



INDIA
भारत

**High-Level Midterm Review of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of
Actions (SAMOA) Pathway**

Multi-stakeholder Roundtable II
Priorities, solutions and the way forward

Statement by
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Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

I am delighted to have the opportunity to participate in this very innovative event, bringing together a range of stakeholders and partner organizations as we review our shared commitments made to Small Island Developing States (SIDS) five years ago in Apia, Samoa.

2. We have been greatly enriched by listening to the speakers in the first segment of the programme, who shared their perspectives on the progress made so far, and the gaps and challenges that have been identified.

3. Since this session is a forward looking one about specific solutions, I will outline four innovative steps, big and small, that India is taking as it walks alongside our SIDS partners on the SAMOA Pathway. While many of these initiatives apply equally to our wider development partners around the world, I am highlighting these particular initiatives as they hold special resonance and potential for SIDS countries.

CDRI

4. In light of the growing frequency, intensity and economic impact of disasters, particularly with the heightened vulnerability of SIDS, disaster risk reduction should be an integral part of sustainable development planning, as called for by the Paris Agreement and Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. India has just launched the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) which will bring together technical expertise from a multitude of stakeholders to assist countries to upgrade their capacities and practices, with regard to infrastructure development in accordance with their risk context and economic needs.

South-South Cooperation

5. South-South cooperation is making a vital contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, as a complement, not a substitute, to North-South cooperation. South-South Cooperation has provided innovative solutions to the problems faced in achieving SDGs. In 2017,

India established the India-UN Development Partnership Fund to provide support to projects in developing countries that aim to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs. A sum of US\$ 150 million has been committed for the next decade focusing on developmental projects. In just about two years, the Fund has been able to develop 38 projects in 37 partnering countries. 29 Projects are under implementation, while others are nearing completion. The Government of India has also substantially increased its financial support to SIDS – in 2017 it pledged a sum of US\$ 500 million in grant-in-aid and US\$ 1 billion in soft loans to SIDS.

6. We have committed to the establishment of an Institute for Sustainable Coastal and Ocean Research; a Network of marine Biology Research Stations; and setting up of IT laboratories; for Pacific Island states. We are supporting a Climate Early Warning System project for six Pacific Island countries under the India-UN Development Partnership Fund.

International Solar Alliance

7. As the first in line to confront the adverse consequences of environmental degradation and over-dependence on non-renewable energy, SIDS countries have a special interest in promotion of greener fuel sources. The International Solar Alliance (ISA), which India founded together with France, aims to help nations address key common challenges in the scaling up of solar energy. As part of the International Solar Alliance, India has approved nearly US\$28 billion in concessional credits, including about \$10 billion for approximately 40 African partners, with special emphasis on partnerships with LDCs and SIDS.

Sustainable financing

8. According to UNCTAD developing countries face an average annual funding gap of around US\$2.5 trillion of investment in health, education, roads, electricity, water and sanitation. This target cannot be achieved by the government sector alone. We have to find innovative solutions to bridge the funding gap. Flexibility and creativity are required to leverage a limited

amount of capital to create large-scale impact. For instance, India, is the only country in the world that has mandated companies to spend 2% of their three-year average annual net profits on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities. Today, India's private sector invests about US\$2 billion annually in CSR activities particularly in the areas of health, education, sanitation and rural development.

Excellencies,

9. Just this past week here in New York, we have had series of innovative high-level engagements with our Pacific Islands and CARICOM partners, which include Small Island Developing States - demonstrating once again our commitment and sincerity in nurturing these important relationships.

10. I will end by recalling what our Prime Minister has said on an earlier occasion: while the world may see you as Small Islands with modest populations, we see you as Large Ocean States with vast potential. We offer ourselves as steadfast allies in the developmental journey of SIDs, with a consultative and demand driven approach that is always respectful of the sovereignty of our partners.

11. This approach is best summarized in Mahatma Gandhi's conception of development as reaching "*Sarvodaya through Antyodaya*", *meaning that development of all can be truly be achieved only when the fruits of development have reached the last person at the base of the pyramid.*

Thank you.
