Statement

by

Ms. Fekita ‘Utoikamanu
Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States

at the

Closing of the meeting of the SIDS National Focal Points

Friday, 26 July 2019
Praia, Cabo Verde
I thank Ambassador Fialho Rocha for his remarks.

I also wish to thank all of the moderators of the sessions for their very useful summaries of our deliberations. I wish to add a few general points to take away from our work together.

The adoption of the Terms of Reference for the SIDS national focal points is an important milestone, but there is more to be done. Capacity building and dedicated resources for NFPs, as well as the need for institutional continuity were among key points that were raised.

It was apparent here that a harmonized approach to monitoring and reporting is necessary to drive the implementation of SAMOA Pathway and other global frameworks. We take note of the excellent feedback provided on the draft toolkit, including the need to reduce the burden of reporting in SIDS, while taking an integrated, coherent and coordinated approach to moving the process forward.

In this context, OHRLLS will provide a timeline for finalization of the toolkit in the coming weeks, and will support efforts to introduce the toolkit into the MTR process and its outcome.

We had a very rich discussion on the lessons learned from the VNRs, including the opportunity that the process provides to enhance coordination and inclusiveness in the implementation of the SDGs and SAMOA Pathway. The importance of breaking down silos and strengthening institutions was also highlighted. Perhaps most importantly, it was stressed that efforts to align the SDGs and the SAMOA Pathway should be entrenched in all national systems of implementation.

On the SAMOA Pathway MTR, we had the opportunity to delve deeper into challenges facing SIDS around the key issues of finance, connectivity and resilience building. These discussions will inform a more nuanced approach to the MTR, as well as to the next phase of implementation over the next five years.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you know this National Focal Point mechanism provides a much needed opportunity for the SIDS to share information on the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway, and how different countries are striving to promote synergies with the implementation of the SDGs.

It is important that these important takeaways from our meeting will be fed into the Midterm Review of the SAMOA Pathway and other key meetings this year.

OHRLLS will provide a summary report of this meeting which will be made available in the coming weeks. All presentations will be uploaded on OHRLLS website at www.ohrlls.un.org. I recommend that you visit this website as it is a good resource for SIDS related information.
We have circulated an evaluation form that I would kindly request you all fill in and return to us before you leave. This is an important tool for as we want to get your ideas on how to improve the effectiveness of our meetings.

Your candid assessments will certainly be reflected in the work of OHRLLS, particularly as we move forward with efforts to build the capacity of this network, and as it relates to finalising the toolkit for monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway.

We are committed to continue supporting the national focal points and developing this network to be an effective mechanism to link the UN support to SIDS at national, regional and global levels. We will do it in close cooperation with our UN partners and other important stakeholders.

We are presently working to raise funds for the national focal points to participate in the mid-term review of the SAMOA Pathway which will be held in New York on 27 September 2019. We will inform you as soon as we know the details of the availability of this funding. We very much hope to see you all in September in NY. The next regional focal points meeting should be held in the Caribbean region in 2020.

Thank you all so much again for the very useful discussions and your active participation. I would also like to thank in particular all the moderators and panelist for your important contributions. I would also like to thank the interpreters and all the technical staff who have so ably supported our meetings. Finally, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Government and people of Cabo Verde for so graciously hosting us.

Thank you all.

I will now handover to Mr. Julio Morais for his closing remarks.