



**Statement
by
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2017 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction

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Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies
Distinguished Delegates
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of Samoa's delegation, I would like to convey our deepest gratitude to the Government and the people of Mexico for being generous and gracious hosts of the 2017 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, a timely opportunity for all stake-holders to be engaged in a serious and honest dialogue to exchange, learn and benefit from each other's experience as we work collectively to make the world a safer and more resilient place.

Samoa is a small island developing state in the frontline of the impacts of climate change. It has experienced firsthand the harsh realities of the destructive and inhumane impacts of climate change and natural hazards and the compelling need therefore to increase its resilience.

Samoa is fully committed to accelerate the reduction of disaster and climate-related risks through the coherent implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement for Climate Change and the SAMOA Pathway, the blueprint of SIDS sustainable development for now and the immediate future.

While these are important global agreements, plans of action, and platforms, we need to contextualise and localise them for our people and communities to understand and relate to them and be in the driver's seat of their implementation.

We have worked to achieve this through mainstreaming and integrating the multilateral platforms and plans into our national Strategy for the Development of Samoa 2016-2020, with its overarching theme of "Accelerating sustainable development and creating opportunities for all".

To deliver on our commitments, we have pushed to reinforce national and local leadership and capacities in managing disaster and climate-related risks through strengthened preparedness and predictable response and recovery arrangements, enhance investment in data, implement analysis and early warning and developing evidence-based decision-making processes that result in early action.

There is also recognition of the necessity to increase investment in building community resilience as a critical first line of response, with the full, effective and meaningful participation of women, people with disabilities, youth and the elderly. The path to resilience comes with improved understanding and anticipation of, as well as preparedness for, disasters and climate-related risks.

Samoa has also taken steps to formalize qualification for resilience which includes disaster risk management and climate change through dedicated programs to ensure safe and disaster ready schools, rural health facilities as well as other community facilities such as multipurpose centres.

We are also cognisant of the fact that we should build on the strengths of traditional knowledge and adaptive practices which have ensured the ability of our communities to cope with extreme weather events, climate change and natural

disasters over the years. Similarly, we must continue to nurture and cultivate our people's spirit of resilience, their Christian faith and sheer fortitude to pounce back stronger from some of nature's cruel calamities as these attributes had sustained them in the past.

In closing, Samoa is committed to a whole-of-society approach to reduce disaster and climate change induced risks and increase community resilience.

I thank you for your attention.