

Opening remarks by

Mr. Liu Zhenmin, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs

2019 annual Global Multi-stakeholder SIDS Partnership Dialogue

10 July 2019

“Fostering effective partnerships for addressing gaps and priority areas of the SAMOA Pathway”

Her Excellency, Geraldine Byrne Nason, Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations

Her Excellency, Lois Michele Young, Permanent Representative of Belize to the United Nations

Excellencies

Colleagues,

I am honoured to address you at this 2019 annual Global Multi-stakeholder SIDS Partnership Dialogue.

I thank the co-chairs of the Steering Committee on SIDS Partnerships – Belize and Ireland, for their leadership.

I also extend my appreciation to the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (OHRLLS) for their advocacy role and active collaboration with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), in organizing this important event.

Ladies and gentlemen

It has been almost five years since the member States came together and adopted the SAMOA Pathway, the unique overarching framework for guiding global, regional and national development efforts to achieve the sustainable development aspirations of SIDS.

An intense preparatory process for the September Mid-Term Review of the SAMOA Pathway has taken place since our last Multi-stakeholder Partnership Dialogue. It has included three regional meetings of SIDS in their respective regions, as well as one interregional meeting for all SIDS.

Much has happened also regarding the SIDS Partnership Framework. The Framework, and the Steering Committee, were formed to follow-up on sustainable development commitments, including through partnerships and best practices.

Parallel to the Mid-Term Review preparations, our Department of Economic and Social Affairs has undertaken a capacity development project to support the work of the SIDS Partnership Framework.

This project has included a broad consultative process with relevant stakeholders in SIDS, including a series of partnership dialogues organized in the margins of the regional SAMOA preparatory meetings. It has resulted in the development of the SIDS Partnership Toolbox and an in-depth analysis of SIDS Partnerships, of which we will hear a presentation later today.

While SAMOA Pathway is a stand-alone framework for the development of SIDS, the partnerships it has created provide a treasure trove of lessons learned on what works, how can these ideas be scaled up and what are some of the common challenges. These lessons should be more widely utilized also for our SDG implementation.

Your excellencies,

It is clear to us all that the value added that successful partnerships can bring to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SAMOA Pathway will be the crucial element for success. When forged well, partnerships can bring myriad benefits.

For example, partnerships can help us bring together complementary resources; they help us share our ideas but also risks. Partnerships can help us create collective legitimacy and knowledge as well as create mechanisms for collective learning and complex problem solving.

However, our work has also shown that partnering is a skill that needs to be learned and nurtured. We must collectively make an effort to ensure that our civil servants, institutions, private companies, civil society organizations – indeed all relevant stakeholders – are fit for partnering.

Just as we need to work differently in order to break the silos for integrated implementation of the SDGs, we also need to collaborate better with our new-found partners once those walls have been broken. We need to learn to truly pinpoint the challenge we are trying to solve and to find the right partners and actions that can add value to the work.

For a true partnership, each contributor must benefit from the collaboration. For this, we need to learn to see our work through the eyes of our potential partners.

Today, we will hear very inspiring stories of concrete partnerships that have successfully brought together a variety of actors to solve the special challenges that SIDS face. We will also discuss the bottle-necks, challenges but also opportunities for the way forward.

DESA is excited to be part of the discussions and stands ready to continue its support for the SIDS Partnership Framework.

I wish you a very productive SIDS Partnership Dialogue and look forward with interest to the outcomes.

Thank you