Intervention by
Hon Tuilaepa Lupesoliai Sailele Malielegaoi,
Prime Minister of the Independent State of Samoa
at 3rd High-level Ministerial Dialogue on Climate Finance on
"Translating climate finance needs into action"
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Mr. Moderator, Distinguished Panelists

The Paris Agreement was lauded as a remarkable feat of shared responsibility. It entered into force in record time because it was to our collective benefit to do so. Implementing the Paris Agreement reduces the risk of costly climate disasters and boosts clean energy jobs and economic growth. States parties in good faith provided their Nationally Determined Contributions to implement the Paris Agreement to reflect national commitment.

My government submitted a very ambitious NDC. It was a genuine leap of faith on our part, not because we have the resources to go it alone, but because the Paris Agreement provided the assurance that our development partners involved would provide the financial resources to support us to **adapt** to the impacts of climate change for which we were already engaged and invested in.

Climate finance is an enabler for developing country parties especially most vulnerable countries (SIDS and LDCs) to take more ambitious actions and continues to play a key role in enhancing trust and confidence between Parties. Thus it is essential that climate finance remains high on the political agenda in the COP 24 discussions and decisions.

It is not only required for Small Islands Developing States to **increase their resilience against climate impacts**, but also **enable to increase their mitigation ambitions** to play their role in the fight against climate change. And while Mitigation is equally important, Adaptation will continue to be our priority preoccupation exacerbated by factors outside of our control like our small sizes and vulnerability to climate change.

Three years on, there is still no clarity as to the size of the resource envelope, the types and sources of funding, how they will be reported and accounted for, including their allocation and conditions, if any. Regrettably, there does not appear to be a sense of urgency on some states part to provide transparency on these issues, with some preferring to remain vague, disinterested and uncommitted. I reiterate, Climate change is our priority.

While the Rules of Implementation of the Paris Agreement and the need for Transparency are essential elements to determine whether we are on track for a 1.5 degree pathway, climate finance is the key element and most critical component that facilitates the expeditious achievement of States' Nationally determined contributions. Without climate finance, the Rule Book and other components of the Paris Agreement will be meaningless.

Small island developing states, or AOSIS, came together to advocate as a group because they share one overriding characteristic; their common vulnerability to the impacts of climate change and their being at the frontline against those impacts. Strangely, there seems to be a tendency to take decisions on priority eligibility groups to climate funds based on other criteria, including "development status", not solely on climate related factors. One hopes that such an approach will not inadvertently sideline or disadvantage Small island developing states in the race for a share from the increasingly finite climate finance.

We acknowledge the approval of projects under the various Financial Mechanisms of the Convention to assist small islands developing states in increasing resilience against climate impacts and embarking on innovative ways to transform their dependence on fossil fuels.

But we cannot achieve these goals alone. We need to see a massive scale up in support and investment in climate compatible infrastructure. The **Means of implementation - finance, technology transfer and capacity building are essential to help us achieve our mitigation targets.**

Let me say something about the popular call for the private sector to play a more prominent role in the provision of climate finance. Most SIDS have small private sectors, and some are either non-existent or are basically an extension of their governments which makes private sector involvement limited and not a viable option. That is why SIDS when discussing climate finance prefer to focus on certainties like public funds; grants because these are under the control of development partners. This also points to the importance of international cooperation particularly in the context of sustainable development.

The IPCC 1.5°C Special Report is a "wake up call" for us all. It provides strong scientific support for the disproportionate risks facing SIDS at 1.5°C and beyond and reinforces the caution that if we overshoot 1.5 degrees, **no country will be immune.**

Limiting warming to 1.5°C is still feasible, and there are enormous positive benefits for doing so, but it would require a profound transformation of our development pathways and international cooperation. For SIDS, we need clear guidance on how some of these funding mechanisms will serve the Paris Agreement, we need timely information on projected levels of support and delivery modalities. Our special circumstances drive the need to call for financing support for loss and damage, enhanced access to climate finance and the urgency to upscale resource flows to SIDS.

There is urgency to provide relevant high-level guidance to all the Financial Mechanisms at this COP and it would be an important signal to come out from COP24.

Thank you.