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PACIFIC CLIMATE CHANGE ROUNDTABLE

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ALLIANCE OF SMALL ISLAND STATES (AOSIS)

14 MAY 2015

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Talofa! Good morning colleagues, friends, fellow Pacific Island brothers and sisters. It is indeed a pleasure for me to be back here in Samoa for a second time in less than a year.

It is an honour to have these opportunities to come together in our home countries where we can see first hand what we're fighting for at the United Nations. It is also worth noting that meetings outside the formal UN negotiations like the Pacific Climate Change Roundtable (PCCR), create that needed space for countries to discuss and deepen their understanding of the different issues within the very complex climate change negotiations.

I have been asked to provide an overview of the climate change negotiations leading up to COP21.

As I am sure most of you know, COP21 is the deadline the world has set for itself to conclude a new climate agreement that covers all the

issues with which we are familiar – mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology, capacity building, and transparency of action and support. We began the process of developing this new agreement back in 2012 and reached a major milestone this past March when we left the Geneva session with a complete draft negotiating text.

The text weighs in at just under 90 pages and contains over 100 provisions. In theory, the text now reflects all of the proposals made by all Parties. New substantive proposals have been discouraged. Most paragraphs in the text have several options, and many have options within options. In some cases, the same proposal is reflected in multiple paragraphs throughout the text.

Our first task for the upcoming session in Bonn next month will be to streamline the text. In other words, we will engage in a technical drafting exercise to eliminate duplicate proposals and merge similar proposals when possible. Ideally, the resulting new draft will be significantly shorter and the range of options will be made much clearer and more concise.

At that point, the real negotiations begin as Parties seek to find common ground and narrow the number of options. The ADP co-

chairs have suggested our objective for the session should be to deliver, first, a more streamlined, concise and manageable negotiating text, and second, the outline of a draft accompanying decision, including items that can be left to negotiate after Paris in the interim period of 2015 to 2020.

A full description of the process is contained in the scenario note released by the ADP co-chairs last week and can be found on the UNFCCC website.

Negotiations on a compromise text will continue at the ADP sessions in August and October until we have a final agreement that can be adopted in Paris.

AOSIS has taken strong positions on a number of issues important to our islands. We are looking to place loss and damage on firm legal footing in the new agreement to ensure that the mechanism established in Warsaw is an enduring part of the regime. Some negative impacts of climate change are now unavoidable, therefore SIDS need an international mechanism that helps us deal with the inevitable loss and damage we will suffer.

We have seen over the last few days here in Samoa solutions and best practices within our small island developing states on how to build the resilience of our communities to cope with the effects of climate change. What remains to be ironed out in the Global context is how we respond when the impacts on a vulnerable country exceed our adaptation efforts.

This then leads me to address the issue of finance. SIDS have long struggled to access multilateral financial mechanisms and attract private investment, particularly for urgent adaptation projects. We welcome the progress on the Green Climate Fund to address these concerns, including work on climate finance readiness, streamlining application and reporting obligations for small projects, and allocating a substantial portion of GCF funds for adaptation in SIDS and LDCs.

I would like to also take this opportunity to congratulate SPREP for their recent accreditation as a Regional Implementing Entity for the GCF.

Colleagues, friends, the new agreement should build on this positive momentum to ensure that climate finance in the post-2020 time period is adequate, predictable and accessible. This should include a clear commitment in the Paris agreement that climate finance continues to be scaled up post-2020 using the USD 100 billion as a floor for developed countries' contributions. We also must work to enhance transparency in the delivery of support.

On the issue of mitigation, I know that AOSIS members are working diligently to develop their iNDCs before Paris. SIDS are embracing a renewable energy future and are taking action within the constraints of our often modest capacity. We can see these efforts first hand in the solar panels seen here in Samoa.

It should be noted that the SIDS level of greenhouse gas emissions are minuscule compared to the rest of the world. SIDS contribution to global greenhouse gas emissions amounts to much less than 1% of the global share. However small our GHG contribution, we are all working towards submitting our iNDCs before the October deadline. The new agreement will be applicable to all, and AOSIS is committed to doing our part.

We are also calling on developed countries to take the lead by coming forward with iNDCs ambitious enough to help put the world on a pathway consistent with limiting warming to less than 1.5 degrees. And we need the agreement to address the means of implementation in a clear and balanced manner, so that developing countries have the confidence to bring forward ambitious iNDCs of their own. The agreement cannot be about mitigation only.

We also welcome the progress on enhancing near-term mitigation ambition under Workstream 2. AOSIS has pioneered the solutions-oriented approach in this track of the negotiations, and we have seen all countries engage constructively on topics including renewable energy and energy efficiency. Rarely at the UNFCCC do we see such broad support for a proposal. Workstream 2 is opening up new discussions and new ways of collaborating around mitigation strategies, and we expect Paris to accelerate the implementation of effective policies and good practices, including by establishing a clear linkage between the technical work under Workstream 2 and the political engagement at the high-level Lima Paris Action Agenda.

Our timeline is short. We have less than 20 negotiating days before Paris. Delivering a final text would be a challenge even in the most

favorable political climate. However, we know that there are still some fundamental disagreements among Parties. Therefore we must use our remaining time as effectively as possible.

I expect the June session to be intense, but if we can maintain the productive atmosphere we saw in Geneva, then I am optimistic we will be on track to conclude our work with a strong agreement in Paris.

Thank you.