CENTRAL BANK GOVERNOR MAIAVA ATALINA EMMA AINUU-ENARI ADDRESSES UNITED NATIONS
Samoa experience highlighted at ministerial dialogue featuring UN agency heads, finance ministers

TUESDAY 17 APRIL 2019 (NEW YORK). Central Bank Governor Maiava Atalina Emma Ainuu-Enari today delivered remarks to the United Nations as part of its annual ECOSOC (Economic and Social Council) meeting held in conjunction with the Forum for the Financing of Development. The Governor spoke at a ministerial dialogue titled “Harnessing New Technologies for Financing the Sustainable Development Goals” (also known as the SDGs). The audience for ministerial dialogues includes finance ministers, central bank governors, and other senior officials and diplomats from every UN country and from the UN agencies; speakers and panelists include similarly high-ranking officials. The Governor was invited to address this gathering in her capacity as a member of the United Nations Task Force on Digital Financing of the SDGs, on which she was invited to serve last November by UN Secretary-General António Guterres.

“We are grateful to Governor Ainuu-Enari for bringing the perspective of Samoa, and of the Pacific Island countries, to this global audience,” said Tillman Bruett, who is currently director of the Task Force secretariat and who lived in the South Pacific for four years (2008-2012) when he launched the Pacific Financial Inclusion Program. “The dialogues now underway about the digital revolution too often unconsciously assume that the experiences of highly developed and populous nations are universal. As one of two central bank governors on the Task Force, Governor Ainuu-Enari’s decade-long experience in working with the private sector is vital to ensure that the benefits of digitalization are equally shared, that harms are minimized, and that no one is left behind.”

Governor Ainuu-Enari’s remarks to the United Nations today stressed Samoa’s work on the infrastructure associated with digitalization, both the administrative infrastructure such as the national identification system and the physical infrastructure. “Other countries can take basic connectivity for granted,” the Governor said. “Samoa can’t. It was not an easy thing to lay broadband cable across thousands of miles of ocean floor. But to commit seriously to ‘leaving no one behind’ you must first commit to ‘leave no one off-line.’”

Along with Governor Ainuu-Enari, speakers at the ministerial dialogue included two other members of the Task Force: its co-chair Achim Steiner, who is head of the United Nations Development Programme, and Patrick Njoroge, Governor of the Central Bank of Kenya whose country is home to the world’s best-known mobile money service, M-Pesa. Together with their fellow Task Force members (see complete list below), they are working with a broad cross-section of public- and private-sector stakeholders to determine how the digital revolution that is radically transforming the world’s financial systems might be harnessed to help achieve the SDGs. Current estimates put the annual gap at approximately USD 2.5 trillion below estimated necessary investment; the Task Force is charged with finding ways that digitalization can help close that gap.

The Task Force will deliver an interim report of findings to the Secretary-General for discussion during the General Assembly in September; the final action plan is expected in early 2020.

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Members of the United Nations Secretary-General’s Task Force on Digital Financing of the Sustainable Development Goals:

Co-Chairs
- Maria Ramos, retired Chief Executive Officer, Absa Group Limited (retired March 2019)
- Achim Steiner, Administrator, United Nations Development Programme

Members as of 15 April 2019
- Maiava Atalina Emma Ainuu-Enari, Governor, Central Bank of Samoa
- Kristalina Georgieva, CEO, World Bank
- Mats Granryd, Director General, GSMA
- Piyush Gupta, Chief Executive Officer and Director, DBS Group
- Natalie Jabangwe, Chief Executive Officer, EcoCash
- Eric Xiandong Jing, Chief Executive Officer and Executive Chairman, Ant Financial Services Group
- Bradley Katsuyama, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, IEX
- Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director, UN Women
- Ambareen Musa, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Souqalmal
- Patrick Njoroge, Governor, Central Bank of Kenya
- Richard Samans, Managing Director, World Economic Forum
- Liu Zhenmin, United Nations Under-Secretary General for Economic and Social Affairs
- Aurelie Adam Soule Zoumarou, Minister of the Digital Economy and Communications, Government of Benin

WEBSITE: DigitalFinancingTaskForce.org
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Full text of Governor Ainuu-Enari’s remarks
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