



**Permanent Mission of the Independent State of Samoa
to the United Nations and other international organisations in Geneva**

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**NATIONAL STATEMENT
114th IOM COUNCIL**

Climate impact on human mobility: a global call for solutions

29th November 2023

Afternoon session

Madame Chair (Germany Ambassador)/Chair

Distinguished delegates,

On the outset, we express our congratulations to both you and Director General, Ms Amy Pope on your respective appointments. Ms Pope, together with the Deputy Director Generals (Ms Ugochi Florence Daniels and Irena, Vojackova-Sollorano), it is wonderful to see, an all-female executive team at the helm of IOM and are confident in your leadership. We are further pleased, that IOM has opened an office in Apia, and look forward in strengthening the work between IOM and Samoa.

We align our statement to the joint-statement of the Asia-Pacific Group.

For Samoa, human mobility has long been used to diversify livelihoods and as a response to sea-level rise, and other adverse effects of climate change. As a nation, grounded in our culture and rooted to our lands, it is difficult to leave, but there is often no choice in migration especially when on the frontlines of the climate crisis.

We welcome the Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility and its endorsement by our Pacific Leaders at the Fifty-Second Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting held in the Cook Islands. Noting that it aligns with the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, and the Boe Declaration, to which *we affirm that climate change remains the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security and wellbeing of the peoples of the Pacific.*

The Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility provides a proactive, inclusive and collaborative regional approach, towards safeguarding the future of all Pacific peoples in the face of climate change. Furthermore, the framework acknowledges the value of traditional knowledge in ensuring the protection of people with respect to the land, ocean, and natural resources. Investments in ensuring the minimization of non-economic losses as a result of climate change are vital. Lands and homes are already being lost as result of natural disasters and extreme climate events, the loss of identity, in particular cultural and intangible culture heritage should not be added to a growing list of negative climate change impacts. Thus, we reiterate the importance of operationalizing the Loss and Damage Fund with utmost haste.

Climate financing and official development assistance to invest and support in mitigation and adaptation efforts needs to be scaled up, more easily accessible and be fit for purpose. The unique set of vulnerabilities and characteristics that Small Island Developing States possess impedes our progress towards achieving the 2030 agenda. Too often we are left in economic, and environmental despair post-natural disaster which is becoming increasingly frequent as climate change remains inadequately addressed. Using income as the sole determinant for financial assistance is a veritable debt sentence. The endorsement and implementation of a multi-dimensional vulnerability is needed to allow for the inclusion and reflection of SIDS realities and vulnerabilities to assess eligibility for concessional finance.

We recognize the value of an early warning system and its crucial role in the protection of people. With forecasting and actionable information, we can pre-empt the impact of a natural disaster, rather than only react. Our Samoa Meteorological Services usage of an early warning system has enabled Samoa to map population and assets affected within a short period of time and issue targeted warnings to the public, and sectors. We express appreciation that Samoa is one of the number of countries included in the first phase of UN Secretary General's Early Warnings for All Initiative, and encourage its extension to all member states in need, especially for SIDS.

(Madame) Chair,

We conclude, by underlining the importance of international cooperation and assistance however, this should be on the basis of genuine partnerships, and as just a donor-recipient relationship.

I thank you