

GLOBAL PLATFORM 2013
OFFICIAL STATEMENT
GOVERNMENT OF THE INDEPENDENT STATE OF SAMOA

Mr. Chairman,
Secretary-General of the United Nations
Heads of Distinguish Delegates,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Mr. Chairman, I bring warm greetings from the Government of the Independent State of Samoa and its people. Two years ago, Samoa participated in the third session of the Global Platform which was held about a year after the catastrophic tsunami of September 2009 which devastated our small island state. And then a year later from this third session, Samoa was again devastated by another catastrophic event, Tropical Cyclone Evan two weeks prior to the celebration of Christmas in 2012. Mr. Chairman, if you look at the time difference between these two catastrophic events and the magnitude and extensiveness of the damages caused and the losses incurred as well as the death tolls, it was only three years apart from each other with a notably increase in the cost of damages and losses brought about by Tropical Cyclone Evan. The Government and our people once again bounced back and managed to celebrate Christmas in 2012 and the New Year and for some families and villages in Samoa, they celebrated the festive season without power and water.

Mr. Chairman, the 2011 review of the Samoa National Disaster Management Plan which also coincided with the review of the Hyogo Framework and the progress review conducted in August 2012 highlighted that, although Samoa has made a lot of progress in implementing the national and local programs which contributes to the achievement of Hyogo Framework 2005-2015 milestones, there are still a number of capacity gaps that needs to be addressed to strengthen disaster resilience. These capacity gaps include the building of technical expertise such as information management and GIS and mapping for disaster risk reduction and response in order to expedite the provision of critical information to the policy makers, Ministry of Finance and development partners and other relevant stakeholders. It further

highlighted the need to continue to build the capacity of our local communities in reducing disaster risks and ensure that they are ready to respond to disasters and that the needs of the vulnerable groups are fully embedded in all facets of disaster risk management.

Mr. Chairman, the key outcomes of these reviews include the development and approval of the disaster risk management national action plan for 2011 to 2016, and the revised national disaster management plan 2011-2014. I am very happy to announce at this juncture, that Samoa's National Disaster Risk Management Platform was officially established as a result of these reviews with its first session to be held sometime this year; and of course the support of the UNISDR and other relevant partners would be of great value to ensure that this milestone in the history of disaster risk management in Samoa will be a success.

Mr. Chairman, despite the devastation caused by the latest calamities in our small island state, the Government and the People of the Independent State of Samoa, remains vigilant and continue to build its capacity and capability in partnership with its development partners like New Zealand, Australia, United States of America, United Nations, EU and SPC/SOPAC for whom we are grateful. Without this assistance we would not have been able to implement what we have in place to prepare our country at all levels to respond to disasters and reduce the risks of future disasters.

Mr. Chairman, a classic example of some of the development programs where we partnered with donor agencies and countries include a tsunami mapping and modelling project and a project to strengthen Samoa's tsunami warning and mitigation system through the technical and financial support provided by the Government of New Zealand to our National Disaster Management Office. This assistance enabled the development tsunami hazard maps, tsunami signage and information boards, installation of sirens and the multi-agency, multi-hazard emergency radio communication system which will tremendously improve response coordination through real time transmission of information and enabled the activation of our multi-hazard siren system.

Mr. Chairman, a small island state like Samoa, although we will graduate from being a least developed country come 2014, will continue to be faced with the limited resources and capacity syndrome. Therefore, I urge the donors and technical agencies that are present here in this fourth session of the Global Platform, to continue to provide the support for Samoa and not turn a blind eye to our proposals and requests for assistance.

Mr. Chairman, with these words, I wish you all a fruitful and successful deliberation throughout the Session.

Soifua ma ia manuia,