

**ADDRESS BY THE
VICE CHANCELLOR AND PRESIDENT PROFESSOR RAJESH CHANDRA
AT THE SIDE EVENT ON CULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT: HERITAGE AND
CREATIVITY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING
STATES (SIDS) THIRD INTERNATIONAL SIDS CONFERENCE**

Excellencies,
Honorable Ministers,
Distinguished panelists,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

I am very pleased to welcome you to this side event on Culture and Development: Heritage and Creativity for the Sustainable Development of SIDS. The Honourable Minister for Education, Science, Culture and Sports of Samoa will do the formal welcome. I am pleased to see so many of you here testifying to the importance we all place on culture in our development.

This Side Event is organised by the Pacific Heritage Hub at The University of the South Pacific in close cooperation with UNESCO Pacific Office and I gratefully acknowledge its significant contribution. As you might recall, at the Mauritius SIDS Conference held in 2005, a panel discussion on the role of culture in the sustainable development of SIDS was organised by the UN and UNESCO. This resulted in the inclusion of culture in the Mauritius Plan of Action. In the Mauritius Plan of Action, commitments were made to;

- a. Develop and implement national cultural policies and legislative frameworks to support the development of cultural industries and initiatives in such areas as music, art, the literary and culinary arts, fashion, festivals, theatres and film, sports and cultural tourism.
- b. Develop measures to protect the natural, tangible and intangible cultural heritage and increase resources for the development and strengthening of national and regional cultural initiatives.
- c. Improve institutional capacity for advocacy and marketing of cultural products and the protection of intellectual property.

Ten years later, here in Samoa, we have an opportunity to have insights into progress made since 2005 from distinguished speakers from the various SIDS regions and countries and to discuss the way forward in better integrating culture in the sustainable development of SIDS.

The University of the South Pacific is a regional intergovernmental university owned by 12 island countries in the Pacific. In 2012, at the request of Pacific countries, USP agreed to host the Pacific Heritage Hub (PHH) at its Oceania Centre for Arts, Culture and Pacific Studies. The Pacific Heritage Hub is a regional facility peoples of the Pacific to facilitate the management of tangible, intangible and natural heritage. It has three main areas of

actions; i) knowledge management, ii) capacity building and iii) partnership building for heritage management in the Pacific. Since its establishment, the Pacific Heritage Hub has conducted a series of capacity building activities for heritage managers and communities in the Pacific, while also contributing to the development of under-graduate and post-graduate courses in Pacific studies.

The establishment of the PHH was generously funded by the Government of Australia and I wish to gratefully acknowledge this assistance.

The decision to locate the Pacific Heritage Hub at USP reflected the views of Pacific countries that it would synergize with the long-standing cultural institutions and activities of the USP since its establishment, especially the Institute of Pacific Studies, a long tradition of literary and research publications dealing with Pacific culture, and the Oceania Centre for Arts, Culture and Pacific Studies so ably led by the founding Director, the late Professor Epeli Hau'ofa.

We will be very pleased to work with additional partners, so please contact us if you wish to become a partner in this exciting programme.

I would like to present to you a short video on the activities of the Oceania Centre for Arts, Culture, and Pacific Studies and the Pacific Heritage.

Faafetai Lava, Vinaka Vakalevu