**CLOSING REMARKS BY THE HON FIAME NAOMI MATAAFA**

**PRIME MINSITER OF SAMOA**

**AT THE PRESENTATION OF SAMOA’S THIRD UPR TUESDAY 2ND NOVEMBER 2021: LAVA HOTEL APIA**

Excellencies

On behalf of the Samoan Delegation, and all our stakeholders present this evening, I thank all the Member States and all of you for your constructive feedback, including your recommendations on Samoa’s UPR. Your engagement signals your interest in our efforts to improve the quality of life of our people and your commitment to ensuring the protection of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all.

Samoa acknowledges the technical and financial assistance provided by the international community to implement its human rights commitments.

We also wish to thank the countries that sent us advance questions. We hope that we have answered most of those questions in our opening statement and as part of our responses early on in the evening. Our responses recognize that Samoa’s approach to human rights is not static but is informed by continuing debate at a domestic and international level.

Let me extend our sincere gratitude to the members of the Troika and the Secretariat for their invaluable assistance.

Let me end by sharing with you our Reflections on this process,

Samoa confirms the benefits and contributions of the UPR to our ongoing development and growth as a nation. The recommendations will form part of our human rights roadmap for the next 4 to 5 years.

We do however, see room for improvement. With the word limits on reports and format of engagement, these do not allow for proper contextualisation of the issues. This is crucial when recommending solutions.

The virtual presentations allow for more people to be involved in the process and can strengthen ownership.

There are also no simple solutions to some of the issues raised. However, a whole of society approach with a whole of government response can make all the difference.

Samoa is determined to continue to work towards compliance with its international human rights obligations and to pursue its close cooperation with all stakeholders in its efforts to meet these commitments. This we are committed to do even in the trying and difficult times we are under.