



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

11 September 2019

Excellency,

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 11 September 2019 from H.E. Mr. Satyendra Prasad, Permanent Representative of Fiji, and H.E. Ms. Geraldine Byrne Nason, Permanent Representative of Ireland, the co-facilitators of the intergovernmental consultations of the political declaration of the high-level mid-term review of the Small Island Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 72/307.

The co-facilitators transmit the final draft of the political declaration, which is now under silence procedure until 6:00 p.m. on Friday, 13 September 2019.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to the co-facilitators for their work and leadership in executing this mandate as well as to all delegations for their constructive engagement throughout the process.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "MFEspinosa".

María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés

All Permanent Representatives
and Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York



11 September 2019

Excellency,

We write to you in our capacities as Co-Chairs appointed by the President of the General Assembly to facilitate intergovernmental consultations for a concise, action-oriented and inter-governmentally agreed political declaration of the high-level mid-term review of the SAMOA Pathway.

Please find attached the Political Declaration to be placed under silence procedure until 6pm on Friday the 13th of September.

We would like to thank all delegations who participated in the preparatory process.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurance of our highest consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Prasad", written over a horizontal line.

Geraldine Byrne Nason

Satyendra Prasad
Permanent Representative
Representative

Geraldine Byrne Nason
Permanent

Mid-Term Review of the SAMOA Pathway High Level Political Declaration

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 implementation of the small island developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway, reaffirm our commitment to strengthening cooperation and support towards small island developing States in the context of sustainable development, in line with their national development strategies and priorities.
2. We reaffirm that the SAMOA Pathway is a standalone, overarching framework setting out the sustainable priorities of small island developing states that builds on the Barbados Programme of Action (BPoA) and the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation (MSI). The SAMOA Pathway is consistent with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, and is in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the New Urban Agenda and the Paris Agreement, adopted under the UNFCCC .
3. We recognize and welcome the ownership, leadership and considerable efforts that have been demonstrated by small island developing states, with the support of the international community, in advancing the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway, and welcome the successes and progress made to date.
4. We reaffirm that small island developing States remain a special case for sustainable development and we renew our solidarity with them, as they continue to face the combined challenges arising, in particular from their geographical remoteness, the small scale of their economies, high costs and the adverse effects of climate change and natural disasters. We are particularly concerned that many small island developing States have not achieved sustained high levels of economic growth, owing in part to their vulnerabilities to the ongoing negative impacts of environmental challenges and external economic and financial shocks.
5. We acknowledge that for all countries the principle of national ownership is central to our common pursuit of sustainable development. We renew our commitment to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda as necessary to achieve sustainable development in all its dimensions.
6. We recognize that small island developing States continue to grapple with the effects of disasters.
7. We remain especially concerned about the devastating impacts of climate change, such as extreme weather events, slow onset events, and the increasing frequency, scale and intensity of disasters, due to the particular vulnerabilities of small island developing States.
8. We highlight the synergies between the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement and note with concern the scientific findings contained in the special report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

9. We recognize the need to strengthen international development cooperation and to address the recent declining trend of ODA.
10. We call on the international community to mobilize additional development finance from all sources and at all levels to support SIDS efforts.
11. We acknowledge the value of partnerships as a means of supporting the sustainable development of small island developing States and note the establishment of the small island developing States Partnership Framework. We renew our commitment to working in meaningful partnerships with small island developing States.
12. We note the importance of oceans, seas and marine resources to small island developing States and acknowledge their efforts to develop and implement strategies for the conservation and sustainable use of the ocean and its resources. We reiterate the call made in the declaration *Our Ocean, Our Future: Call for Action* and encourage the fulfilment of voluntary commitments pledged in the context of the UN Conference to Support the Implementation of SDG 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development and recall the decision to convene the 2020 conference.
13. We emphasize the importance of the negotiations for an internationally legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction in line with resolution 72/249.
14. We underscore the importance of eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty. Eradicating poverty is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, as well as an overarching objective of the 2030 Agenda for small island developing States and other developing countries.

PROGRESS, GAPS AND CHALLENGES

15. We recognize that gender equality and women's empowerment and the full realization of human rights for women and girls have a transformative and multiplier effect on sustainable development and are drivers of economic growth in small island developing States. Women can be powerful agents of change. We note and support ongoing efforts in small island developing States to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment, including economic empowerment, and full and equal participation and leadership and to end gender based violence.
16. We note the advances in social inclusion by many small island developing States, but are concerned that poverty, unemployment, inequality and exclusion continue to disproportionately affect people in vulnerable situations.
17. We recognize the efforts of small island developing States in promoting peaceful, prosperous, inclusive societies and safe communities on their paths toward sustainable development.
18. We recognize the need for the prevention, detection and treatment of communicable and non-communicable diseases. We are concerned that these diseases

and the health related impact from disasters are endangering the delivery of quality and accessible health-care in small island developing States.

19. We recognize that small island developing States face significant challenges in accessing sufficient affordable financing for sustainable development, including concessional financing, as their incomes grow. We also recognize the need to devise methodologies to better account for the complex and diverse realities of middle-income countries as outlined in Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

20. We remain committed to assist small island developing States to further explore innovative financial instruments and mechanisms, such as debt for development swaps, debt for climate adaptation swaps, blue or green bonds among others, while mindful of the need to ease debt burdens with a view to improving small island developing States access to finance.

21. We reaffirm that successful engagement in international trade is a key driver for sustainable economic growth and sustainable development. We are concerned that small island developing States continue to face challenges in engaging in the multilateral trading system.

22. We acknowledge that remittances represent a major source of external financing in many small island developing States. We are concerned that they still face significant obstacles to the flow of and access to remittances, including costs, policies and access to correspondent banking relationships and services.

23. We recognize and are concerned by the transition challenges encountered by small island developing States that have or are about to graduate from Least Developed Country status. We remain mindful that graduation must not disrupt a country's development progress. We stress the need for the development and implementation of a viable multiannual transition strategy to facilitate each small island developing State's graduation, with the support of the international community where appropriate, to mitigate against, inter alia, the possible loss of concessional financing, reduce the risks of falling heavily into debt and ensure macro-financial stability.

24. We stress the importance of access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for small island developing States. We welcome all initiatives, such as IRENA and SIDS DOCK, to support small island developing states to fully exploit their renewable energy potential, improve energy efficiency and reduce dependence on imported sources of energy, noting the role of appropriate energy sources and technologies in the energy mix, and call for further work and enhanced support.

25. We commend the ongoing efforts made by small island developing States to make improvements to their transportation connectivity. We recognize the important role of sustainable transport in promoting policy synergies, trade facilitation, infrastructure connectivity, financial cooperation and people-to-people exchange, which are key areas in achieving sustainable development.

26. We recognize that disaster risk reduction is key to advancing sustainable development, in all its dimensions, and resilient societies and note that many small island developing States still experience severe disaster repercussions, including inter alia significant loss of life, bio-diversity and infrastructure destruction, disaster induced human mobility and threats to food security and nutrition.

27. We also recognize the diverse approaches to address climate change, inter alia ecosystem-based approaches, as part of overall adaptation, disaster risk reduction and resilience strategies for small island developing States, in the face of the adverse effects of climate change.

28. We reiterate the need for improved data collection and statistical analysis, including high quality and disaggregated data, to enable small island developing States to better plan, monitor and evaluate the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway, the 2030 Agenda and the Sendai Framework Monitor.

29. We recognize that science, technology and innovation are essential enablers and drivers for sustainable development and in this regard, we reaffirm our commitment to support the efforts of small island developing States to gain access, on mutually agreed terms, to appropriate reliable, affordable, modern and environmentally sound technologies.

CALL FOR ACTION

30. Having noted the progress made and challenges encountered by small island developing states in the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway, we urge the following actions to further advance the sustainable development priorities of small island developing States:

a. targeted measures to eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty. Implementation of nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for the poor and the vulnerable;

b. the fostering, creation and expansion of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises in small island developing States, while taking into account national development priorities, circumstances and legislation;

c. promotion of investments in science and technology in small island developing States as a means of incentivizing innovation and entrepreneurship;

d. the scaling-up of investments for economic growth and diversification, including in ocean-based economies and creative and cultural industries, to serve as a means of reducing vulnerability and building resilience;

e. relevant institutions to learn from each other's efforts to address the diverse circumstances of countries, to better manage transitions and graduation. While recognizing that ODA should continue to focus on countries most in need, we take note of a willingness to develop a wider analysis of new measures, building on existing experiences with eligibility exceptions, for concessional finance and multidimensional assessments, to address limitations of an income-only assessment of development and graduation readiness.

f. support for the strengthening of small island developing States' national institutional capacities to access sustainable development finance including grant, concessional, climate and disaster relief finance to ensure effective and tailored finance solutions. We remain committed to exploring innovative and sustainable private sources of financing, including; blue, green and diaspora bonds tailored to the specific circumstances to small island developing States;

- g. the fostering of the appropriate enabling environment to overcome the obstacles to the flow of, and access to, remittances;
- h. the strengthening of small island developing States' capacity to effectively participate in the multilateral trading system;
- i. the scaling-up and development of genuine and durable partnerships with all stakeholders at national, regional and international levels that follow the small island developing States Partnership SMART criteria;
- j. the strengthening of national and regional statistical systems and capacity to effectively monitor and evaluate the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- k. the continued integration of a gender perspective in priority areas for sustainable development, strengthening of women's economic empowerment and women's full, equal and effective participation in all fields and leadership at all levels of decision-making, the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls, and the promotion and protection of the human rights of all women and girls;
- l. the creation of the enabling environment to facilitate and attract foreign direct investment and financing, and capacity support for small island developing States in this regard;
- m. strengthening cooperation, capacity and investment in disaster risk management in the public and private sectors;
- n. examination of the disaster related funding and support environment with a view to possible development of a targeted voluntary disaster fund, mechanism or financial instrument, coordinated with and complementary to existing mechanisms, to assist small island developing States to manage disaster risk and build back better after disasters;
- o. strengthening of national health systems to prevent, detect, and respond to communicable and non-communicable diseases as well as enhancement of the resilience of health systems including by integrating climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction and management in all health-related activities;
- p. further promotion of sustainable food systems and the combating all forms of malnutrition, including undernourishment and obesity, with a view to ensuring food security, improving nutrition and fostering healthy diets and lifestyle;
- q. strengthening of regional and international cooperation, exchanges and investments in informal and formal education, including technical and vocational training and skills, and the further strengthening of the national education system to ensure high quality and inclusive education, in order to enable and support sustainable development;
- r. urgent and ambitious global action in line with the Paris Agreement to address the threat and impact of climate change on small island developing States;

- s. urge a timely, well-managed and successful replenishment of the Green Climate Fund in order to contribute to the paradigm shift towards low- emission and climate-resilient development pathways;
- t. enhance understanding, strengthen dialogue, and enhance action and support with respect to avert, minimize and address loss and damage, including through the WIM for Loss and Damage;
- u. urgent action to address the adverse impacts of climate change, including those related to sea-level rise and extreme weather events, which continue to pose a significant risk to small island developing States and to their efforts to achieve sustainable development and, for many represent the gravest of threats to their survival and viability, including, for some, through loss of territory, as well as through threats to water availability and food security and nutrition;
- v. support to small island developing States to mitigate and adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change through diverse approaches, such as ecosystem-based approaches and nature-based solutions, without risking debt sustainability by exploring, inter alia, mechanisms such as debt swaps initiatives similar to the Economic Commission for Latin American and the Caribbean (ECLAC) debt for Climate Adaptation Swap initiative;
- w. addressing through innovative approaches different types of waste, including inter alia mismanaged plastic waste, chemical waste and marine litter, including plastic litter and microplastics;
- x. development, adaptation and transfer of technology and policies for sustainable forest management to prevent and combat desertification, land degradation and drought in small island developing States, and to boost knowledge exchange, including of traditional knowledge, capacity-building and sharing of technologies, on mutually agreed terms;

31. We call upon:

- a) all entities of the UN system to address and integrate small island developing States related priorities into their respective strategic and work plans, in accordance with their mandates;
- b) the World Health Organization to urgently support the implementation of relevant resolutions, in line with the implementation of the health objectives set out in the SAMOA Pathway, and call on other relevant specialized agencies, funds and programmes to coordinate and advance initiatives to address the persistent and emerging health issues of small island developing States;
- c) UNCTAD to continue to support small island developing States to enhance institutional and technical capacity for trade expansion and competitiveness, upon their request, while taking into account national development priorities, circumstances and legislation;
- d) the relevant entities of the United Nations Development System, international and regional development banks to continue, upon their request, to support small island developing States to address the water and sanitation challenges outlined in the SAMOA

Pathway by strengthening existing technical assistance initiatives in line with their mandates;

e) the Committee for Development Policy to give due consideration to the unique and particular vulnerabilities of small island developing States as it continues to monitor regularly, together with their Governments, the progress of small island developing States that have graduated from least developed country status, while looking forward to the outcomes of the ongoing comprehensive review of the least developed country criteria, which will be concluded at the next plenary of the Committee, in 2020;

f) the UNODC and other relevant UN system entities, in accordance with their mandates, to support small island developing States' efforts, upon request, in combatting transnational crime and violence, including drug trafficking, illicit trade in small and light weapons, taking into account the varied national circumstances of small island developing States;

g) the FAO and other relevant entities of the UN system to support the full and effective implementation of the Global Action Programme on Food Security and Nutrition in small island developing States and to provide small island developing States with support to enhance their institutional and technical capacity to promote sustainable and resilient domestic food production;

h) the relevant institutions, funds and facilities to review, where appropriate, their financing instruments in order to maximize accessibility, effectiveness, transparency, quality and impact, in the context of a complex funding environment which presents challenges for small island developing States;

i) UNEP to further strengthen support to small island developing States, including through dedicated programs;

j) UNDP to continue to provide support to small island developing States, upon their request, including through policy and program development implementation;

k) the Secretary-General, within existing resources and in consultation with Member States, to identify the SAMOA Pathway priority areas not covered by the SDG or Sendai Framework, and, if any are identified, to develop forthwith targets and indicators for those priority areas while ensuring complementarities and synergies, and avoiding duplication, in order to strengthen monitoring and evaluation and taking note of the work being done by UN-OHRLLS to develop a toolkit for a harmonized approach of the implementation of the Samoa Pathway as a whole;

l) the Secretary-General to mobilize the resources, from all sources, and to continue to address the needs resulting from the expanding mandates given to the small island developing States 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 small island developing States (SIDS) Partnership Framework, the small island developing States (SIDS) Focal Point Network, and the small island developing States (SIDS) Global Business Network;