



**Statement
by
Honourable Tuilaepa Lupesoliai Sailele Malielegaoi,
Prime Minister of the Independent State of Samoa
SDG Moment
18 September 2020 : UN Headquarters New York**

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen

The 2030 Agenda and its Seventeen goals is our whole-of-society plan of action to propel the world on a path towards a sustainable and resilient future. Five years after their adoption, implementation of the interrelated goals is more critical and demands more ambitious and accelerated action if we are to end poverty, survive pandemics, fight inequality or reverse the existential threat posed by climate change.

Samoa applauds the SDG Moment initiative and is pleased to be amongst the inaugural group of countries to launch the Decade of Action. Our commitment to the 2030 agenda is underscored by our inclusion in the first group of countries to report on our progress on SDGs in 2016 with our second VNR presented in July this year.

Overall, our reviews revealed both positive gains and some regression in some targets. We have integrated the SDGs, and other global priorities into our national development planning both medium and long term, budgeting, partnership

arrangements, accountability processes and in alignment with regional planning as well. Data collection and inclusive and effective stakeholder engagement was improved. We are pleased with the progress made in linking SDG implementation efforts with our regional and international commitments, including the Paris Agreement, S.A.M.O.A Pathway, the Pacific Framework for Regionalism, the Human Rights, Disarmament and Environmental Conventions. The linkages are essential to building on synergies and identifying gaps for better prioritization of accelerated action and transformative pathways for implementation.

Nevertheless, we face persistent challenges of limited resources, administrative capacity, skills gaps in data analysis and management. Samoa supports member countries requests to the multilateral system to consider all possible ways to lessen fiscal/debt distress and ensure enhanced resilience. The biggest challenge for Samoa is our increased vulnerability to external shocks, disasters and emerging threats, such as health crises. We are experiencing loss of hard fought gains due to the 2019 measles epidemic and the ongoing COVID-19 situation.

Samoa's ability to develop a strategic response will determine the achievement of many of the SDGs. We are using our Second VNR findings to feed into our new 5 year Strategy for Development, inform the Samoa 2040 Vision and our COVID 19 response. It will also feed into the implementation processes for our human rights treaties.

Finally, government will continue to ensure strong and decisive leadership and strengthen our whole of society approach including through job creation, well

funded education and protection to women and girls. These are key to our Decade of Action to improve the quality of life for all, by leaving no one behind.

Soifua