



**Statement**  
**by**  
**Honourable Fiamē Naomi Mataaafa**  
**Deputy Prime Minister of the Independent State of Samoa**  
**at the**  
**High-Level Segment of the United Nations Climate Change**  
**Conference [COP23]**  
**Bonn, Germany, 16 November 2017**

Mr. President,

Samoa congratulates Fiji's presidency for infusing a Blue Pacific essence in our annual climate change discourse and elevating and capturing the unique challenges of Small Island Developing States in our global agenda. Now is the time for focused discussions in our joint search for implementable and durable solutions, a process long overdue.

The Paris Agreement entered into force in unparalleled fashion because it symbolized hope for our people and planet and the survival of sovereign nations some of which are low-lying islands. High ambition was the defining trademark of our agreement. Yet we are not on track to achieve our Paris Agreement goal of 1.5 degrees Celsius. Even the pre-2020 ambition, so critical to avoiding dangerous global warming, and

important to the smooth transition to the Paris Agreement phase, is purposely being sidelined and for some non constructive reasons, lost in the discussions.

It leads one to observe that perhaps some of those in positions of world leadership are being selective and will conveniently assume such responsibilities when it suits their national and/or group agenda. But a true world leader will always be one no matter the circumstances and the consequences. We are heartened to once again hear that the beacon of hope burns on.

As Leaders therefore, we must remain seized of this issue and treat climate change as the urgent inter-generational crisis it is. We need to redouble our efforts to scale up climate solutions through the Marrakech Partnership and the technical examination process – as no country can continue to stay aloof and be unconcerned about the invasive reach and destructive impacts of climate change.

Mr. President,

Nationally determined contributions (NDC) are the core of the Paris Agreement. Their very credibility rests on all countries achieving such commitments. Developing countries will require adequate means of implementation. The Green Climate Fund has made strides to fill the climate finance gap, but more can be done to scale up climate finance. The launch of the GCF Simplified approval process during COP23 is a welcome

development to assist resource and capacity-constrained developing countries to expedite their access to much needed climate funding.

On the Talanoa Facilitated Dialogue, it is essential that it sets the stage for NDCs showing much higher ambition in 2020. We look forward to a rigorous process that is informed by the latest science, including the results of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [IPCCC] Special Report on 1.5 degrees Celsius due in October 2018. It should highlight the needs of implementation required for developing countries to achieve their mitigation objectives. The Blue Pacific narrative adopted by the Pacific Forum Leaders at its 48<sup>th</sup> meeting is fit for purpose and placed to deliver facilitated dialogue for the collective good.

Mr. President,

Adaptation and mitigation are either sides of the same coin. Each deserves equal treatment and priority attention by all parties. We cannot allow adaptation to take a backseat to mitigation. The Adaptation Fund has proven to be a very important and innovative source of finance for small island developing countries. In order for SIDS to continue to usefully benefit from the Fund, we must agree that the Adaptation Fund will serve the Paris Agreement, and that a 5% share of proceeds from market mechanisms go to the Fund.

The record breaking cyclones of this past year are further tragic evidence of the need for a strong loss and damage mechanism. Rapid progress on the Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM) on Loss and

Damage is more important and urgent than ever. We hope that the finely balanced decision to have Loss and damage addressed at each meeting of the Subsidiary bodies until the review of the WIM in 2019, will enable the garnering and gathering of wider support for the WIM to be operationalized ultimately as an integral part of the Paris Agreement Work Programme.

Mr. President,

Time is a premium. We have one year left to meet our self-imposed deadline to complete the Paris Agreement Work Programme. While the negotiations are very technical in nature, it is obvious that large political differences are making progress very difficult - particularly on how the differences of developing countries are accommodated. Early political engagement on this issue next year would be useful. Much greater clarity on the provision of climate finance will also be critical to unlocking these difficult discussions.

Let us focus on what unites and binds us. Climate change is a global problem and that only by working together in genuine partnerships where all NDCs matter and every effort of support counts can we realize the spirit of Hope captured in the Paris Agreement.

Thank you for your attention.