



Remarks

by

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Thank you Hon. Chairman, and Hon. Ministers and distinguished participants.

Disaster strikes everywhere, but LDCs, and SIDS face their impact disproportionately. It is their exposure to the natural hazards, now more frequent and severe than before, and limited capacity, which are the reasons why they are among the most vulnerable within the family of nations. cyclone Pam in Vanuatu is yet another example of disaster as we speak.

I would like to put forth a few observations.

First, the multiple layers of constraints make the prospect of LDCs and SIDS more challenging.

High level of Poverty and deprivation, climate change, natural and slow onset disasters, rapid unplanned urbanization and capacity and resource constraints conspire to make disasters severe and debilitating for LDCs and SIDS, seriously undermining their development prospects. Disasters are a big drag on poverty eradication efforts and sustainable development. Building resilience, early warning and risk reduction are therefore very much an integral part of their development strategy.

For SIDS, their future disaster losses represent an existential threat for some. Besides loss of lives, the global assessment report 2015 states that compared to Europe and Other parts of Asia, SIDS are expected to lose on average 20 times more of their capital stock each year in disasters. The expected annual losses in SIDS are equivalent to almost 20 per cent of their total social expenditure, compared to only 1.19 per cent in North America and less than 1 per cent in Europe. Due to their size, location and capacity constraints, they are disproportionate.

LDCs are other groups which are equally vulnerable, because of their low development indicators and high level of multiple vulnerabilities.

Second, it is important to ensure synergy with all the global processes.

Issues of DRR are fully integrated into the SAMOA Pathway and IPOA. Further to a dedicated section on DRR, disaster risks are elaborated under various sectors such as inclusive and economic growth, climate change, oceans and seas, water sanitation, and forests. This cross sectoral integration is key to build resilience.

It is therefore important that the international community looks at disaster risk reduction and issues surrounding natural hazards integrated into the proposed SDGs and the post-2015 agenda, including in proposed goals on ending poverty, ending hunger, human settlements, and climate change. Mainstreaming them into various sectors of Sustainable development agenda is critical.

The forward looking nature of the outcome of this conference will be critical. The fact that this is taking place before post-2015 development agenda including the conference on financing for development and climate change conference in Paris calls for clear synergy between building resilience and sustainable development and international cooperation.

Thirdly, there is a need for national focus with a multistakeholder approach

With the help and support of the UN system, international institutions and development partners, Many of the LDCs and SIDS have developed their national disaster councils and entities, that shows their commitment to developing coordinated resilience building policies and development strategies involving the whole of society approach. But to effectively implement those strategies, they need comprehensive, multistakeholder and scaled up support from the international community.

Mainstreaming disasters into national development strategy is critical, simply because, they are mutually reinforcing.

Fourthly, it is critical that special consideration to the vulnerable countries in international cooperation in DRR is acknowledged.

For many SIDS and LDCs, the numbers speak for themselves. Given the frequency and enormity of the risks to natural hazards that they face, their efforts to put in place national plans of actions, strategies to reduce risks, as well as efforts to mobilize domestic resources, no matter how successful, they will not be able to effectively build their resilience, without enhanced, coordinated and consistent international cooperation and support. Furthermore, a fair balance in terms of resources for disaster recovery and building resilience should be ensured. We all know that investment in prevention, disaster risk reduction and building resilience is much cheaper than dealing with disasters afterward and they are good investment. Similarly, Risk analysis, risk management and support for these countries to build capacity to do so is critical.

As such, ongoing discussions should clearly urge the international community to come out with strong commitment to ensure adequate resources, including financial resources, appropriate technology support and capacity building for all the national stakeholders in the most vulnerable countries. The support has to be multi-pronged and sustained. One particular initiative that we are working on is to establish a technology and innovation support mechanism dedicated to LDCs. Similarly, Stronger support to help LDCs and SIDS in the implementation of medium and long term national adaptation plans will be essential. It needs to be fully funded with the support from the international community.

There is going to be a big dividend on not only saving lives but also in eradicating poverty and promoting a life of safety and dignity for the most vulnerable people in LDCs and SIDS.

Thank you.

