

Thank you, Co-chairs for giving me the floor.

Palau associates itself with statements that have been made by the distinguished Ambassador of the Republic of Nauru on behalf of AOSIS and the statement made by the distinguished Ambassador of Papua New Guinea, on behalf of Pacific SIDS. We take the floor in our national capacity to express our sincere gratitude, appreciation and support :

First, to Samoa for bringing the world through the United Nations and partners to our part of the world. You will be the face of all of our proud and resilient people. We are proud of and because of you. Secondly, we wish to congratulate the two chairs, our dear colleagues from New Zealand and Singapore, again making our region so extremely happy and proud. Congratulations to you, the rapporteur from Spain and all of the members of the Bureau. You have our support..

Co-Chairs:

We all agree that this year is an extremely busy year. But it is also a year of immense opportunities for Small Island Developing States. Islands by definition, yet we are states of large oceans in character, culture and livelihood. And we want to do all we can to take advantage of this International Year of the SIDS and make it truly significant for us and, through us in Samoa, to the whole world.

Co-Chairs:

We, in Palau will be hosting the 45<sup>th</sup> Session of the Pacific Islands Forum in late July and we view this event as an excellent opportunity to launch activities and sharpen our focus towards the Conference in Samoa. It would be another excellent forum to begin the serious discourse of what the words 'genuine' and 'durable' mean in the context of partnership. It is our fervent hope that by the time we get to Apia, Samoa, we would have sharpened in our minds not only what these concepts mean, but have already begun to put them into genuine and durable relationships, in practice, framed within the context of climate change, biodiversity, disaster risk reduction and control of non communicable diseases issues. We trust that in Samoa we will discuss the health of oceans, within which we are states, within which we live our lives and within which we dream bright future for our children. We hope that health of children, women and persons with disabilities will also find prominence in our deliberations because difficulties in these areas continue to plague the SIDS and to address the problems we need genuine and durable partners such as demonstrated by Ireland. Thanks to Ireland. It is for us, in this and the next PrepComs to be diligent in ensuring the outcomes we desire from the Samoa Conference. We believe that the Samoa outcomes will also influence the outcomes of the Summit on climate change, the SDGs, the Post-2015 Agenda and beyond.. This is not an easy task and we pledge our support in this process.

Thank you for your attention.