Remarks
by
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High Representative
and
Under-Secretary-General

Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries
and Small Island Developing States

SAMOA Pathway Midterm Review
High-Level Luncheon
Mission Transforming Island Lives! The Network of Regional Sustainable
Energy Centers for Small Island Developing States

Delegates Dining Room
1:00 pm to 3:00 pm
27 September 2019
Heads of State
Ministers,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates
Ladies and Gentlemen

I thank you for taking time in your busy schedules to join us for this working luncheon.

I warmly welcome you all.

I extend my appreciation to our co-organisers: UNIDO and SIDS-DOCK.

There is no doubt left in anyone's mind - climate change will impact each and every one of the soon 8 billion people on this planet.

This week has made it more than clear: the time to discuss is over, the time to negotiate on the edges is over the time for ACTION and fast action at that is what now matters.

And action is what the Network of Regional Sustainable Energy Centres launched in Samoa in 2014 is all about. It is so good to see this!

The network is about fast-tracking coordination, about disseminating and building relevant knowledge in south-south and multi stakeholder conversations.

It is about leveraging regional markets for faster, more efficient, more inclusive success.

Some of you may already heard me say it throughout this week, but let me say it again: energy is at the core, is the binding link between the SDGs that make up Agenda 2030. Energy is our strategic driver.

Let there be no doubt, scaling up access to renewable energy, making this transition happen is imperative for inclusive sustainable development in Small Island Developing States.

We must reduce SIDS’ reliance on imported fossil fuels. We must realize that this is urgent, that this is at the core of climate adaptation and resilience.

SIDSD have enormous potential to develop renewable energy systems from the diverse range of natural resources available to them.

I myself recall how already in the late 80s and yes that is last century, in my country we looked at leveraging ocean power and wind energy...and here we are three decades later and so may be let us move a bit faster!

What though needs to be addressed is size with its attendant cost implications and capacity limitations coupled with access to modern technologies and knowledge.
We must remedy on these counts if we want to turn what is potential into reality.

One critical factor in this is regional cooperation.

Regional cooperation is crucial to scaling up. By adopting a regional perspective, we can create economies of scale and promote more ambitious innovations with spill-over effects throughout the SIDS.

Yes, we have the energy-SDG nexus but it is equally important to address the energy-climate nexus.

Nowhere is it more true than in the SIDS that we have moved from climate challenges to a climate emergency.

It is of utmost urgency that for the Small Island Developing States we look into finding integrated approaches to policy development for resilient solutions across various sectors.

Where we have complex goals, we need sophisticated solutions.

Regional networks are key for partners to invest in, to find the solutions by delivering innovative capacity support in SIDS’ priority assistance areas.

And that drives home how important partnerships are and will have to be.

All the necessary political will is there. SIDS have committed to the world’s most ambitious energy and climate goals.

So it is now incumbent on us to address their limited capacities and assist in capacity-building through the whole project life cycle, ranging from preparing bankable projects to their implementation.

Partner countries and organizations must step up, share their knowledge and work with SIDS in addressing capacity gaps. Support to SIDS in simplifying access procedures, in navigating through procedures that govern access to climate finance along with preparing applications and securing funding is the kind of assistance that is impactful and easily shared. So, let us do it!

We also know a lot of knowledge, experience, innovation resides in the private sector.

Development partners and SIDS must work cooperatively to create enabling environments for private sector investment in renewable energy projects.

For this reason, OHRLLS launched the SIDS Global Business Network Forum in Samoa in 2014.
One of the focus areas of the Forum is renewable energy and the network provides a platform for existing and new members of the SIDS Global Business Network to meet and exchange best practices and for building partnerships.

We invite you, we would welcome a close collaboration between the SIDS Global Business Network and the Regional Sustainable Energy Centres, particularly in support of the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway.

All of in this room have the chance to be in positions where we can bring about change. We all want a sustainable, prosperous and peaceful future for our children, grandchildren and beyond.

So, let us take immediate action to expand renewable energy in SIDS. As a global community all sharing one planet we must continue to strengthen our collaborative efforts to support sustainable energy development in Small Island Developing States.

Thank you.