Over the next five years we are determined to:

(a) take urgent global action to address human induced climate change by taking ambitious action needed to halve the amount of global CO2 emissions from 2010 levels by 2030, recognizing the responsibility of developed countries to take the lead in climate action;

(b) act with utmost urgency to rapidly shift financial flows towards pathways consistent with limiting warming below 1.5°C, and to participate actively and meaningfully to address loss and damage, including through the provision of adequate support to initiatives under the Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM) for Loss and Damage, as well as support to enable SIDS to submit proposals to address loss and damage to the Green Climate Fund (GCF).

(c) scale up the mobilization of the means of implementation, while recognizing and encouraging the ongoing efforts to expedite and simplify the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and other Environmental Funds' application processes.

(d) consider and address the security implications of climate change in SIDS, including violation of territorial integrity, more frequent and severe climate-related disasters, threats to water and food security, increased natural resources scarcity, and forced displacement and the human dimensions of climate change, including where necessary, initiatives for preparing communities for relocation.

(e) urgently undertake inter alia, the actions highlighted in the "Our Ocean, Our Future: Call for Action" and implement the respective voluntary commitments pledged during the 2017 Conference and welcome the 2020 United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

(f) support the strengthening of the public health systems in SIDS, to reduce the risk factors for NCDs, in particular the rising incidence of obesity, cancers and cardiovascular diseases, adolescent pregnancy, maternal, newborn and child health, and other emerging issues related to the spread of vector borne diseases such as Chikungunya Virus, Zika Virus, malaria and dengue, noting that these health issues also have grave financial implications, as well as negative impact on economic productivity, as well as support the enhancement of the resilience of national health systems including by integrating disaster risk management into primary, secondary and tertiary healthcare.

(g) continue efforts to address and manage, through innovative approaches, the different types of waste, including marine litter and chemical waste, noting with concern the linkages between the chemical waste management regime, and its implications for human health and social well-being, and recognizing that waste management is a serious challenge for SIDS. [first part of para 44 of inter-regional]

(h) invest in developing, adapting and scaling up the application of technologies, policies, methods and tools to prevent combat desertification, land degradation and drought in different regions, and to boost knowledge exchange, including of traditional knowledge with the consent of the knowledge holders, capacity-building and sharing of technologies.

(i) enhance support to SIDS by creating the enabling environment to scale up new opportunities for economic growth and diversification, including through investments into the marine

sector and creative and cultural industries, which would also serve as a means to reduce vulnerability, build resilience, foster innovation and promote entrepreneurship

(j) strengthen t engagement and participation by youth in the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway, including through incorporating special consideration for addressing youth unemployment in mechanisms to develop resilient SIDS economies;

(k) provide timely, predictable and sustained financial resources to SIDS with prioritized and simplified access in particular for public sources of grant based and highly concessionary finance together with technical support at the national, regional, inter-regional and international levels to ensure the successful implementation, monitoring, follow-up and review of the outcome documents and decisions of all United Nations conferences and processes related to the sustainable development priorities of SIDS.

(l) address the resource needs for national institutional strengthening and capacity building within and across SIDS, including support to build SIDS capacity to access available funding and financing, especially grant and concessional financing. Therefore, we remain committed to exploring innovative sources of financing, such as blue or green bonds, as well as diaspora bonds, with a view to improving SIDS access to finance.

(m) encourage partnerships that support SIDS to mitigate and adapt to the consequences of climate change and at the same time reduce their debt burdens, including consideration of further debt relief steps, where appropriate, which are similar to the establishment of a debt swap task force by the Economic Commission for Latin American and the Caribbean.

(n) scale up the development of genuine and durable partnerships that follow the SMART criteria as a means also supporting the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway and continue to advance partnership modalities to enhance the engagement with all relevant stakeholders at the national, regional and interregional levels.

(o) develop an integrated trade related mechanism or framework for technical assistance for SIDS under the WTO, based on the Enhanced Integrated Framework for Trade-Related Assistance for the LDCs

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(q) promote investments in Science Technology and Innovation (STI) connectivity across SIDS, recognizing that the recently established Technology Bank for Least Developed Countries is

one means by which small island least developed countries can improve the utilization of scientific and technological solutions to ensure the growth of knowledge-based economies and stress the need for similar mechanisms to address the challenges faced by all SIDS.

(r) support national authorities to address the most significant obstacles to the continued flow of remittances, such as correspondent banking relationships and services, and work together on remittance transfer services across borders. We will increase coordination among national regulatory authorities to remove obstacles to non-bank remittance service providers accessing payment system infrastructure and promote conditions for cheaper, faster and safer transfer of remittances in both source and recipient countries, We acknowledge SIDS commitment to enhance the productive use of remittances, as well as their need for continued support to address capital mobility, both domestically and internationally, including through the use of ICT.

(s) assist SIDS to further improve the monitoring and accountability of the SAMOA Pathway, including through strengthening regional and sub-regional Coordinating Mechanisms, which will enable better data generation, statistical analysis knowledge management, education, communication and outreach activities, to support the effective, monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway.

(t) implement concrete measures in support of the transition strategy for SIDS that have recently graduated or are about to graduate from least developed country status, so as to ensure the sustainability of the progress made, and call upon the Committee of Development Policy to address the special case, circumstances and vulnerabilities of SIDS, including in determining the criteria and transition period for graduation from LDC status, as part of its ongoing review;

(u) provide adequate resources to consolidate the progress made and enable DESA and OHRLLS to better implement their mandates in support of SIDS, and to mainstreaming the SAMOA Pathway and issues related to SIDS into the work of the United Nations system.

(v) We recognize that gender equality remains a key challenge for SIDS and commit to stepping up efforts to further promote gender parity and women's economic and political empowerment , as well as to address gender-based violence to enhance the implementation of the Samoa pathway, and call for the continued support from the United Nations system and other relevant stakeholders.

CALLS FOR ACTION

22. We call for:

a) the establishment of a global disaster fund for SIDS to rebuild better after natural disasters, and to support development strategies for the financial management of disaster risk in SIDS.

b) the establishment of initiatives for the development of resilient infrastructure, data collection for development of evidence-based strategies, strengthened disaster risk governance mechanisms, innovative ex-ante risk-informed financing instruments, including financing approaches which incentivize disaster risk reduction, and integration of disaster risk reduction and climate action into policies, programmes and budgets across all sectors.

c) the urgent establishment and introduction by international financial institutions (IFIs), Regional Development Banks and development partners of eligibility categories based on vulnerability measures which would reflect the principle of gradual transition in access to development financial assistance and the abandonment of per capita national income as the primary eligibility criterion for access to concessional and non-concessional development finance assistance. The development needs, the need for tailor made solutions, including post disaster debt relief, should be given greater weight in determining access to international development finance, in light of the special circumstances and vulnerabilities of SIDS.

d) IFIs, and development partners to prioritize access and increase their funding to SIDS, including providing timely, predictable and sustained financial resources and technical support at the national, regional, inter-regional and international levels.

e) Strengthening the protection of our environment and for all to work with the private sector and other stakeholders to implement initiatives to better manage and reduce plastic waste, noting with great concern the increase of plastics in the Ocean and its accumulation in certain areas, in particular those in proximity to SIDS and all countries to integrate into their national development and environmental strategies, approaches to reduce, reuse, recycle, as appropriate, based on the principles of sustainable consumption and production;

f) support for the efforts of SIDS to foster the creation and expansion of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises while taking into account national development priorities, circumstances and legislation;

g) deepened international cooperation, exchanges and investments in formal and non-formal education and training to enable and support sustainable development;

h) support for the efforts of SIDS to strengthen their national statistical systems, for effective monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the SAMOA pathway and in particular to produce disaggregated data; other relevant information systems as well as analytical capabilities for decision-making, tracking progress and the development of vulnerability indices and resilience country profiles;

i) continued support for SIDS efforts to further promote gender parity and women's economic and political empowerment, as well as to address gender-based violence nationally or regionally to enhance implementation of the SAMOA Pathway;

j) enhanced support from the UN system to address transnational and domestic crime and violence, including drug trafficking, illicit trade in small and light weapons, upon request and taking into account the varied national circumstances of SIDS;

k) the World Health Organization to urgently enhance implementation of adopted resolutions, in line with the implementation of the health objectives set out in the SAMOA Pathway, and call on other relevant specialized agencies to coordinate and advance initiatives to address the persistent and emerging health issues of SIDS

l) full and effective implementation of the Global Action Programme on Food Security and Nutrition in SIDS and FAO and other relevant UN specialized agencies to provide SIDS with support to enhance institutional and technical capacity to enhance sustainable and resilient domestic food production;

m) the UN system and international and regional development banks to support the establishment of a dedicated SIDS Water for Sustainable Development Technical Assistance Initiative during the UN International Water Decade, to address the water and sanitation challenges outlined in the SAMOA Pathway;

n) development of a mechanism for SIDS, similar to the recently established Technology Bank for Least Developed Countries, in order to assist them to improve the utilization of scientific and technological solutions for the development of knowledge-based economies;

o) development of an integrated trade related mechanism or framework for technical assistance for SIDS under the WTO, based on the Enhanced Integrated Framework for Trade-Related Assistance for the LDCs, aimed at strengthening SIDS capacity to effectively participate in the multilateral trading system, including with respect to explaining trade rules and disciplines, negotiating and implementing trade agreements and formulating and administering coherent trade policies; [based on para 30 of inter-regional]

p) relevant UN agencies, such as UNCTAD to support SIDS to enhance institutional and technical capacity for trade expansion and competitiveness, while taking into account national development priorities, circumstances and legislation

q) upon all entities of the UN development system to integrate SIDS-related concerns and issues into their respective strategic and work plans, in order to devise tailor-made solutions and projects that would address the development challenges of SIDS, and to include this in their annual reporting on their work programmes.

r) UN DESA and OHRLLS, in collaboration with the Statistical Commission, and other relevant coordinating bodies in SIDS, to develop an indicator framework, to be completed no later than mid-2021 for monitoring and evaluating implementation of the SAMOA Pathway, to better identify gaps, challenges and progress, so that support can be targeted to priority areas lagging behind. The framework should be built on the existing SDG Global Indicator Framework in order to enhance synergies and identify linkages, where appropriate.

s) the scaling up of North-South and triangular cooperation in support of SIDS, complemented by South-South cooperation, including through enhanced knowledge sharing platforms, leveraging the UN Office for South-South Cooperation, UN DESA, UN OHRLLS and relevant International and regional organizations, for the dissemination of best practices and strengthening peer review and peer-to-peer learning processes;

t) development partners to implement concrete measures in support of the transition strategy for SIDS that have recently graduated or are about to graduate from least developed country status, so as to ensure the sustainability of the progress made, and call upon the Committee of Development Policy to address the special case, circumstances and vulnerabilities of SIDS, including in determining the criteria and transition period for graduation from LDC status, as part of its ongoing review

u) continued work on the full and effective implementation of all the recommendations of the Comprehensive Review of UN System Support for SIDS prepared by the Joint Inspection Unit and reporting on the progress made in implementation.

v) the Secretary-General to mobilize the necessary resources, from all sources, and to continue to address the needs resulting from the expanding mandates given to the SIDS unit of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) and the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (OHRLLS), including *inter alia*, the SIDS Partnership Framework, the SIDS Focal Point Network, and the SIDS Global Business Network.

w) the UN Sustainable Development Group to fully implement the findings and recommendations of the Multi-Country Office Review and the Regional-level Approaches, in order to strengthen and increase the presence of the reinvigorated UN Development System in SIDS.