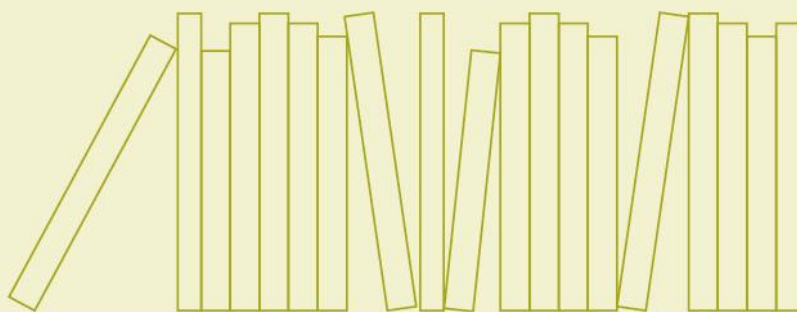


Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

**ECLAC SUBREGIONAL HEADQUARTERS
FOR THE CARIBBEAN**



**Report of the Caribbean consultations
in preparation for the SIDS
Accelerated Modalities of Action
(SAMOA Pathway) Interregional
Midterm Review**



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Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean

Caribbean consultations in preparation
for the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action
(SAMOA Pathway) Interregional Midterm Review
12 October 2018
Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago

LIMITED
LC/CAR/2019/2
5 February 2019
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

**REPORT OF THE CARIBBEAN CONSULTATIONS IN PREPARATION
FOR THE SIDS ACCELERATED MODALITIES OF ACTION
(SAMOA PATHWAY) INTERREGIONAL MIDTERM REVIEW**

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Acronyms

AIMS	Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Sea
AOSIS	Alliance of Small Island States
CANARI	Caribbean Natural Resources Institute
CCCCC	Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre
CCRIF	Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CDB	Caribbean Development Bank
CDCC	Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee
ECLAC	United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
GCF	Green Climate Fund
IF	Integrated Framework for Trade-Related Technical Assistance
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ITC	International Trade Centre
MTR	Midterm Report
NCD	Non-communicable Diseases
NFP	National Focal Point
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization
RCM	Regional Coordinating Mechanism
SAMOA Pathway	Small Islands Developing States: Accelerated Modality of Implementation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
UNCTAD	The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNOHRLLS	United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States
UNSG	United Nations Secretary General
WTO	World Trade Organization

A. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The meeting made the following recommendations:
 - a. That the Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway Interregional Meeting should serve as an important juncture in the SIDS agenda to address urgent and critical issues for SIDS and should take into consideration the special sustainable development challenges and priorities for each country and region.
 - b. That there is urgency for being highly focused on Caribbean SIDS sustainable development priorities.
 - c. That the SAMOA Pathway implementation modalities should be country owned, driven, relevant, current and involve the active engagement of all partners in development. That implementation of this agreement should take into consideration common and differentiated responsibilities at national and regional levels.
 - d. That Caribbean SIDS should develop a five-year plan with pragmatic priorities for advancing the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS).
 - e. That the priorities in implementation of the SAMOA Pathway and the work of the AOSIS should be balanced in addressing all sections of the SAMOA Pathway. This can be exemplified by the current emphasis on Climate Change and not on the other priorities (for example Non-communicable diseases, chemical management, youth violence etc.) as listed in the SAMOA Pathway.
 - f. That at the SAMOA Pathway Interregional Meeting there should be a call for a SIDS specific statement on the Green Climate Fund (GCF). Additionally, the Caribbean Region should undertake a study to better understand the reasons for the current slow rate of access, and to have a suitable road map serving as a tool for supporting more active engagement with the GCF.
 - g. That Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) should provide further background on the “Strategy for Growth and Economic Transformation of Caribbean Economies” and should also seek to raise further advocacy of this initiative in the context of supporting the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway.
 - h. Recognising that the SIDS Partnership is critical in the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway, this subject requires a deeper examination of the dynamics at play for the Caribbean region.
 - i. Given the success and usefulness of this WebEx meeting, that ECLAC should convene similar scheduled regular informed dialogues of this kind which focuses on the Caribbean SIDS sustainable development priorities.

B. ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

1. Place and date

2. The United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean subregional headquarters for the Caribbean (ECLAC) convened a WebEx session to support the efforts of Caribbean countries to take full advantage of the opportunity presented and to address critical issues of relevance at the upcoming Interregional Preparatory Meeting for the Midterm Review of the Small Islands Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA Pathway) to be held from 30 October to 1 November 2018 in Apia, Samoa. The meeting was convened at the office of the ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago on 12 October 2018. This Caribbean consultation which also received the Caribbean Midterm Review Report and the San Pedro Declaration was led by the Government of Belize, which had also hosted the Caribbean subregional preparatory meeting to review the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway.

2. Attendance

3. The Permanent Representative of Belize to the United Nations chaired this dialogue and facilitated the discussions. There were eighteen participants in attendance including representatives from Aruba, Belize, Curaçao, Grenada, Jamaica, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago. Representatives of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean subregional headquarters for the Caribbean (ECLAC), Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (OHRLLS), Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), civil society and a regional expert in sustainable development also participated in this meeting.

C. REPORTING THE PROCEEDINGS

1. Opening of the meeting

4. The Director of ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean welcomed participants to the Caribbean Consultation to prepare for the SIDS Interregional Meeting on the Midterm Review of the SAMOA Pathway. The Director underscored the commitment of ECLAC in advancing the SIDS agenda for the Caribbean subregion.

5. The Permanent Representative of Belize to the United Nations opened the meeting as the designated Chair. She thanked participants for the regional activities undertaken to date in support of the preparations for the SAMOA Pathway Interregional Meeting. In this regard, reference was made to the Caribbean SAMOA Pathway Midterm Review Report prepared by ECLAC and the San Pedro Declaration adopted by the Caribbean Preparatory meeting held in Belize in August 2018.

6. The Chair noted that this meeting was intended as an opportunity for consultation among Caribbean countries, to sharpen the focus of the subregion's positions in anticipation of the SAMOA Interregional Meeting being held in Apia, Samoa, from 30 October to 1 November 2018. Participants were also advised on the other two meetings to be held in parallel on 29 October 2018 as follows: (i) SIDS National Focal Points Meeting (NFPs) Inaugural Meeting and (ii) SIDS Partnership Meeting¹.

7. The Chair recognized that the SAMOA Interregional Meeting would represent the culmination of the preparatory process for the midterm reviews on the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway. She shared that the final review would take place in June 2019 and that countries were urged to use this platform to articulate the scope of assistance and support required from the international community to advance the SIDS agenda. She informed that at this time, all SIDS had completed their regional meetings. In the case of the Caribbean, the session was held in Belize during August 2018 and yielded the San Pedro Declaration². The San Pedro Declaration also included a Caribbean SAMOA Pathway five-year programme of implementation.

2. SAMOA Pathway – Medium-Term Review Report and the San Pedro Declaration

8. In the interest of time, the Chair noted the subjects of the SAMOA Pathway – Medium-Term Review Report and the San Pedro Declaration were being discussed and addressed as part of the tabled

¹ The Interregional preparatory meeting for the Midterm Review of the SAMOA Pathway, the SAMOA Partnership Dialogue, and other related meetings and side events by stakeholders will take place in Apia, Samoa, from 29 October – 1 November 2018, at the Samoa T.A.T.T.E Convention Centre (STCC) (2018), available at: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sids/samoareview/inter>.

² San Pedro Declaration: Caribbean SIDS Regional Preparatory Meeting, San Pedro, Belize, 7-9 August 2018: available at https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/20630San_Pedro_Declaration_Revised_AT.pdf.

discussions and proceedings of this meeting. Therefore, a specific presentation on these two items as per agenda would not be necessary. This was agreed by all participants. ECLAC then thanked countries and partners for the added contributions made for the further elaboration of the Caribbean SAMOA Pathway Midterm Review Report. Based on the observations made during the preparation of the Caribbean SAMOA Pathway Midterm Report, ECLAC concurred with the observations made by CARICOM and Belize, regarding the need for an institutional mechanism to provide sustainable support for the SIDS agenda and to have systematic regular reassessments of the priorities for sustainable development in the Caribbean region. The need for more balanced attention to be given on the priorities of the SAMOA Pathway and to have more transparent, informed knowledge to justify reasons for prioritization of selected sustainable development subjects was also noted. An example provided in this regard was on the current high focus on climate change subjects compared to other SAMOA Pathway priorities such as those of non-communicable diseases (NCD), safe management of chemicals and waste.

3. Preparation for the Interregional Preparatory Meeting for the Midterm Review of the SAMOA Pathway

9. The Chair invited the representative from UNDESA to provide an update of the upcoming Interregional Preparatory Meeting for the Midterm Review of the SAMOA Pathway. The UNDESA representative advised participants that the first two days of the SAMOA Pathway Interregional Meeting would be set aside for the presentation of regional reports, which would articulate the priorities and other urgent issues specific to each region. The Chair emphasized that SIDS Partnership was critical to the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway and therefore required a deeper examination of the dynamics at play. UNDESA assured the meeting that all the relevant reports would be made available on their website prior to the meeting. Additional information on the structure of the agenda was provided by UNDESA.³ (See annex 2 for draft agenda of the SAMOA Pathway Interregional Meeting).

10. Regarding agenda item 4 on strengthening the means of the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway and addressing the challenges in SIDS including partnerships; the UNDESA representative explained that this agenda item will be delivered as four consecutive panel discussions. The objective was to identify detailed and focused priorities in the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway. UNDESA indicated that the presentations were to be very focused and limited to 5-7 minutes so as to afford more time for floor interventions. Thematic subjects to be addressed were listed as: economic, social, civil society and development. These were based on assessments of the major issues highlighted during each of the three regional midterm meetings. In this regard, CARICOM inquired about the flexibility of the topics, suggesting it was critical for the incorporation of land degradation, and water resources, among other issues. UNDESA agreed that other resilience issues could be tabled for discussion.

11. The UNDESA representative further elaborated that priorities for SIDS for the Midterm Review of the SAMOA Pathway was designed to stimulate discussion on how the SAMOA Pathway and the 2030 Agenda could be placed at the forefront of debate within the United Nations especially in the context of declining resources from development partners. UNDESA reiterated the urgency of developing a robust monitoring, reporting and evaluation system to track the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway.

12. Regarding agenda item 6 on the adoption of the outcome, UNDESA noted that the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) intended to close the discussion on the draft outcome prior to arriving in Samoa. It was also recommended that Caribbean SIDS identify pertinent points for inclusion in the five-year implementation plan of the Samoa Pathway, to be considered in Apia. Further, UNDESA informed the meeting that the Government of Samoa had requested the collation and generation of a synthesis report that

³ See also annex 2. For further information on the draft agenda on the SAMOA Pathway Interregional Meeting.

would focus on the outcome of each region and would identify common issues and priorities for all SIDS to be addressed over the next five years.

13. Following on the review of the SAMOA Interregional Agenda, the Chair invited participants to offer their inputs for consideration and to include comments and observations on the San Pedro Declaration that would be considered at the SAMOA Interregional Meeting. The following section details these interventions.

14. Caribbean SIDS specific sustainable development priorities: The Director of ECLAC, indicated that there are urgent, critical developmental issues specific to the Caribbean Region that should be highlighted before the wider SIDS audience. She was of the view that the SAMOA Pathway Interregional Meeting is an opportune moment for all SIDS to forge a greater appreciation for the specific issues faced by each group of SIDS.

15. The Assistant Director, Socioeconomic Policy Planning Division, Ministry of Planning and Development of Trinidad and Tobago, called for a mapping exercise to determine the commonalities between the SAMOA Pathway and the 2030 Agenda, including which agencies had responsibilities for respective themes within their mandate. The Trinidad and Tobago representative also informed the meeting that he was not convinced that the SAMOA Pathway should be addressed independently from the 2030 Agenda; rather with alignment for implementation they could effectively become one and the same for the Caribbean. He emphasized, for example, that climate change was common across all Caribbean countries. He was therefore in favour of examining the similarities between the SIDS and the 2030 Agenda, and in implementing them congruently. This approach, he argued, was necessary to realize the best use of limited human and other institutional resources. Following on this subject, the CARICOM representative also expressed support for this systemization and synergy. To achieve this objective for the Caribbean SIDS development, CARICOM indicated that it remains hopeful that ECLAC would table the importance of the Regional Coordinating Mechanism (RCM) at the SAMOA Interregional Meeting. The CARICOM representative also suggested that there should be a process whereby the SIDS agenda should be reviewed collectively to identify perennial issues that were continually overlooked and to address challenges as well as new and emerging priorities. The CARICOM representative concluded that the SIDS need to work to strengthen the cohesion of the group of AOSIS in order to accelerate the objectives and purpose of the SIDS agenda.

16. In supporting the forging of synergies in the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway and the 2030 Agenda, UNDESA explained that a mapping exercise of these two sustainable development agendas was already attempted by a Joint Inspection Unit⁴ and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)⁵. UNDESA expressed the belief that the midterm review could help to refocus the SIDS agenda, and in taking into consideration the current United Nations system reforms. The OHRLLS representative endorsed all previous comments on synergies and mentioned that this subject, as well as monitoring strategies would be addressed at the first SIDS National Focal Points Meeting to be held in Apia, SAMOA, October 2018.

17. The Director of ECLAC agreed with both UNDESA and Trinidad and Tobago's representative that this mapping exercise was necessary and critical to communicate and recognize the synergy between these two sustainable development instruments. Given the cross-cutting implications coupled with limited financial, institutional and human resources at national level, it was prudent to implement these simultaneously at the country level and should be recognized at that meeting in Apia, Samoa. It was further

⁴ Comprehensive review of the United Nations system support for small island developing States: final findings (2018), available at: https://www.unjui.org/sites/www.unjui.org/files/jiu_document_files/products/en/reports-notes/JIU%20Products/JIU_REP_2016_7_English.pdf.

⁵ United Nations Developing Programme (UNDP (2018), SAMOA Pathway and 2030 Agenda http://www.paris21.org/sites/default/files/2%20-%20UNDP_SAMOA%20Pathway%2C%202030%20Agenda.pdf.

elaborated that SIDS needed to stress their uniqueness, and through an efficient and appropriate negotiation strategy, a special case could be effectively supported. In context of the movement towards synergizing these two instruments, the Director of ECLAC was adamant that the SIDS agenda should not be lost in this process. She noted that the SIDS agenda had to be addressed as a stand-alone international agreement and should continue to be a significant element in the sustainable development discussions for island countries. She was convinced that both the SIDS and the 2030 Agendas could be implemented synergistically and simultaneously. It was her view that on a regional level, national and regional institutions should be strengthened to facilitate future international support. The Chair reminded the meeting that the San Pedro Declaration also spoke to the importance of synergies between of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the SAMOA Pathway.

18. In addressing the subject of priorities, the economic challenges of the Caribbean SIDS were tabled. The Director of ECLAC underscored that the current metrics of gross domestic product (GDP) did not sufficiently factor in the vulnerabilities of Caribbean SIDS and that this was disadvantageous to this group of SIDS. Except for Haiti, the other Caribbean countries were classified as middle-income countries. This economic classification was clearly applicable to other SIDS regions. The Director also raised the issue of debt as tabled in the San Pedro Declaration as a challenging and recurrent matter for all Caribbean countries. She noted that this was intrinsically linked to the region's vulnerability and sustainable development. One example that demonstrated this was the impact of hurricanes, especially in the recent 2017 season. The impacts of the hurricanes of 2017, dramatically undermined Caribbean countries' ability to recover and retarded the overall sustainable development of Caribbean SIDS. This observation on the economic categorization of the Caribbean SIDS was also supported by the representatives of Trinidad and Tobago and Belize.

19. The Assistant Director of the Socioeconomic Policy Planning Division, Ministry of Planning and Development of Trinidad and Tobago endorsed the contribution made by the Director of ECLAC. He added that the issue of debt and financing under the present classifications was denying many Caribbean countries access to development financing and hampering the implementation of both instruments in the process. He suggested that this was a crucial point that should be emphasized at the SAMOA Pathway Interregional Meeting, especially given that based on the data obtained from the impact of 2017 hurricanes, one hurricane can diminish a country's GDP by multiple folds.

20. The retired CARICOM Director of Sustainable Development, speaking in an expert capacity, underscored that trade was essential for economic growth and poverty reduction. He further observed that the Caribbean, as with most SIDS, due to their small size, persistent structural disadvantages and vulnerabilities, face specific difficulties in integrating into the global economy. Trade liberalization and globalization presented opportunities and challenges to SIDS, including the erosion of terms of trade, and the dismantling of preferences. The potential benefits from trade liberalization and globalization could be best realized if the specific limitations and vulnerabilities of SIDS were addressed at all levels. However, the adjustment costs associated with trade liberalization were high. The international community has recognized this but has failed to effectively act. Caribbean SIDS recommended the redesign and implementation of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Integrated Framework for Trade-Related Technical Assistance⁶. The Integrated Framework was built on the principles of country ownership and partnership and was financed from a trust fund managed by the multilateral agencies can could accelerate the path to sustainable development in SIDS.

21. The subject of the Green Climate Fund (GCF) was discussed as one of the key funding sources available to the Caribbean SIDS to support adaptation and mitigation efforts. In this regard it was noted

⁶ World Trade Organisation (WTO) Integrated Framework for Trade-Related Technical Assistance: Integrated Framework for Trade-Related Technical Assistance, including for Human and Institutional Capacity-Building, to Support Least-Developed Countries in Their Trade and Trade-Related Activities Revision (2018), available at: https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/devel_e/framework.htm.

that the San Pedro Declaration (paragraph 23) also called for engagement with the GCF. The meeting also noted that under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the GCF is mandated to provide concessional financing to middle-income Caribbean SIDS given their high vulnerability to climate change and natural disasters. Indeed, 25 per cent of the Fund's resources are to be made available for adaptation activities in SIDS, least developed countries and African States. In this regard, the Director of ECLAC suggested that at the upcoming GCF Structured Dialogue to be held in the Caribbean in November 2018, governments should be encouraged to further engage with the GCF. She was also hopeful that that GCF will be addressed as an agenda item at the SAMOA Interregional Meeting.

22. The Chair noted that the Caribbean should be enjoying greater access to the GCF; that it was necessary to better understand the reasons for such weak Caribbean engagement with the GCF. Further she observed that there were cases where countries may need support in capacity building to effectively engage the GCF. The Deputy Permanent Representative of Belize to the United Nations provided additional insights into the GCF, indicating that there were real challenges in accessing these resources. Factors such as governance, financing and concerns regarding the replenishment of the Fund were some of the other issues that affected the GCF disbursement processes. The meeting was reminded that the status of the Fund was discussed at the GCF Caribbean Regional Meeting held in 2017 in Belize.⁷ She suggested further probing of these issues. The Chair indicated she considered it important for the Caribbean to articulate the reasons why the subregion was having such difficulty engaging with the GCF. The Chair suggested that at the Samoa meeting there should be a call for a SIDS specific statement on the GCF.

23. The Director of ECLAC noted that ECLAC has been promoting an initiative designed to help reduce the debt of Caribbean countries and encourage growth. It was explained that this is a debt swap strategy in which debt repayments at a discount will be placed in a resilience fund for investment in climate related projects. She noted that the proposal was presented to both CARICOM and the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC) for their consideration. This project is scheduled to begin initially in three Caribbean SIDS: Antigua and Barbuda, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. The Chair then enquired whether the project was officially ready for presentation at the SAMOA Pathway Interregional Meeting. The Director confirmed that it could be promoted as a long-term project that will include Caribbean indebted countries and their respective creditors. ECLAC was requested to provide additional information on this very important initiative that will benefit the subregion.

24. The Director, Sustainable Development Unit, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry, Environment and Sustainable Development of Belize, applauded this initiative and elaborated the experience of his country with a debt for nature swap. He extended his country's willingness to provide guidance and support to this new initiative led by ECLAC. He also asked for clarification on the concessional grants, capitalization of the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF) and the engagement with the GCF within the scope of the project. The Director of ECLAC stated that at this time it was a capacity issue. Best practice was demonstrated in the case of the accreditation of Antigua and Barbuda to the GCF. The question was asked if there was a possibility for the region to apply to the GCF through an accredited organization like the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) or the Caribbean Community Climate Change Community (CCCCC). It was agreed that this was a question that could be raised at the upcoming Caribbean GCF Structured Dialogue to be held in Grenada in November 2018⁸.

25. The Policy Advisor, Department of Foreign Affairs of Aruba asked how the initiative "Facility for Development in Transition for Latin America and the Caribbean" led by the European Union (EU), and

⁷ GCF (2017) Structured Dialogue with The Caribbean 19–22 June 2017, Placencia, Belize (2018) available at: <https://www.greenclimate.fund/meetings/2017/belize>.

⁸ GCF Structured Dialogue with The Caribbean, St. George's, Grenada (6–9 November 2018) available at: <https://www.greenclimate.fund/meetings/2018/grenada>.

developed with the support of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and its Development Centre and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)⁹ would benefit the Caribbean Community and how it would feed into the dynamic partnership paradigm. The Director of ECLAC acknowledged that she was unable to provide further details and would seek to provide further information on this initiative to the Caribbean SIDS. The Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Belize to the United Nations, informed that she was aware of the initiative which was launched in New York but noted that the original document was in Spanish and she was hopeful that an English version would be released in short order as it would assist in guiding and influencing finance. The Chair noted that this should be flagged as a new and emerging issue and must be addressed.

26. The Programme Manager, Sustainable Development of the CARICOM Secretariat substantiated previous interventions and added there was a need to improve institutional arrangements. She made mention of the need to re-establish the Regional Coordinating Mechanism (RCM) as part of the institutional strengthening. She strongly recommended that the financial issue raised by the representative from Trinidad and Tobago form part of the Caribbean SIDS intervention at the upcoming SAMOA Pathway Interregional Meeting.

27. The Deputy Permanent Representative of Belize emphasized that the Caribbean SIDS should advocate for wider sustainable development issues including for example that of oceans, waste management, NCD and the setback effect on the SIDS development agenda. CARICOM assured that it would lobby their member states to provide inputs on the points to highlight at the Samoa meeting.

28. The Director of Sustainable Development Unit, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry, Environment and Sustainable Development of Belize, reminded the meeting of other priorities supporting environmental sustainability. He noted that currently climate change priorities overshadowed other issues, but these overlooked issues were in most part, drivers of climate change. He gave as examples to demonstrate his point – the importation of used vehicles, integrated chemical waste management, municipal waste management, land-based pollution, and ocean acidification among others.

29. The Chair of the Board of Directors of the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) in making her intervention observed that civil society had not been engaged fully in the regional sustainable development agenda. She also referenced the institutionalization of Principle 10 through the Escazú Agreement¹⁰ and towards ensuring effective engagement of civil society. Her concerns were endorsed by the Director of ECLAC who added the importance of engaging the civil society. She noted also that the private sector could provide financial support for SIDS development. The UNDESA representative concurred with the CANARI contributions. UNDESA informed that the engagement of civil society was exemplary and that constraints for more active engagement was due to limited resource mobilization. UNDESA informed that at the SAMOA Interregional Meeting, there would be representatives from the Pacific Region civil society. UNDESA encouraged civil society members to follow on proceedings and outcome of the Interregional Preparatory Meeting for the Midterm Review of the SAMOA Pathway via its website. UNDESA intended to encourage the broadest participation from all stakeholders.

30. The Chair invited UNDESA to give an overview of the report on the analysis of the SIDS Partnerships. The UNDESA representative explained that her Department assessed and examined the status,

⁹ The European Union (EU), with the support of the Development Center of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Sign Agreement to Facilitate the Development of Countries in Transition, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) (2018), available at: <https://www.cepal.org/en/pressreleases/european-union-oecd-and-eclac-sign-agreement-facilitate-development-countries>.

¹⁰ Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) (2018), available at: <https://www.cepal.org/en/escazuagreement>.

gaps and pit falls of various partnership initiatives for sustainable development and including the related outcomes of United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) and 2017 Oceans Conference¹¹. One common observation was that the Caribbean SIDS were not well represented in these registered partnerships. UNDESA indicated that there has been an interest in the development of criteria, guidelines, norms and criteria to govern SIDS Partnerships. Moreover, the draft on this SIDS Partnership approach were circulated to Member States and the UN system with invitation for comments. These were then integrated into the document and shared with AOSIS. UNDESA informed the meeting that she was hopeful that this systematic approach on SIDS Partnership would be included on the United Nations High-level Panel Agenda for discussion. The Chair recommended that the SIDS Partnership should define a clear set of goals and tool box along with proper governance, encourage participatory ownership and buy in from all SIDS.

31. The Chair then invited discussions in the SIDS Partnerships. The UNDESA representative explained that a SIDS Partnership synthesis report will be presented at the SIDS Partnership Meeting to be held on 29 October 2018 in Samoa. At this meeting, the expected outcome will be on the gaps and challenges and that common ground will be established specific on a SAMOA partnership framework over the next five years. The representative of UNDESA assured the delegates that both the regional and synthesis SIDS Partnership reports would be available on UNDESA website prior to the Samoa meeting.

32. Participants were informed that OHRLLS will present on the objectives of the SIDS National Focal Point Meeting on 29 October 2018 in Samoa. No further comments were received on this item.

33. The Chair invited discussions on the SAMOA Pathway Midterm Review Draft Outcome Statement. She further encouraged Member States to make their contributions to the outcome document and informed that AOSIS is working on the strengthening the document. All inputs should be ready by 23 October 2018.

34. The Director of ECLAC encouraged participants to consider that it was necessary to show strong representation on behalf of all SIDS. She reiterated the need for core Caribbean issues to be clearly reflected in the outcome document and thanked ECLAC for its support in this process.

35. The OHRLLS representative clarified that the AOSIS Bureau and the host country were asked to prepare a skeleton document based on the three regional outcome documents. This skeleton will be available for Member States for review and further contributions. The Chair enquired on the protocol related to the submission of interventions. The Director of ECLAC suggested the sharing of the Zero Draft to all Member States and further offered the services of ECLAC to restructure the Caribbean outcome document which could then be shared with CARICOM, OHRLLS, UNDESA and AOSIS.

4. Documentation list for the SAMOA Pathway Interregional Meeting

36. The OHRLLS representative provided additional details on the process of documentation. She explained that following on each region's meeting, three documents were generated as: (i) a regional midterm review meeting report, (ii) the outcome document and (iii) a declaration. The OHRLLS representative also informed that all documents emanating from the Small Island Developing States of the Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Seas (AIMS) were ready and were submitted to the United Nations Secretary General (UNSG) for his approval, at which time they would be considered official General Assembly documents. Additionally, the Pacific Region already had a summary document of their meeting report with all relevant annexes attached and the outcome report lodged with the UNSG. It was suggested that this action should also be taken for all SIDS regions.

¹¹ The Ocean Conference 5-9 June 2017 (2018), available at: <https://oceanconference.un.org/>.

37. ECLAC reassured the participants that the Caribbean SAMOA Pathway Midterm Regional Report would be completed in a timely fashion. UNDESA concurred that the Caribbean Report was also in its final stages of review and would also be ready for upload onto the website before the Caribbean in advance of the SAMOA Interregional Midterm Meeting.

38. All documentation for the SAMOA Pathway Interregional Midterm Review would be available on the site: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sids/samoareview/inter>.

5. Closing of the meeting

39. The Chair thanked all delegates for their interventions and for participating in the WebEx. The Director of ECLAC wrapped up the meeting by thanking the participants for their valuable input. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 1.30 p.m.

Annex I**List of participants**

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Annex II**Provisional agenda: Interregional Preparatory Meeting for the Midterm Review
of the SAMOA Pathway**

Apia, Samoa, 30 October – 1 November 2018



**Inter-Regional Preparatory Meeting
For the Midterm Review of the SAMOA Pathway
Apia, Samoa
30 October – 1 November 2018**

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Adoption of the agenda and organisational matters.
3. Review of progress of implementation of the SAMOA Pathway at the national, regional and global levels:
 - i. Presentation of the Outcomes of the regional preparatory meetings;
 - ii. Interactive discussion among Member States, the United Nations system, regional organisations and other stakeholders on the implementation of SAMOA Pathway
4. Strengthening the means of implementation of the SAMOA Pathway and Addressing the Challenges in SIDS:
 - i. Means of Implementation, including Partnerships;
 - ii. Institutional support for SIDS in the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway including within the context of the 2030 Agenda.
5. Priorities for SIDS for the Midterm Review of the SAMOA Pathway.
6. Adoption of the Outcome.
7. Closing of the meeting.

Annex III

SAN PEDRO DECLARATION Caribbean SIDS Regional Preparatory Meeting

San Pedro, Belize, 7-9 August 2018

1. Representatives of the Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS), including Associate Members of the Economic Commission of Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), met in San Pedro, Belize, from 7 to 9 August 2018 in preparation for the Midterm Review (MTR) of the SAMOA Pathway to be held in New York in September 2019, as mandated by the UNGA Resolutions 70/292, 71/225 and 72/217. The Caribbean regional preparatory meeting ('the Meeting'), for the SAMOA Pathway Midterm Review was attended by the participants from Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Vincent & The Grenadines, Trinidad & Tobago and Associate members of ECLAC attended and observers, including: Aruba, British Virgin Islands, Curacao, Sint Maarten.

Contextualizing the S.A.M.O.A in the Caribbean

2. The Meeting affirmed that the SIDS agenda for sustainable development comprises the Barbados Programme of Action (BPoA), the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation (MSI) and the S.A.M.O.A Pathway, all of which reaffirm that SIDS remain a special case for sustainable development, in view of their unique vulnerabilities and that they remain constrained in meeting their goals in all three dimensions of sustainable development. The SIDS agenda for sustainable development is consistent with the 2030 Agenda, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, and the Paris Agreement and the New Urban Agenda. The Meeting however stressed that the SIDS sustainable development agenda is a stand-alone regime in keeping with their recognition as a special case for environment and development that remains under the full ownership of SIDS.

3. The Meeting reaffirmed that the outcome of the Third International Conference on small island developing states, the SAMOA Pathway, reinforces the international recognition of SIDS as a special case for development and serves as an international framework to advance the sustainable development priorities of small island developing states. The Meeting urged its speedy and effective implementation, and called for the allocation of resources at the national, regional, Interregional and international levels for strengthening existing modalities, and for the development and implementation of additional appropriate modalities for its effective monitoring, follow-up and review.

4. The Meeting noted that reporting should be tailored to address and accelerate support for the attainment of SIDS sustainable development objectives. In this regard, the Meeting underscored that the upcoming Midterm Review (MTR) represents an important opportunity for SIDS to assess gaps, challenges and emerging issues in the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway, including at the 2

national, regional, inter regional and international levels. The Meeting also noted that the MTR process is also an opportunity to strengthen institutional and targeted international support for SIDS through the allocation of adequate resources for the United Nations system to execute mandates emanating from the SIDS. The Meeting emphasized that the MTR should call for the international community to take urgent and concrete action to support SIDS in a coherent manner.

5. The Meeting stressed that while Caribbean SIDS have made some progress in meeting their sustainable development priorities, these countries continue to face major challenges and highlighted in particular, the lack of economies of scale in production, high vulnerability to environmental stresses, acute exposure to external shocks, excessive reliance on external financial inflows and on few export and import markets, limited transport and communications, reduced scope for economic diversification and limited human resources, compounded by high levels of migration of skilled individuals, high unemployment youth and women. This has resulted in stalled progress in some areas and reversal of development gains in others.

6. The Meeting noted with grave concern that the Caribbean region is experiencing sharply increasing debt to GDP ratios; persistent low economic growth; a widening infrastructure gap; high energy costs which

negatively impact the ease of doing business in the region; and declining credit ratings that negatively affect prospects for investment, in an increasingly hostile and volatile international economic landscape. This is coupled with a decline in the attention and resources afforded to addressing SIDS issues in the context of the United Nations system. Moreover, existing challenges as set out in the SAMOA Pathway in relation to the impact of non-communicable diseases, poverty and inequality, youth unemployment, the gender wage gap, rising levels of crime and violence, including gender-based violence, the escalating costs of development activities, and the dangerous impacts of climate change persist. These challenges are being compounded by the increasing costs of recovery associated with more frequent and intense natural disasters.

7. Whereas the Meeting recognised the leadership that has been exerted in addressing some of these challenges, it also identified a clear need for enhanced citizen and private sector engagement at the national level, as well as the need to effectively mainstream the S.A.M.O.A Pathway into national development plans. The Meeting also took note of the need to revitalise institutional modalities for regional and Interregional cooperation, and called for more effective international cooperation, genuine and durable partnerships and assistance from the international community. In this regard, the Meeting also called for renewed engagement with the international community to ensure that SIDS needs are central to decision-making processes that affect their development aspirations.

8. Caribbean SIDS are committed to the full and effective implementation of the BPoA, the MSI and the SAMOA Pathway and in this regard urged development 3

partners to fulfill their commitments by providing timely and predictable financial and technical support to ensure the successful implementation of the outcome documents and decisions of all United Nations conferences and processes related to the sustainable development priorities of small island developing States. The Meeting noted with concern the declining levels of Official Development Assistance and Foreign Direct Investment being provided to Caribbean SIDS.

Assessing Progress in Implementation – Achievements, Gaps and Challenges

9pre. Welcome the Caribbean Outlook report for 2018 prepared by ECLAC for this meeting that outlined many of the achievements, gaps and remaining challenges in the achievement of sustainable development for Caribbean SIDS.

9. At the Meeting Member States assessed progress in implementing the SAMOA Pathway, took note of achievements, best practices, and extant gaps and challenges. The Meeting welcomed the achievements of individual Member States and sub-regional groupings in aligning the SAMOA Pathway with existing sustainable development priorities, long and medium-term development planning, and with accessing finance for resilience building, in spite of existing high debt and fiscal stress. In this regard, the Meeting took note with appreciation of the efforts underway in the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), in particular, to implement the St. George's Declaration¹ and CARICOM to develop a sub-regional strategy that builds on the synergies between existing development initiatives. The Meeting also welcomed the establishment and operationalisation of the SIDS Partnership Framework and used the opportunity of the Caribbean Regional Partnership Dialogue to assess the requirements for its improvement in the future. In this regard, the Meeting recognised the need to strengthen the Partnership Framework and proposed improved monitoring and evaluation, considering thus the advantages of developing norms such as the SMART criteria and building monitoring and evaluation into projects so as to better understand the impacts including the spillover effects of partnerships. The Meeting also proposed organising national and regional partnership dialogues and underscored the need to promote existing partnerships consistent with national sustainable development priorities.

10. The Meeting acknowledged that achieving a results-based, sustained and cohesive approach for the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway requires that consideration be given to elements of governance, policy, budget, legislation, human resources, technology transfer, institutional framework, national, regional, Interregional and international coordination, generation, access and application of data, and multisector stakeholder engagement.

11. The Meeting stressed the need for an integrated and synergistic approach to the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway, the 2030 Agenda, including the SDGs and other sustainable development agreements, to strengthen coherence in overcoming the multiple challenges facing SIDS. The meeting identified the urgent need to strengthen knowledge management, education, communication and outreach activities to support the implementation monitoring and evaluation of the SAMOA Pathway.

12. The Meeting stressed the urgent need for an ongoing assessment of existing national and regional institutions and capacities mechanisms, roles, and mandates with a view to identifying areas of overlap, duplication, gaps and conflicts to contribute to the best use of resources for Caribbean SIDS. In this regard, the Meeting called for the revitalisation of the Regional Coordinating Mechanism to advance political advocacy on SIDS issues at the regional level, facilitate SIDS-SIDS cooperation and advance implementation of the SAMOA Pathway in a coherent and effective manner. In this regard, the Meeting underscored the importance of the role of the RCM as the natural institutional home for a system for regular review, early warnings and required reassessment/realignment of priorities, reporting and evaluation on the implementation of the SIDS sustainable development agenda.

13. The Meeting took note of the reform of the UN regular budget cycle and its movement from a biennial to an annual process, on trial basis beginning in 2020, as well as ongoing re-positioning of the UN Development System. In this regard, the Meeting stressed that these ongoing processes should not negatively impact the treatment and prioritization of SIDS sustainable development priorities and should rather form the basis for a renewed partnership and framing within the UN system for SIDS.

14. The Meeting welcomed the publication of the Findings of the Comprehensive Review of United Nations System Support for Small Island Developing States prepared by the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU), and called for continued work on the full and effective implementation of its recommendations.

Transforming economies and societies for sustained inclusive and equitable growth

15. Poverty, unemployment, and exclusion disproportionately affect vulnerable groups in the Caribbean, with significant income disparities across the region and within countries. This demands economic restructuring from a human-centered perspective that helps the region to remain competitive. Investments in appropriate education and skills-building are essential to expand human capabilities and support the readiness of young people for labour market opportunities that arise. These investments need to be complemented by the creation of opportunities in the labour market, a large proportion of which will come from entrepreneurship and small and medium enterprises, especially in many of the SIDS where significant parts of the labour market are informal and/or dependent on SMEs.

16. In this regard, the Meeting stressed the importance of expediting domestic capital formation and of using capital market strategies to drive the creation of and expansion of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) including youth and women's ownership of SMEs to enable more persons to generate jobs and promote entrepreneurship.

17. The Meeting recognized the need to advance progress on the implementation of the social agenda elaborated in the SAMOA Pathway which is lagging behind. The Meeting also took note of the challenges in addressing these issues posed by limited fiscal space in the region.

18. The Meeting took note of the value of implementing prudent fiscal management reforms that would foster more balanced public finances and result in improved sovereign credit ratings. The Meeting also noted the need to incentivize the participation of the private sector and called for the support of International Financial Institutions for government led fiscal reform efforts. The Meeting welcomed initiatives on debt restructuring, debt forgiveness and innovative forms of finance including the debt for climate adaptation swap initiative¹².

¹² Caribbean Regional Preparatory Meeting on the Midterm Review (MTR) Report of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway, Report Prepared by ECLAC, 2018.

19. The Meeting took note of the importance of the green economy, the blue economy and creative and cultural industries as means to build resilience, foster innovation and value chain creation as well as to promote entrepreneurship and decent jobs, in the context of enhancing economic diversification. The Meeting also noted the need to scale up investment and enhance the enabling environment for expanding renewable energy and energy efficiency in the region.

Building a sustainable and resilient Caribbean: confronting climate change and other environmental related stressors

20. The meeting reaffirmed that climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time, and acknowledged that the impacts of climate change including sea level rise continue to pose a significant threat to Caribbean SIDS and their efforts to implement the SAMOA Pathway. In this context, the Meeting reaffirmed the imperative of limiting the increase in average global temperatures to below 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, as championed by SIDS and took note of, the Declaration on Climate Change by the Heads of State and Government of CARICOM at their 39th Regular Meeting¹³, in order to assure their continued survival and viability. The Meeting recognized the responsibility of developed countries to take the lead in climate action.

21. The Meeting noted with concern that although the region's contribution to the climate change problem was negligible it was being disproportionately burdened with the financial cost of addressing its negative and dangerous impacts. In this regard, the Meeting took note of the challenges inherent in accessing climate change finance, including in relation to the need for national institutional strengthening and capacity building within and across SIDS. The Meeting also recognised and encouraged ongoing efforts for the expedition and simplification of Green Climate Fund and other Environmental Funds application processes with a view to improving SIDS access to finance and called for these to be further improved.

22. The Meeting emphasized that loss and damage is an integral pillar of the Paris Agreement and called for the provision of adequate support to initiatives under the Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM) for Loss and Damage. The Meeting also called for support to enable countries to submit loss and damage proposals to the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and urged the international community to support the CARICOM in its drive to recapitalize the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF) as the premiere mechanism that presently addresses loss and damage, in the face of more intense extreme weather events exacerbated by climate change. The Meeting underscored the importance of support being made available for developing strategies for the financial management of disaster risk in SIDS, and in this regard, emphasized the importance of low-cost, concessionary and long-term financial arrangements. The Meeting called for the establishment of a global disaster fund for SIDS to build back better after natural disasters.

23. The Meeting stressed the need to integrate the improved management of environmental issues outside of climate change into the SAMOA Pathway. The linkages between the chemical waste management regime, and its implications for human health and social well-being in the region were highlighted with a request for further work to be done on these issues. In this regard, the Meeting called for greater attention to the generation and availability of environmental statistics to inform decision-making at all levels.

24. The Meeting considered the high levels of biodiversity in the region and its sensitivity to anthropogenic pressures which undermine the capacity of ecosystems to provide economic advantages in the area of eco-tourism services as well as critical natural services such as barriers against natural hazards, climate change adaptation options, renewable energy options, fiber communications, water quality and availability, food security and livelihood support. The Meeting welcomed the success of conservation measures taken in Belize to preserve the integrity of the Belize barrier reef system, which is a UNESCO World Heritage site.

25. The Meeting underscored its support for the principles of sustainable consumption and production as a means of addressing issues related to waste, chemicals, food, energy, sustainable lifestyles and land management in an integrated manner. The Meeting welcomed initiatives on banning and or phasing out the use of single-use plastics undertaken in a number of countries in the region.

¹³ Securing the Future of Our People", 39th Regular Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of CARICOM, 4 - 6 July 2018, Montego Bay, Jamaica.

26. The Meeting recognized that reducing economic, social and environmental vulnerability and building the requisite resilience requires a significant departure from traditional approaches and interventions, and should involve risk assessments through a thorough analysis of communities, including details of the most vulnerable areas in terms of productivity, residences and infrastructure, followed by a recommended course of risk reduction measures. In this regard, the Meeting called on the UN system, the specialized agencies and relevant intergovernmental organizations, in accordance with their respective mandates, to continue to elaborate appropriate indices for assessing the progress made in the sustainable development of small island developing States. The Meeting stressed that these indices should: take better account of SIDS vulnerabilities; support the elaboration of policies and strategies for building and sustaining long-term resilience; strengthen national disaggregated data and information systems; improve analytical capabilities for decision-making, and the tracking of progress; and facilitate the further development and deployment of Vulnerability Resilience Country Profiles (VCRP), across Caribbean SIDS.

27. The Meeting called for an evaluation of the World Bank Small Island States Resilience Initiative in terms of building climate and disaster resilience in SIDS and for this programme to be scaled up and expanded to all Caribbean SIDS. The Meeting called for the development of similar resilience initiatives to be launched in regional development banks.

Achieving financial and economic sustainability in the face of graduation, adverse debt dynamics, de-risking, and adverse impacts of climate change

28. The Meeting noted that the majority of Caribbean SIDS have been classified as middle-income countries, which greatly limits their access to bilateral and multilateral grants and other concessional funding. Decreasing ODA continues to hinder the progression of the Caribbean's development agenda. This categorization does not recognize the vulnerability of Caribbean SIDS to climate change, to natural disasters and to negative external shocks considering their extreme openness and size. In the circumstances, a concerted effort must be made to focus the donors, partners and the UN system on the acute financial challenges faced by Caribbean SIDS to meet their commitments under the SAMOA Pathway and other global mandates. This implies focusing on vulnerability as a key element in accessing development assistance and in offering debt reduction through climate adaptation swaps and other mechanisms to those Member States whose debt burden limit their capacity to adequately address mitigation and adaptation strategies to combat the effect of natural hazards and climate change.

29. Withdrawal of correspondent banking relationships and services has negatively impacted several countries and resulted in an acute financial shock to the region. The Meeting noted with extreme concern the multitude of direct and indirect impacts resulting from these measures which include: impacts on human welfare and economic development, given the region's high dependence on foreign exchange; adverse effects on initiatives aimed at alleviation of poverty and inequality, given declining remittances and their mode of delivery; and knock-on effects in Tourism and other Economic Sectors; as well as decreased access to credit by Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs).

30. In this regard, the Meeting recognised the critical role of the financial services sector in promoting the sustainable development of Caribbean SIDS and called for dedicated spaces for SIDS in the relevant international decision-making fora. The Meeting also called on the regional financial services sector to advance a new partnership with Caribbean SIDS in support of their sustainable development priorities. The Meeting called on the UN system and other relevant agencies to increase advocacy to enhance the profile and understanding of SIDS issues in the context of the international financial institutions and other relevant fora.

31. The Meeting noted that both natural and man-made disasters have large and enduring economic effects that range from lost income to the destruction of physical and human capital, infrastructure, and property. The Meeting noted with concern the negative feedback loop created when governments borrow to finance recovery only to be faced with the destruction wrought by a new extreme event. In this regard, Governments underscored that whereas rebuilding provides a temporary boost, indirect effects can spread throughout the economy and undermine investment, growth, and macroeconomic performance. Debt dynamics inevitably worsen as governments borrow to finance recovery and growth slows.

32. The Meeting expressed solidarity and support to the islands and communities, affected in the 2017 hurricane season and reaffirmed their commitment to working together to build back better and in a more resilient way, following the devastation caused by increasingly intense and severe disasters. They highlighted the need to build human resilience, establish early warning systems and preventive measures, as well as to ensure the active engagement of communities, especially women, in the response, recovery and reconstruction process. The Meeting underscored the importance of establishing building standards and taking other measures to mitigate the impact of future extreme weather events and accelerate the rate of recovery.

33. The participants highlighted the need for a response involving all partners, including regional organizations, development partners, private sector, national Governments and civil society, to leverage comparative advantages for building resilience to disasters in highly vulnerable small-island states, as extreme weather events have added to their existing economic vulnerabilities. The Meeting noted that the contribution of the private sector would also be critical, offering both resources and expertise and underscored the importance of public private partnerships in this regard.

34. The Meeting called on the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) to continue to enhance their crisis preparedness and resilience frameworks and toolkits, including through exploring opportunities for appropriate insurance solutions and extending advisory services across the Caribbean countries and Overseas Territories. The Meeting stressed the need for post-disaster responses and approaches that are tailored to specific country needs to better prepare for and mitigate the impact of future disasters. The Meeting underscored the importance of information sharing amongst SIDS to facilitate disaster risk management.

34 bis. The meeting acknowledged the support of the UN Development System and agencies in disaster recovery efforts. The Meeting called for strengthening the ability of the UN system to offer to continue to offer this support.

Strengthening institutions and enabling environments for a people centred development

35. Strengthening the public health system, including at the primary level through expanding the viability of basic health-care services, is essential for improving health, life expectancy and related social and economic outcomes. The rise in NCDs that many SIDS are experiencing is associated with a variety of factors including ageing and early initiation of unhealthy behaviors with long-term healthy consequences, particularly during adolescents. Promoting healthy behaviors at early ages is part of recognizing that prevention of NCDs is the only long-term way to address the issue. The Meeting also noted with concern the urgent need to address adolescent pregnancy, reduce maternal mortality rates, and incidence of childhood obesity. The Meeting underscored the importance of addressing emerging issues related to the spread of Zika, Chik V, and the rising incidence of cervical cancer, in the Caribbean, noting that these health issues also had a negative impact on economic productivity throughout the region.

36. In this regard, the Meeting stressed the importance of improving access to basic health-care services including for maternal, newborn and child health and sexual and reproductive health and to reducing risk factors for non-communicable diseases through the promotion of healthy lifestyles among children and adolescents through school programmes, public media, including skills to resist tobacco use and other substance abuse, healthy eating and affordable nutrition, movement and exercise, tax measures on sugary drinks and all foods with added sugar and stress management and mental health care. The Meeting stressed the importance of public private sector partnerships to assist with financing of the health system.

37. The Meeting recognized the importance of meaningful multi stakeholder engagement in advancing the implementation of the Samoa Pathway. The Meeting also called for new social compacts and other partnership modalities to enhance the engagement with civil society organizations, academia and the private sector at national, regional and interregional level. The Meeting called for enhanced implementation of those resolutions already adopted at the WHO in line with implementation of health objectives set out in the SAMOA Pathway

38. Special reference was made to the recent adoption of the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Towards A Programme for Implementation: Addressing Caribbean Challenges with Means of Implementation

39. In defining a programme of implementation for the next five years, the Meeting emphasized the importance of building resilience in all its dimensions and identified the following priority areas for action:

I. Scale up implementation of trade and market integration processes to advance Caribbean SIDS resilient economic transformation and to promote and enable innovation and entrepreneurship to address youth unemployment and public and private sector development;

II. Call on the international community in consultation with national and regional institutions and other partners to support Caribbean SIDS in the scaling up of the use and deployment of sustainable energy, communication and transport infrastructure for the land, marine and air; mainstreaming of the SAMOA Pathway into national development plans and programmes in Caribbean SIDS;

III. Call on the Caribbean Development Bank and ECLAC to establish a Caribbean SIDS Public Sector Investment Programme Reform and Enhancement Initiative in support of implementation and Resilience Building;

IV. Call on the UN System and international partners to support capacity strengthening for development and management of coastal zones and protected areas;

V. Call on the UN System to support the use and institutionalisation of appropriate tools for science-based sustainable natural resources management;

VI. Build partnerships with new global development partners and mechanisms;

VII. Call on the World Bank to produce an evaluation report on the SISRI at the 2019 Spring meetings of the Bretton Woods Institutions;

VIII. Call on the enhancement of the SISRI to include all Caribbean SIDS; and call on Caribbean-focused regional development banks to develop and or scale-up Caribbean SIDS specific resilience building initiatives;

IX. Call on UNDESA in collaboration with the relevant regional institutions to review and scale-up development and deployment of the Vulnerability Resilience Country Profile methodology to all Caribbean SIDS;

X. Call on OHRLLS to scale up its advocacy and resource mobilization delivery in support of SIDS sustainable development priorities;

XI. Establish relations with new global financial institutions with a view to build the resilience of Caribbean SIDS;

XII. Support the development of green, sustainable ocean-based or blue economies, and cultural and creative industries as a means to build resilience, foster innovation and entrepreneurship;

XIII. Request ECLAC to prepare an infrastructure gap report on a biennial basis in support of implementation of the SAMOA Pathway;

XIV. Support the development of national social compacts to support inclusive local partnership dialogues towards the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway;

XV. Institute national and Caribbean SIDS Major Groups Mechanism as vehicles to facilitate non-governmental stakeholder inputs to policy and programming processes;

XVI. There is a need for Caribbean SIDS cultural industries promotion and cooperation framework that utilises the experiences of the Caribbean region's cultural heritage and cultural exposition experiences including CARIFESTA; ‘

XVII. Promote the convening of a “Financial Services Sectors for Caribbean SIDS Sustainable Development Forum” in partnership with institutions such as the Commonwealth;

XVIII. Call on CARICOM Secretariat to complete the CARICOM Environment and Natural Management Policy Framework, as one of the main vehicles for the implementation of the SIDS sustainable development framework, to address environmental resilience building and to share experience with all Caribbean SIDS;

XIX. Enhance technical assistance and collaboration among Caribbean SIDS Universities and regional ocean-focused institutions to research and address new and emerging issues, such as Sargassum;

- XX. Collaborate with United Nations Environment to establish the Caribbean SIDS Sustainable Consumption and Production Initiative;
- XXI. Call on the United Nations Environment and other regional organisation to support the establishment of a framework initiative to address Caribbean SIDS sustainable consumption and production priorities in the SAMOA Pathway;
- XXII. Call on the FAO, PAHO, WHO and UN system to escalate support to Caribbean SIDS to address the health, agricultural and food challenges in the Caribbean;
- XXIII. Call on the UN System for enhanced support for capacity building to civil society and NGOs including funding support for meaningful participation in the sustainable development agenda;
- XXIV. Called on the UN System for support to Caribbean SIDS in addressing issues pertaining to the vulnerability of young men to gang-related violence, and to address national security concerns including in relation to illicit drug trade and small arms and light weapons.
- XXV. Call on the UN system to disseminate relevant information on SIDS priorities and SAMOA Pathway at all levels.

40. The Meeting underscored the importance of national ownership to achievement of sustainable development priorities, and the need for strengthened enabling environments at national, regional and global levels to facilitate greater coherence in and coordination of support to national priorities. The Meeting discussed the importance of enhancing access, modalities and partnerships for concessional finance for SIDS. The Meeting recognized that the SAMOA Pathway, 2030 Agenda other sustainable development agendas require increased effort with regards to Caribbean SIDS relevant data generation, access, and monitoring; and statistics. The Meeting underscored the importance of localizing the global sustainable development agenda.

Cross cutting issues for implementation

- I. Call on ECLAC to strengthen the Regional Coordinating Mechanism to be able to monitor implementation of actions called for in this Declaration and elaborated in the SIDS Sustainable Development Agenda
- II. Strengthen national statistical systems to support the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the Samoa Pathway
- III. Develop and enhance institutional modalities for the facilitation of SIDS SIDS cooperation
- IV. Encourage knowledge transfer platforms for SIDS-SIDS cooperation and collaboration using existing regional ICT platforms
- V. Request the UN system to increase the global socialization of the SIDS agenda
- VI. Promote SIDS-SIDS cooperation on best-practices in resilience building, including in the context of developing appropriate building-codes.

Conclusions

43. The meeting expressed its appreciation to UNDESA, UNOHRLLS and ECLAC for their continued support to Caribbean SIDS in the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway. The Meeting also thanked regional organisations, partner agencies and stakeholders participating in the meeting, for their contributions and for their continued support.
44. The meeting expressed its gratitude and appreciation to the Government of Belize for ably hosting the Caribbean Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Midterm Review of the SAMOA Pathway.

END.



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