

**OUTCOME STATEMENT  
MAJOR GROUP AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS FORUM**

**THE S.A.M.O.A PATHWAY<sup>1</sup>:  
ENGAGING FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE**

**People must be at the centre of the S.A.M.O.A Pathway Declaration and Implementation Plan, connected by accountable, genuine and durable partnerships where human rights, gender equality, environmental sustainability and economic justice are the core of all sustainable development pursuits in Small Island Developing States.**

Over 250 representatives from Major Groups, Civil Society Organisations and Networks, Social Movements and Other Stakeholders from the Caribbean, Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Seas (AIMS) and Pacific small island developing states (SIDS) who gathered for the 3rd UN SIDS Pre Conference 'Major Groups and Other Stakeholder Forum' held on 28-29 August, 2014 at Tuiatua Tupua Tamasese Efi (TATTE) Convention Center, Apia, in Samoa call on governments to use a clear and strong human rights and development framework approach to underpin all action plans.

We reiterate the wealth of knowledge and expertise and the vital role of civil society and Major Group as stakeholders is particularly important in these uncertain times for the peoples of SIDS, who are facing the impacts from recurrent global, regional and national financial crises, trade imbalances; increased indebtedness; food and currency speculation, volatility of fuel prices.

### **Human rights**

We call on States to ensure just resource redistribution within local and national budgets to address persistent social inequalities. States must also ensure that environmental degradation is decoupled from economic growth in our island states in recognition of the urgent global and local consequences of climate change, global warming, ocean acidification and sea level rise, and that we quickly move away from unsustainable production and consumption models

Overall, we call for a transformative people-centered approach to sustainable development that delivers development justice - including restorative and redistributive justice, economic justice, environmental justice, gender equality and women's human rights, social justice and universal human rights, and accountability.

All goals, targets and indicators of the S.A.M.O.A Pathway, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Post 2015 Development Agenda must be coherent, and consistent with human rights standards. They must not fall below States' legally binding human rights obligations. Accountability must be imbedded by the inclusion of robust human rights targets and indicators on access to justice, the right to freedom of information and expression, and by ensuring that implementation of laws and policies are consistent with human rights standards.

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<sup>1</sup> SIDS ACCELERATED MODALITIES OF ACTION [S.A.M.O.A.] Pathways

Acknowledging and appreciating the participation of Major Groups, Civil Society and Other Stakeholders through the SIDS process, and highlighting persistent challenges of SIDS civil society in engaging on development issues at national, regional and global levels, we regret that we have not been adequately engaged in the formulation and articulation of the S.A.M.O.A Pathway but we continue to positively and proactively engage with SIDS States and development partners toward a strong, useful Outcome document and implementation plan, both here in Apia and for ongoing use in the Post2015 Development Agenda, SDGs, Beijing+20, ICPDBeyond2014, UNFCCC and other global, SIDS-SIDS and regional negotiations.

The S.A.M.O.A Pathway though it could be strengthened, builds hope for the peoples of SIDS and the next generation. We are pleased that in the very first paragraph Governments affirm their commitment to sustainable development. More importantly governments recognise that the ONLY way that this can be achieved is through a broad alliance of peoples, governments, civil society and the private sector all working together to create the future we want.

### **Inclusive, Accountable, Genuine and Durable Partnerships**

We therefore commit ourselves to partnerships, but only if these partnerships build relationships. A good relationship requires commitment, trust, respect and mutual accountability. In this context, we call on each member State to create the enabling environment and supportive framework for partnership. The elements of those frameworks should include at a minimum, a shared vision, clear governance structures, a regulatory system, freedom of information and expression, inclusiveness, and instruments of transparency and accountability.

#### *Means of Implementation*

Major Groups, civil society and other stakeholders continue to play leading roles and partner with Government and other stakeholders for implementation of sustainable development in SIDS. Critical enabling actions for Major Groups to play an effective role include: knowledge transfer and capacity building of Major Groups; capacity building of counterparts to effectively engage Major Groups in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation; development and strengthening of partnerships with diverse civil society and among civil society, including with non-traditional partners and academia, within and across regions at all levels; enabling policies, structures and processes to facilitate participatory governance approaches that allow for equitable involvement of civil society and citizens in decision-making and accountability for implementation of sustainable development initiatives.

### **Gender Equality, women's human rights and empowerment of women and girls**

We acknowledge the increased focus on gender equality, women's human rights and empowerment in the S.A.M.O.A Pathway document and urge that this important issue remains a stand-alone goal in the SDGs. The Major Group forum calls for an urgent end to all forms of sexual and gender based violence, and an affirmation of sexual and reproductive health and rights. We reiterate that women and girls must never be instrumentalised in sustainable development. Women are not just implementers of development, but full rights bearers, with all other people of SIDS. We call for clear affirmation of personal, bodily, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) as central to enjoyment of all other civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. We must also ensure that sexual and gender

based violence and discrimination includes explicit protection, recognition and implementation of the human rights of all, without discrimination.

### **Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

We call on SIDS to recognise and mainstream disability inclusive development as an approach for achieving rights and as a cross-cutting enabling element for sustainable development to ensure full and effective participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities and their organisations in the implementation of SIDS priorities. We also call for the ratification and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), ensuring that disability rights are recognized in national laws and policies including appropriate financial resources, and that data is accordingly appropriately disaggregated.

### **Youth empowerment**

We reiterate the importance of youth participation, intergenerational justice and inclusive dialogue as a key focus of sustainable development, as further articulated in the Major Group for Children and Youth Statement at the Barbados Interregional Preparatory Meeting and the SIDS 2014 Pre-Conference T.A.L.A.V.O.U<sup>2</sup> Forum Outcome Document. Young people from the SIDS regions are key partners in achieving a sustainable future. It is therefore imperative to provide a platform and mechanisms for meaningful and active participation of young people from SIDS within governmental planning and major national, regional and international decision-making processes. Young people are concerned with the increasing rate of youth unemployment and the existing gaps in the educational system and the need for employment creation, entrepreneurship opportunities. The building of innovative and sustainable partnerships such as eco-tourism and women's employment in non-traditional areas would increase job creation and economic enhancement.

The Forum calls on governments and parliamentarians to remove barriers that deter young and key populations from accessing comprehensive information and services on HIV and AIDS with sexual and reproductive health as a human right. We urge that comprehensive sexuality education is a core need of young people in SIDS and reflected in the Post 2015 Development Agenda, ICPD+20 and Beijing+20.

### **Rights of Indigenous Peoples and Traditional Knowledge**

We are concerned with the minimal reference to Indigenous Peoples within the S.A.M.O.A Pathway document. While the 1994 Barbados Plan of Action, Agenda 21, and Rio + 20 "Future We Want" and UNDRIP<sup>3</sup> highlight the special situation of Indigenous Peoples, they were nearly invisible from the BPOA follow-up and the SIDs preparatory processes. This is contrary to the spirit of "genuine and durable partnerships" envisioned for the 3rd UN Conference on Small Island Developing States.

While we welcome the specific reference to Indigenous Peoples in Paragraph 40 in connection to climate change, the lack of specific mention elsewhere ignores the life-and-

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<sup>2</sup> Toward a legacy of Achievement, Versatility, Opportunities through Partnership and Unity

<sup>3</sup> United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

death struggles of many Indigenous Peoples over their resources and livelihoods, and the inter-linkages to global politics, decolonization, economics, human rights, and environmental issues.

We also strongly reiterates that culture and societies are fluid, socially negotiated and continually transforming for societal needs, so that the rights of Indigenous Peoples necessitates attention to the human rights of indigenous women and girls, as for their wider communities.

## **Environmental Sustainability**

### *Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction*

We call for climate change adaptation, mitigation and loss and damage to be a core part of development agreements in all countries, based on historical contribution, and common but differential responsibilities. We call on SIDS members to press all State Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to urgently commit to ambitious mitigation targets to keep atmospheric warming below 1.5 degrees Celsius. We urge SIDS to impress upon industrial countries to include in their mitigation efforts, increased investment in renewable energy technologies and have this knowledge shared with SIDS under the 'technology transfer' pillar. We call for the urgent financing of the Green Climate Fund to enable SIDS members to implement its adaptation priorities. We also call on all SIDS members to prioritise climate-induced cross-border displacement in the human rights protection agenda, warranting urgent international attention. We also call on SIDS members to prioritise climate-induced cross-boarder displacement in the human rights agenda, warranting urgent international attention.

It is also essential that SDGs and the Post2015 Development Agenda for SIDS include measures that not just protect peoples' lives in the short-term, but maintain their ability to maintain those assets essential to their livelihoods and food security, integrating the welfare of the most vulnerable. This includes ecological care, and protection of animals (live-stock, working animals etc) and wider flora and fauna in disaster and loss mitigation. This must be supported by partnerships that are proven to be useful in SIDS, initiated, developed and implemented by locals wherever possible, and using evidence based research and community, cultural and traditional knowledge to inform urban and rural models of development.

### *Biodiversity and Ecosystems, Sustainable management of chemicals & wastes*

SIDS have significant ecosystems and unique biodiversity, which need to be conserved and used sustainably because they are critical for development of key sectors, local livelihoods and poverty reduction and they reduce risk and build resilience to the impacts of climate change and disasters. For all SIDS protection of land is a critical social, environmental and economic enabler to sustainable development.

Therefore, in order to protect human health and the environment, it is crucial that SIDS governments fulfil their obligations under the legally-binding conventions in the Chemicals & Wastes cluster, including the new Minamata Convention on Mercury. Best available techniques and best environmental practice (BAT-BEP) can be tailored to meet the needs of SIDS across all sectors, including sustainable tourism, organic agriculture and environmentally – sound disposal of wastes (especially hazardous waste).

## *Renewable Energy*

We call for SIDS governments to implement policies to phase out existing fossil fuel-powered plants and switch to environmentally-sound renewable energy specifically adapted to each SIDS territory. In addition, energy efficiency in production and behavioral patterns are pre-requisites in order to effectively reduce and/or eliminate reliance on imported fossil fuels. Incineration of waste as an energy option is to be discouraged due to its high toxicity, and being a barrier for recycling and composting. We further call for a re-distribution of inefficient fossil fuel subsidies towards technologies for storage of renewable energies.

Diversification of the energy mix to include renewable energies which are economically-viable and environmentally sound technology is a key enabler in the sustainable development of SIDS. Decentralization of our energy will prevent reliance on a singular technology and welcome deployment of renewable technologies on a larger scale. This also allows room for unlocking our energy options for the next decades.

## **Moving beyond extractive industries and fossil fuels**

We recognise the threat to the coastal environment and communities and their food security and health from extractive industries, unsustainable production and consumption and fossil fuel dependence. We therefore strongly call for improved oceans health, including regional governance and regulation of experimental deep sea mining (DSM), beach mining, riverine and land based mining; IUU fisheries. We also call for increased partnerships to build capacity for improved fisheries data especially in support of policy on small-scale and subsistence fisheries; the adoption of principles that recognise the interdependence of sustainable ecosystems and sustainable livelihoods (SSLs); the need for an environmental rights and human rights framework for fisheries including gender equality; a biosphere approach to addressing oceans and fisheries; and ecosystem and community-based management of fisheries.

## **Sustainable Economic Development**

We further call for sustainable economic development that delivers partnerships that are about far more than making a profit. Today, thirty-seven of the world's 100 largest economies are corporations. We are therefore very concerned that this level of corporate power will shift further sovereignty from States and multilateral processes at the UN to corporations, and this is not acceptable!

The public sector, whose crucial roles include the financing necessary for poverty eradication, meeting social needs, social protection and financing global public goods, remains essential for a sustainable development financing strategy. All public budgets need to be transparent, open to public debate, gender responsive and allocate adequate resources to achieving these priorities, including through the implementation of international financial transaction taxes. There must be concentrated support for gender responsive economic policies including the integration of women in non-traditional sectors, and their access to financial and investment opportunities to develop women's and girl's entrepreneurship. We must also ensure the meaningful participation of women in the design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of economic and other development goals, policies and programs, as well as during peace-building efforts.

For sustainable economic development we require a major expansion of decent work. These jobs must provide a living wage, comprehensive social protection and full implementation of international labour standards. At present throughout the SIDS we face major problems of unemployment and under employment. These problems are particularly acute among young people. As a result, SIDS face critical social political and economic challenges which require a new sustainable development model that delivers social, economic and environmental justice and which protects public goods from privatisation.

## **Recommendations**

### **Major Group and Other Stakeholders call for:**

1. Affirmation of the stand-alone goal on Gender Equality in the SDGs and into the Post 2015 Development Agenda;
2. Effective remedies and redress at the national level, and strong political initiatives with drawdown from regional level to end women's human rights violations. In order for the advancement of gender equality, we must protect all women human rights defenders, and guarantee their safety and non-persecution;
3. Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) that is freely available, age-appropriate, gender sensitive and life-skills based, and mainstreamed across policy frameworks, curricula, coordination structures, monitoring systems, teacher training, and other strategy initiatives in full partnerships with CSOs;
4. The inclusion of the rights of Indigenous Peoples in the S.A.M.O.A Pathway implementation plan as articulated in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and relevant conventions. This is particularly needed for Indigenous Peoples of SIDS, especially Caribbean Indigenous Peoples;
5. The inclusion of the rights of persons with disabilities in the S.A.M.O.A Pathway implementation plan as articulated in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Relevant Conventions;
6. Urgent and ambitious action on adaptation, mitigation and loss and damage, with specific attention to the associated slow-onset issues of sea level rise and attendant issues, ocean acidification, environmental degradation from mining and other extractive industries including DSM. On the issues of Ocean protection, this requires a ridge to reef approach;
7. SIDS members to specifically include negotiation gains under the Warsaw Mechanism on loss and damage, in all DRR and Climate Adaptation agreements. Loss and Damage is a SIDS priority because it accounts for the permanent loss of cultures, knowledge systems and identity, which are non-economic in nature;
8. SIDS to commit to the development of a comprehensive natural resource management framework policy to ensure that environmental degradation is halted and that SIDS ecosystems are restored, regenerated and protected;
9. Good governance, appropriate legislative framework, standards and regulations – including a vulnerability index for SIDS, and education and training for capacity development;

10. We call for fair partnership in the process of technology transfer, while protecting intellectual property rights of SIDS;
11. The establishment of inter and intra-regional collaboration platforms, stronger institutional mechanisms, tangible international support, integrated planning and execution, better statistics and information, increased absorptive capacity development, sharing of best practices, finance for development, adequate measurement and evaluation;
12. Education opportunities in support of young people, women, men at risk, indigenous peoples, and other marginalized groups;
13. Integration of cross cutting issues, such as gender, sustainable consumption and production, climate change, and the development and/or access to appropriate clean technologies;

## **Conclusion**

Major Groups recognise that this Third International Conference on SIDS is a pivotal moment to influence key wider regional and global policy processes. SIDS issues must be fully reflected in the post-2015 sustainable development agenda, UNFCCC, Beijing+20, ICPD Beyond 2014 and other critical global policy processes in the coming years. Major Groups stand ready to partner with Governments and other stakeholders to advocate the priorities that have been identified in the S.A.M.O.A. Pathway to ensure robust and accountable sustainable development. As equal development partners, we reaffirm our role in the development, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of sustainable development of SIDS.

We reiterate the vital role of civil society and other stakeholders as development partners with SIDS and all UN Member States and the United Nations in supporting, advancing and implementing global, regional and national policies and development obligations, and call for their commitment to respond positively to our aspirations as contained in this document.

We thank the host Government of Samoa, SIDS and other member states, UN agencies and regional development agencies for the opportunity to clarify our Major group, civil society and other stakeholder positions into the 3rd Global UN Conference on SIDS, and toward concrete implementation pathways to benefit the lives of all peoples of SIDS, and consistent with the upcoming critical multilateral development negotiations.

**Ends**

**31 August 2014, Apia, Samoa**