



**Statement by the Republic of Maldives on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States
At the EGM: Enhancing the Coherence of SIDS issues in UN processes post SAMOA
Pathway and in the context of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda**

20-21 November 2015

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me begin by expressing my sincere appreciation and gratitude to OHRLLS for convening this workshop. I also want to thank all the distinguished participants who have made themselves available for this retreat and for the hard work that has been put in to facilitate these dialogues. We are heartened to note the traction within UN agencies towards the full implementation of the SAMOA Pathway, and your dedication towards SIDS issues.

This retreat comes at a critical time for us, with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and of course the Samoa Pathway. The interlinkages between the substantive and operational aspects of these agendas present us with a unique opportunity to maximize the benefits that will accrue from them.

We have campaigned strongly and now have our hard won successes etched out in various documents. However, as we know, our real work starts now. The ways to implement our ambitious goals will have to include support from internal and external agencies - and the role of the SIDS unit in UN DESA, of UN-OHRLLS, of UNDP and all other relevant UN agencies will be critical.

Your analysis has shown us that almost 60 UN agencies are responsible for various objectives under the Samoa Pathway. While it makes sense that a vast number of agencies would be charged with carrying out the huge mandate of the SAMOA Pathway, this also poses challenges for implementation and accountability. This also poses a challenge, as we need to be able to ensure coherence within these processes so that we are not only aware of who the responsible agency is, but also what the adequate mechanisms are, when we as SIDS have additional questions for follow-up to the work of those agencies. We also need to ensure that all Agencies are working together, towards a common goal, which is the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway, and not in silos, which is unfortunately, often the case with agencies and their separate mandates.

The many issues and challenges that are covered under the Samoa Pathway stem from the peculiar complexities we as SIDS face, and we are all well aware of them at this point, and I believe I don't need to repeat them to this group. Our struggles with the threat of climate change, prevailing and in some case, increasing poverty, depleting fish stocks,

dwindling freshwater resources, pollution, ocean acidification, degradation of reefs and challenges to food security and employment give rise to the entire spectrum of development issues. Research has proved time and again that by and large the greater the distance of an island nation to global markets, the poorer the society is. Additionally, the remoter the island, the greater the cost to governments in order to provide basic social services including providing physical infrastructure, health services, education facilities or access to communications technologies.

I am very much looking forward to a rich discussion today and to know more about the work plans and coordination between all of you. SIDS have time and again called out for greater coherence between processes and between operations of various agencies. And I am deeply interested to know more about the critical work that is being done to this end. We will not only require deep coordination between processes and implementing agencies but also require support elsewhere. SIDS will require support from OHRLLS to ensure monitoring and follow up processes are not unduly burdensome and also to help in the regional and global follow up mechanisms. Additionally, the new sustainable development goals will need to be integrated into our national programs. This will require assistance from relevant UN agencies so that we are able to fulfill our mandates while aligning them to our national priorities.

I will limit my remarks for now and once again thank you for convening this meeting. Unfortunately, I will not be able to stay with you for the whole day, as I have been invited to another retreat that the ECOSOC President is convening on the organizational arrangements for the global follow-up and review process, where I will once again be making the case for substantive and operational coherence between the various processes and agencies,

I wish you the best in your discussions throughout the course of the day and look forward to the implementation of our discussions and recommendations going forward. Thank you.

Other Talking Points:

Overview on Coherence of SIDS Issues in the UN Processes

- Which, if any, UN agencies are specifically tasked with integrating the many mandates from different agendas, to ensure non-duplication of efforts?
- What kind of present and future mechanisms are there to ensure sufficient communication flows between UN agencies, say for example – DESA and UNOHRLLS – to respond to SIDS issues
- Is there any move to ensure greater participation from SIDS themselves during UN agency coordination to implement sustainable development goals?

Addressing SIDS Issues in UN processes in a coherent manner at the regional level

- What level of engagement can we expect to have in the monitoring and follow up processes for Addis and Post 2015 Development Agenda from regional commissions?
- To what extent could SIDS rely on the expertise of regional commissions to help with alignment of Samoa and 2030 Development Agenda with national development programs?

Other Talking Points

SIDS face extreme economic volatility because our economies are highly dependent on external factors. Even though we have called on the UN repeatedly to integrate vulnerability and risk indexes to determine eligibility for concessionary financing, this has not happened yet. Price shocks are also occurring in part from WTO's trade liberalization policies, and are dismantling arrangements that traditionally have guaranteed markets for island exports. Is the UN trying to engage in this issue, or working towards other mechanisms to ensure smooth transitioning from LDC status?