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**Statement made by European Disability Forum on behalf of Nuanua O Le Alofa
(Samoa)**

Adoption of the Working Group Report on Samoa

24 September 2011

Thank you, Madame President. I am speaking on behalf of Nuanua O Le Alofa, a National Advocacy Organisation established in 2001 to advocate for and promote the rights and abilities of persons with disabilities in Samoa.

Nuanua congratulates the Government of Samoa for its commitment to review most of the existing policies and legislation for consistency with the rights of persons with disabilities and urges it to do a full review of existing laws that have a direct or indirect effect of discrimination to allow persons with disabilities to contribute constructively to the development of Samoa at all levels.

It acknowledges the Government for endorsing the establishment of the National Disability Task Force Committee and accepting the National Disability Policy. It congratulates the government for identifying the Ministry of Women Community and Social Developments as the National focal point for disability matters in 2008.

We were pleased that the government immediately accepted a number of recommendations to improve the rights of persons with disabilities, such as:

- to consider to ratify the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with disabilities,
- to support the work of organizations promoting accessibility and other rights of persons with disabilities,
- to give high priority to the work of the National Disabilities Task Force,
- to implement fully the national policy for persons with disabilities,
- and to improve employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.

In addition we sincerely congratulate the government for accepting recommendations 75.13 through 75.17, as just indicated today.

However we regret that the Government rejected recommendation 75.31, to introduce amendments to domestic legislation and administrative regulations to eradicate discrimination against persons with disabilities and others. We underscore Slovakia's recommendation on the need to incorporate the CRPD into national legislation and we note that discrimination based on disability needs to be re-evaluated in light of the new approach to disability in the CRPD.

Nuanua encourages the Government to complete its inclusive education policy and strategy by 2012, to emphasise in Strategy that teachers are to be given proper training relevant to persons with disabilities. We stress that other specialists services are to be recruited such as Speech therapists, physiotherapist, physiologists, sign language teachers, braille teachers, all educational facilities, public places and means of transportations are to be made accessible. We suggest that the

Government request overseas assistance to aid with the process and identify international aid targeted towards the rights of persons with disabilities.

Finally, we urge the Government to take immediate steps to implement its accepted recommendations in consultation with persons with disabilities and their representative organizations, and to submit a two-year midterm progress report to the Council regarding implementation of its accepted UPR recommendations.

Thank you.