Statement on behalf of Major Groups and other Stakeholders

3rd UN SIDS, Opening Plenary, 10am, 1 Sept. 2014

President of the 3rd SIDS Conference
Secretary General of the United Nations
Your Excellencies

In the spirit of genuine and durable partnerships, I have the great pleasure to inform this conference that over 250 representatives from Major Groups, Civil Society Organisations and Networks, Social Movements and Other Stakeholders gathered for the SIDS Major Groups and Other Stakeholder Pre Conference on 29 August, and called on governments to implement a strong human rights and development framework to underpin all action plans for SIDS. Our full declaration is available online at the SIDS website.

We stress that people must be at the centre of the S.A.M.O.A Pathway Declaration and Implementation Plan, based on accountable, genuine and durable partnerships where human rights, gender equality, environmental sustainability and economic justice are the core of sustainable development pursuits in SIDS.

The wealth of knowledge, expertise and the vital role of civil society and Major Groups stakeholders is critical for the peoples of SIDS, who are facing serious challenges caused by recurrent global, regional and national
financial crisis, trade imbalances; increased indebtedness; food insecurity, volatility of fuel prices, and the threat of climate change.

To address these challenges, 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 and protection of all women human rights defenders

2. Youth participation and empowerment, intergenerational justice and inclusive dialogue as a key focus of sustainable development;

3. 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.

4. 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;

5. Urgent and ambitious action on adaptation, mitigation and loss and damage, with specific attention to the associated slow-onset of sea level rise and attendant issues, ocean acidification, environmental degradation from mining and other extractive industries including
deep sea mining.

6. SIDS members to include negotiation gains under the Warsaw Mechanism on loss and damage, in all DRR 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;

7. 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;

8. Good governance, appropriate legislative framework, standards and regulations – including a vulnerability index for SIDS, and capacity development;

9. Fair partnership in the process of technology transfer, while protecting intellectual property rights of SIDS;

10. The establishment of inter and intra-regional collaboration platforms, stronger institutional mechanisms, better statistics and information, sharing of best practices, finance for development, and adequate measurement and evaluation;
11. Education opportunities in support of young people, women, men at risk, indigenous peoples, and other marginalized groups;

12. Integration of other cross cutting issues, such as sustainable consumption and production, climate change, and access to appropriate clean technologies;

Mr. President, Major Groups recognise that this Third SIDS Conference is a pivotal moment.

SIDS issues must be fully reflected in the post-2015 development agenda and other critical global policy processes.

In closing, we reiterate the vital role of civil society and other stakeholders as development partners with SIDs and all UN Member States in supporting, advancing and implementing global, regional and national policies and development obligations, and call for their commitment to respond positively to our aspirations.

We thank the host Government of Samoa, SIDS and other member states, for the opportunity to share our position with the 3rd Global UN Conference on SIDS.

We hereby commit ourselves to engaging the S.A.M.O.A. Pathway for the sustainable future we want.
I THANK YOU