



**SPEECH BY ASSOCIATE MINISTER OF WORKS, TRANSPORT AND
INFRASTRUCTURE HON. NIUAVA ETI MALOLO AT THE 2ND ASIA AND
PACIFIC MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE
CIVIL AVIATION 2024**

11TH – 12TH SEPTEMBER 2024, NEW DELHI, INDIA

- (Honorable Prime Minister/Minister of Civil Aviation of the Government of India);
- Excellency, Mr. Chairman (need to await the election on who will be Chairman)
- Excellency, Vice Chairperson (need to await the election on who will be vice Chair)
- Respective Excellencies, fellow Minister's distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen;

It is an absolute honour for us to be present here today, extending warm greetings and heartfelt Talofa lava from Samoa.

First and foremost, I extend my sincere congratulations to the Government of India for the successful hosting of this 2nd Asia and Pacific Ministerial Conference for Civil Aviation, 2024.

We are deeply grateful for the invitation extended to us, the gracious Indian hospitality, and the very kind support that has enabled us to join everyone here today. A true reflect of the spirit of collaboration that binds our region.

The past few years have indeed been challenging, particularly for air transportation in our Pacific Islands.

For Samoa, these difficulties began with the Measles Epidemic in 2019, which tragically claimed more than 80 lives, most of whom were children. Our borders were shut, and our connectivity was severely affected. This was followed by the global COVID-19 pandemic.

which led to nearly three years of border closure, deeply impacting our economy and isolating us from the world.

Your Excellency, in the face of such adversity, we have been fortunate to receive the unwavering support of our Asia and Pacific neighbours. We are particularly grateful for the training, scholarships, and the Cooperation and Fellowship Programmes extended through the ICAO Developing States Programmes, as well as direct assistance from fellow 'Good Samaritan' States. These initiatives have been essential to our recovery, especially for a small island nation like Samoa.

One of our most significant milestones in recent years has been the establishment of the Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) Liaison Office in Nadi, Fiji. This office represents a crucial step forward for the PSIDS, enabling us to strengthen safety, security, and capacity-building efforts in civil aviation. As we confront emerging challenges, this collaboration will ensure that our region remains connected and does not lag behind in aviation growth. However, challenges remain, particularly in the area of capacity building for Samoa, and many other PSIDS, the small size of our civil aviation workforce makes it difficult to meet the global standards for safety and security oversight. Both the state safety oversight and aviation security oversight systems have an effective implementation below global average. With only eight individuals responsible for aviation safety and security for our entire state, the need for continued support and expertise from more developed nations is critical.

To be able to do this, as a Pacific Small Island Developing State, we look to the more developed countries to guide us and we are very grateful for the unending assistance from the various States to Samoa, which has enabled us to be where we are today.

This is a true testament of your commitment to enhancing connectivity and fostering development within our Asia and Pacific communities.

Today, as we gather here in New Delhi, we stand together in our commitment to regional cooperation and civil aviation growth. Samoa fully supports the proposed New Delhi Declaration, and we believe that through partnership, we can address our shared challenges and achieve a more connected, secure, and prosperous future.

May the bonds that began in Beijing, and are being reinforced here in Delhi, continue to flourish, fostering a brighter future for our Asia Pacific Community.

Thank you...FAAFETAI TELE LAVA.