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Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States

Apia, 1-4 September 2014

Letter dated 4 September 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Nauru to the United Nations addressed to the President of the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States

I have the honour to forward the Alliance of Small Island States Leaders' Declaration 2014, which was endorsed by the leaders of the Alliance on 1 September 2014 at the margins of the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States (see annex).

I kindly request that the Declaration be circulated as a document of the Conference.

(Signed) Marlene **Moses**

Ambassador

Permanent Representative

Chair of the Alliance of Small Island States



Annex to the letter dated 4 September 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Nauru to the United Nations addressed to the President of the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States

Alliance of Small Island States Leaders' Declaration 2014

We, the Heads of State and Government of the Alliance of Small Island States, meeting in Apia, this first day of September 2014, during the third International Conference of Small Island Developing States,

Reaffirming that small island developing States remain a special case for sustainable development in view of our unique and particular vulnerabilities,

Reiterating that climate change continues to pose the most serious threat to our territorial integrity, viability and survival, and that it undermines our efforts to achieve sustainable development goals and threatens our very existence,

Acknowledging the importance of the International Year of Small Island Developing States and its role in raising awareness and mobilizing international support for our sustainable development,

Emphasizing that there is an urgent need to address the security implications of climate change, including the violation of territorial integrity, existential threats, more frequent and severe climate-related disasters, threats to water and food security, increased natural resource scarcity, and forced displacement and the human dimensions of climate change, including, where necessary, initiatives for preparing communities for relocation,

Welcoming the adoption of the Small Island Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action (Samoa Pathway) as the outcome document of the Conference, and the renewed political commitment of the international community to a global partnership and an enhanced international cooperation that will take urgent and concrete actions to address the vulnerability of small island developing States,

Reaffirming that the Barbados Programme of Action, the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation and the Samoa Pathway remain the essential blueprints for addressing the sustainable development needs of small island developing States, expressing our continued commitment to the principles and priorities contained therein, as well as the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, Agenda 21, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, and stressing the urgent need for their full implementation,

Recognizing that the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States is a once-in-a-decade occasion at which we can highlight our realities, the challenges we face and our determination to show our resilience and commitment to the ongoing sustainable development of our countries, for the benefit of our peoples and for future generations,

Recognizing also our stewardship of the atolls, the islands and the low-lying coastal regions, understanding that it is the land, the seas and the oceans surrounding us that define us and that will largely determine our future, and knowing that we have inherited them from our forebears and hold them in trust for

future generations of our people; our determination to survive and thrive on these lands is based on these realities,

Reaffirming the Alliance of Small Island States Declaration on Climate Change 2009, its Leaders' Declaration of 2012 and the Barbados Declaration on Achieving Sustainable Energy for All in Small Island Developing States of 2012,

Post-2015 development agenda

1. *Affirm* that the priorities for small island developing States need to be incorporated in the design of the post-2015 development agenda, which should build on the Samoa Pathway;

2. *Underscore* our commitment to work with the international community to ensure that the post-2015 development agenda and the related sustainable development goals continue to recognize that small island developing States remain a special case for sustainable development in view of their unique and particular vulnerabilities and advance the priorities of small island developing States in these processes, and call for international support for small island developing States in their efforts to fully implement the post-2015 development agenda and related goals, including, inter alia, through their full integration into national development plans and programmes;

3. *Affirm* the need to establish a global enabling environment inclusive of national and regional dimensions for the post-2015 development agenda that takes into consideration the need for the full implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action, the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation and the Samoa Pathway, which would include a robust global follow-up system to strengthen accountability at all levels and ensure adequate and timely analysis of the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action, the Mauritius Strategy and the Samoa Pathway;

4. *Call for* a post-2015 development agenda that mainstreams sustainable development at all levels, integrating economic, social and environmental aspects and recognizing their linkages, so as to achieve sustainable development in all its dimensions with the effective support of the United Nations system and the international community, in order to reach, inter alia, prosperity for all small island developing States;

5. *Also call for* the development of a global compact reflecting the collective political will of small island developing States to support their sustainable development, paying particular attention to the imperative of building resilience, increasing competitiveness and expanding the flow of funds for the financing of sustainable development;

6. *Emphasize* that, as custodians of vast expanses of oceans, we must have ownership of strategies concerning the sustainable development of oceans and seas and that fisheries, coastal tourism, possible exploitation of seabed resources and potential sources of renewable energy are the building blocks of an ocean-based economy, and stress the importance of ensuring that small island developing States adequately benefit from these resources and that the burden of conservation and management is not disproportionately transferred to small island developing States;

7. *Acknowledge* that significant gaps remain in the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation, and

call for these to be addressed through the full and effective implementation of the Samoa Pathway; the post-2015 development agenda must also take the remaining gaps into account;

8. *Stress* that strengthened cooperation and partnerships at the national, regional and international levels are vital, and recognize the value of partnerships as a means of building understanding, providing support and expressing and fulfilling commitments to support efforts of small island developing States over the long term, taking fully into account their challenges, development priorities and national circumstances;

9. *Recall* that the high-level political forum on sustainable development convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council will conduct regular reviews, starting in 2016, on the follow-up and implementation of sustainable development commitments and objectives, including those related to the means of implementation, within the context of the post-2015 development agenda, and, in this connection, call for attention to the follow-up and implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action, the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation and the Samoa Pathway;

10. *Recognize* that small island developing States face special challenges in achieving sustainable development, call for dedicated support for small island developing States for the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action, the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation and the Samoa Pathway, through, inter alia, the provision of new, additional and predictable financial resources, capacity-building and development and transfer of technologies appropriate for small island developing States, and, in this regard, urge all countries to fulfil their commitments to small island developing States;

11. *Call upon* the United Nations system and the international community to support small island developing States in strengthening their national institutions so that those institutions can become implementing agencies;

12. *Recognize* that small island developing States possess a wealth of culture and traditional and indigenous knowledge, which are drivers and enablers for sustainable development, and call for the development of national, regional and international mechanisms to promote and protect tangible and intangible cultural heritage, practices and traditional knowledge of small island developing States;

13. *Call for* increased financial and technical assistance to strengthen the capacity of small island developing States to participate effectively in the multilateral trading system, and reiterate the need for special and differential treatment for small island developing States in various trade and economic agreements, including the extension of trade preferences to small island developing States and more flexible rules of origin;

Climate change

14. *Underscore* that small island developing States are extremely vulnerable to climate change and have demonstrated strong leadership in calling for ambitious and urgent action to address climate change;

15. *Emphasize* that while small island developing States contribute the least to global emissions and have limited human, financial and technological resources,

our nations continue to take significant actions towards the reduction of our own emissions, including through regional and interregional energy initiatives;

16. *Stress* that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is the primary international intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change in order to protect the global climate, and recall its objectives, principles and provisions;

17. *Express* concern about the most recent contributions of working groups II and III of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to the fifth assessment report, which underscore that small island developing States are especially vulnerable to the effects of climate change, sea-level rise, ocean acidification and extreme weather events, given that already, with warming of less than 1 degree Celsius, small island developing States are experiencing more frequent and intense storms, droughts, extreme weather events, accelerating sea-level rise and other life-threatening impacts;

18. *Reiterate* that climate change is a global challenge, but that international action to address climate change remains grossly inadequate and that emissions of greenhouse gases continue to rise globally at a distressing rate, and call for the widest possible cooperation by all countries, with developed countries taking the lead, and their participation in an effective and appropriate international response, with a view to accelerating the reduction of global greenhouse gas emissions on the basis of equity and in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities;

19. *Call for* urgent global action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in order to keep the global average temperature increase well below 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, and long-term stabilization of atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations at well below 350 parts per million carbon dioxide-equivalent levels;

Other post-2015 processes

20. *Acknowledge* the ongoing negotiations for a 2015 climate agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and on the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction, which must both take into account the special case and particular vulnerabilities of small island developing States;

21. *Emphasize* that the outcome of the process launched under the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action should be a protocol under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change that must be legally binding and applicable to all parties, to be adopted no later than 2015, which strengthens the multilateral rules-based and legally binding regime, is based on science and the principles of the Convention and ensures the survival of all small island developing States, and urge all parties to work with an increased sense of urgency and purpose towards an ambitious, comprehensive and meaningful outcome;

22. *Call for* the mobilization of adequate, predictable, reliable, new and additional resources to support nationally appropriate mitigation actions, adaptation measures, technology development and transfer and capacity-building in small island developing States for the pre-2020 and post-2020 periods, including through the fulfilment of the commitments undertaken by developed country parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to a goal of mobilizing

jointly \$100 billion annually by 2020 for the full operationalization of the Green Climate Fund through its capitalization as soon as possible, welcome the recent announcements by Germany and other countries towards the initial capitalization of the Green Climate Fund, and continue to urge other developed country parties to contribute significantly to support the effective capitalization of the fund;

23. *Also call for* the urgent operationalization of the Warsaw international mechanism for loss and damage associated with climate impacts, and stress that a permanent seat on the executive committee of the mechanism is to be allocated to small island developing States;

24. *Stress* that the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction must be concise, ambitious and action oriented, build on previous achievements and priorities, address gaps and the need for strengthening national systems for monitoring and implementation, include a periodic review and ensure strengthened international cooperation on disaster risk reduction, particularly the means of implementation for small island developing States;

25. *Welcome* the convening of the third International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held in Addis Ababa from 13 to 16 July 2015, and emphasize the need for support for the effective participation of small island developing States in the preparatory process and the Conference;

26. *Note* the Secretary-General's Climate Summit, to be held on 23 September 2014, and support the call for global efforts to mobilize action and ambition on climate change;

27. *Express our heartfelt appreciation* to the Government and people of Samoa for hosting the Alliance of Small Island States Leaders' Meeting and the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States.
