Madame Chair; Excellencies; distinguished colleagues:

On behalf of the Indigenous Peoples Major Group at the 3rd UN Conference on Small Islands Developing States, as Indigenous Peoples of SIDS are among those on the frontlines of climates change, I thank you for this opportunity to share our views within this historic context.

It is our understanding these Multi-stakeholder Partnership Dialogues would focus on the launching of new partnerships, reviewing existing partnerships, and identifying gaps. Within this framework, we welcome the specific reference to “Indigenous Peoples” in paragraph 40 of the S.A.M.O.A. Pathway in connection to climate change; however, we are concerned with the lack of specific reference to Indigenous Peoples throughout the rest of the document. As we learned with the MDG process, invisibility does not promote genuine and durable partnerships.

With this in mind, we recommend that the implementation plan for the S.A.M.O.A Pathway and related partnerships specifically reference Indigenous Peoples and remain consistent with the United Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and relevant Conventions, treaties, and other constructive agreements.

Mr. Chair, at this time, we would like to commend an existing partnership engaging the Pacific region entitled “World Network of Indigenous and Local Community Land and Sea Managers” or WIN. A primary area of work of UNDP’s Equator Initiative, WIN provides a platform for Indigenous Peoples and local communities to share their knowledge and experience in managing ecosystems, protecting the environment, and supporting sustainable livelihoods. WIN and their distinguished list of supporters have organized a delegation of Indigenous Peoples and local community leaders to attend this conference. **We recommend that the WINS partnership**
be expanded and supported into other SIDS regions such as the Caribbean.

Finally Mr. Chair, we bring to your attention a new partnership in the Pacific Region that also merits attention in relation to Indigenous Peoples and local communities of SIDS.

This partnership, focused on education and adaptation to climate change, is entitled “R.E.E.F. HOUSE: an Eco-Center for Tuvalu.” Its multi-sectorial partners include the Tuvalu Climate Action Network (TuCAN); the UNDP Equator Initiative and its World Network of Indigenous and Local Community Land and Sea Managers (WIN); and the Tribal Link Foundation.

According to the project partners, a center for ecology and environmental education is needed for Tuvalu, a small island nation whose present and future is affected by the changing climate. Community-based climate change adaptation has been identified as the most effective strategy for the future of the citizens of Tuvalu. The R.E.E.F. HOUSE partnership intends to complement the Tuvalu National Adaptation Plan of Action (NAPA) by developing programming in such an Eco-Center that will include a model home and tackle pertinent issues of access to fresh water, renewable energy, local food production and composting waste, as well as increased awareness about climate change. R.E.E.F. HOUSE seeks to fill a significant gap as a local dedicated space is needed for environmental education, training, research, capacity building, workshops, exhibition and meetings. An initiative of this scope adds value and validity to environmental programs, and would provide a space to generate an active community surrounding issues of climate change and building resilience for their collective future.

The Indigenous Peoples Major Group at the 3rd UN Conference on Small Islands Developing States commend this partnership as an initiative that could potentially be replicated across SIDS, based on the needs and aspirations of Indigenous Peoples and local communities of SIDS.

Thank you.