Plenary Statement by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) for the 3rd International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

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ESCAP, by virtue of its mandate is an intergovernmental platform where leaders and top policy makers along with civil society, private sector and other stakeholders deliberate and agree on a common vision and mission.

The SAMOA Pathway is a product of collective thinking and calls for joint efforts in implementing a product of collective deliberation, its action plan reinforces the role of Regional Commissions in defining a road map and nurturing sustainable development.

Delivery of the central theme of durable and genuine partnership of the SAMOA pathway will be outcome driven and result oriented if backed by:

(i) good understanding of the new pathways of regionalism,
(ii) strong regional solidarity among states
(iii) solid program that nurture regional cooperation and integration, and
(iv) development of regional policy, legal and institutional architecture that navigates and implements development agenda based on best practice and harmonized standards.

So how are we achieving this:

(i) Giving the Pacific a new multiple stakeholder subregional platform within the Asia Pacific platforms which has helped define their priorities and its is no surprise that the Samoa Pathway is very much a SIDs
product. Examples of our initiatives are the special sessions of Pacific's within the Asia Pacific Forum for Sustainable development, outreach of Asia-Pacific Sustainable Finance and Asia-Pacific Monitoring, Accountability and Evaluation.

(ii) Pacific challenges and issues have been well recognized in the Regional Commission of ESCAP. It has helped shaped a new ESCAP strategy for Pacific region which effectively aims to integrated sustainable development across all its key pillars.

(iii) At the center of policy making for us has been to equip and institutionalize in Pacific inclusive, sustainable, and green growth path by mainstreaming the SDGs and means of implementation within a holistic planning and policy coordination. Some countries have already started to draw on the technical expertise and knowledge platform of ESCAP on green growth and more to follow.

(iv) For effective development of national strategies, their assessment and operationalization of the sustainable development path, ESCAP works with regional bodies to ensure a common understanding and path of implementation is defined upfront.

(v) at the center stage in these framework is

a. economic and trade diversification which cannot occur without regional connectivity and this has led us to reflect on how we can nurture an enabling environment for sustainable development of maritime sector with supportive conducive renewable policies.

b. how to deal with shared vulnerabilities both of climate changes and its consequences. Within framework of climate adaptation we are working on climate change and migration. If proper frameworks in place there will high payoffs laying precondition for engagement in seasonal jobs and generating remittances for the economy and livelihoods of people.
c. nurturing an integrated and management approaches to support implementation of Palau Declaration on Oceans -- a regional global common.

d. our natural disaster risk reduction efforts are focusing on offering the remote sensing information generated by satellites in our member countries to disaster management authorities to provide early warning signals of weather disruptions.

e. development of Pacific ICT with the rest of Asia through the Asia Pacific Information Superhighway.

f. With support of regional statistics and regional Pacific bodies engaging with statistical bodies of the Pacific to agree on a holistic development of regional statistics and innovations such as on environmental and ecology accounting and use of big data to enhance statistics.

g. Promoting social inclusion at regional level for us will involve strategizing our Pacific Disability forum which has been instrumental in raising political profile of the disability issues, and using Beijing 20 gender platform for focusing on pacific disparities. and other areas.

Regional dimensions are key to generating momentum at the national level and adoption of regional harmonized frameworks that augur well for durable policies and partnerships.