

**Statement of Hon. Aisake Valu Eke  
Minister of Finance and Planning  
On behalf of the Kingdom of Tonga  
For the Third International Conference on Financing for Development:  
General debate on financing for development**

**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Monday July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

Mr. President,

Mr. Secretary-General,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen

At the outset, I would like to express our congratulations to the Government of Ethiopia for your role in hosting this historic conference, and also our gratitude for the generous hospitality with which we have been received upon arrival. We would also like to extend our thanks to the Co-Facilitators of the preparatory process which has led us here to Addis Ababa for their leadership and dedication to a strong outcome, which lies in sight before us.

Mr. President,

Tonga has been committed to constructive engagement with this process, stemming from our recognition of the fact that financing from all sources, including domestic and international, public and private, and from non-financial means, including transfer of technology and capacity-building assistance and enabling policy environments, is critically important to advancing our sustainable development goals.

In this context, we stress that as a Small Island Developing State, Tonga is a special case for sustainable development- a fact which extends to our development financing needs. SIDS small size, remoteness, narrow resource and export base, and exposure to global environmental challenges and external economic shocks, impacts from climate change including more frequent and intense natural disasters are challenges to SIDS efforts to achieve sustainable development.

Mr. President,

These unique challenges and our resolve to work through them, to bring about our sustainable development, is expressed in the SAMOA Pathway, the outcome of the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States. There, we called for an increase in all forms of partnership with and for Small Island developing States, at the national, regional and international levels to address issues related to SIDS sustainable development priorities and needs. The SAMOA Pathway reaffirms our commitment to move the sustainable development agenda forward, to meet internationally agreed development goals, eradicate poverty, build resilience and improve the quality of life for all. Our agreement here must reaffirm that commitment, and strengthen our support for implementation of the sustainable development of SIDS.

Mr. President,

Our experiences in the Pacific have left us attuned to the value of certain key deliverables, which are critical to the financing of sustainable development for all, including SIDS. These are:

- a. The institutional efforts to expand the blue aspect of the Green Economy is key part of the widening our perspective as SIDS given that oceans and seas are both an essential component of the Earth's ecosystem, and intrinsically linked to sustainable development. Healthy, productive and resilient oceans and coasts are critical for, inter alia, poverty eradication, access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food, livelihoods, economic development, and ecosystem services. Renewed commitment to end illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, through capacity for monitoring and surveillance of fishing vessels and the ending of harmful fisheries subsidies is key to maintaining healthy, productive, and resilient fisheries. And commitment to protect and restore the health, productivity and resilience of our ocean and seas, including through international law as reflected in UNCLOS, is critical to deliver on all three dimensions of sustainable development.
- b. Dependence on imported fossil fuels has been a major source of economic vulnerability and a key challenge for small island developing States for many decades, and that sustainable energy, including enhanced accessibility to modern energy services, energy efficiency, and use of economically viable and environmentally sound technology,

plays a critical role in enabling the sustainable development of SIDS. Enhanced international cooperation to provide adequate support and facilitate access to clean energy research and technology and to expand infrastructure and upgrade technology for supplying modern and sustainable energy services will be critical to overcoming these challenges.

- c. Climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time, and we are deeply concerned that all countries are vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change. We welcome stepped up investment for financing low-carbon and climate resilient development, and look forward to the full operationalization and initial capitalization of the Green Climate Fund.
  
- d. Health is a precondition for and an outcome and indicator of all three dimensions of sustainable development. The threat of communicable and non-communicable diseases remain serious global concerns and constitute one of the major challenges for small island developing States in the twenty-first century. The enormous burden that NCDs place on SIDS requires a comprehensive strategy of prevention and control, including price and tax measures on tobacco.

Mr. President,

The outcome of this conference will be a critical pillar to support sustainable development, while leaving no one behind. Its position alongside the post-2015 sustainable development agenda is an important one, though we stress that it will not exhaust the means of implementation of that agenda. However, a universal and ambitious agenda requires an ambitious set of commitments in the means of implementation, and this is what we have supported throughout this process from various fora here to Addis Ababa.

We look forward to continuing our global partnership to realize our global commitment to create a better world for all.

I thank you, Mr. President.