



Kingdom of Tonga



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Tonga hosts UN regional meeting to review programme of action for small islands in the Pacific

Nuku'alofa, 19 June 2018 – Officials from small island developing States in the Pacific region are meeting in the Tongan capital Nuku'alofa to review progress in implementing the SAMOA Pathway*; the dedicated programme of action for small island developing States (SIDS).

In declaring the meeting open this morning, the Prime Minister of Tonga, Hon. Samuela 'Akilisi Pohiva, said “We are gathered here in Tonga at a critical juncture in terms of our common interests in the sustainable development of our islands. As we approach the 5th year since the world came together in Samoa in 2014 and endorsed the SAMOA Pathway, it is critical that we recall the mandate of the Conference . . . especially in light of related international and regional processes that have come to be, after the fact.”

“This regional meeting is highly important for small island developing States in the Pacific as it helps to chart the future direction of sustainable development for island nations in the region. Tonga has therefore played a critical role in this process. I am certain that the outcomes will add great value to our collective efforts in supporting the sustainable development aspirations of Small Island Developing States in the Pacific and beyond,” said Ms. Fekitamoeloa Katoa 'Utoikamanu, High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States.

The three-day meeting from 19-21 June is an occasion to discuss achievements, challenges and gaps in the first five years of implementing the SAMOA Pathway and to agree on an outcome for accelerating implementation in the region. Substantive discussions are expected to take place in areas including: social inclusion, environment, equitable economic growth as well as addressing gaps in implementation through partnerships. Addressing linkages between the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway and the wider 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Sustainable Development Goals are also on the meeting agenda.

On the margins of the regional meeting, a dedicated partnerships dialogue will also be held for various stakeholders from governments, private sector and civil society to assess the status of SIDS-specific partnerships which were launched at the 2014 SIDS Conference in Samoa.

The Midterm Review of the SAMOA Pathway will take place in 2019 to review all major commitments of the last five years through a SIDS lens – from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals, to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Paris Climate Change Agreement, the New Urban Agenda, and the outcomes of the 2017 Ocean Conference - and how living up to these commitments will help accelerate the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway.

The regional meeting is being hosted by the Government of the Kingdom of Tonga and co-organised by the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs with support from the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and the United Nations and the United Nations Development Programme.

For more information: www.unohrlls.org

Media contact: Mr. Damien Sass (UN Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, UN-OHRLS) - sass@un.org

UN-OHRLS:  @UNOHRLS and  /UNOHRLS

**SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action Pathway is the programme of action for small island developing States for the decade 2014-2024 and the outcome of the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States held in Apia, Samoa from 1-4 September, 2014.