

Steering Committee on Partnerships for SIDS
Ambassadorial Level Meeting
14 December 2023, 10AM, Conference Room 2

Statement

Ms. Lotta Tahtinen, Chief, Outreach and Partnership Branch, Division for Sustainable Development Goals, UNDESA

Excellencies,

Distinguished Participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to join the Ambassadorial meeting of the Steering Committee on Partnerships for Small Island Developing States (SIDS), on behalf of the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, Mr. Li.

I would like to start by congratulating the Co-chairs of the Steering Committee, Permanent Representatives of Portugal and Samoa to the United Nations for their leadership for the last two years.

I also wish to congratulate the incoming Co-chairs, Permanent Representatives of Ireland and Palau for their appointment.

[SIDS' sustainable development]

The ongoing multiple and interrelated global crisis have darkened the global outlook and severely set back development gains across the globe.

The Small Island Developing States have been particularly impacted due to their unique vulnerabilities.

To make the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Samoa Pathway a reality, it has become increasingly clear that these ambitious outcomes cannot be met without the participation and contribution of all key sectors of society, including the private sector, scientific and technological community, civil society and youth. To succeed we also need more inclusive and effective partnerships including in areas that are critical for SIDS, such as resilience building, disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, sustainable infrastructure and innovative technologies, to name a few.

[Preparatory process for the Fourth International Conference]

Excellencies,

As we continue our efforts to overcome the current challenges, the global community has begun to prepare for the fourth International Conference on SIDS (SIDS4), which will take place from 27 to 30 May in Antigua and Barbuda.

The SIDS4 Conference will be a once in a decade opportunity for the global community to assess the ability of SIDS to achieve sustainable development and to provide a blueprint for course correcting efforts.

It will bring together world leaders, the UN system and other partners, civil society, the private sector, academia, youth and other stakeholders, to develop and agree on practical and impactful solutions to address SIDS-specific challenges.

Next month, the first session of the Conference Preparator Committee will mark a significant milestone, when under the guidance of its co-chairs, the Permanent Representatives of Maldives and New Zealand, delegations will engage in the first round of discussions on the zero draft outcome document.

The regional and inter-regional preparatory meetings held over the course of July and August have already highlighted a number of priority areas for consideration, including the need to revitalize the SIDS economies, to enhance their environmental resilience, to support the SIDS in building and fostering equal, inclusive and safe communities, strengthening their institutional and statistical capacity, and supporting the SIDS to move toward a more resilient future by ensuring adequate means of implementation.

[SIDS Partnership Framework]

Importantly, the outcome document of the inter-regional preparatory meeting “Praia (Cabo Verde) Declaration” also recognized the critical role of partnerships and included a call for the strengthening of SIDS Partnership Framework.

In support of the effort to strengthen the SIDS Partnership Framework, UN DESA, in collaboration with ESCAP, is organizing a two-day SIDS Partnership Symposium in the margins of the 2024 Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, to gain insights from SIDS stakeholders on how the SIDS Partnership Framework could be further improved in priority areas and to foster peer learning and knowledge exchange. The recommendations from this Symposium will be submitted to this Committee for further consideration. I would like to thank the government of Republic of Korea and Portugal for the generous funding contribution to this event and process.

[ECOSOC Partnership Forum 2024]

On 30 January, in connection with upcoming ECOSOC Partnership Forum, there will be a side event organized by Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, UNDESA and ITU which will focus on the issue of fostering more SIDS partnerships in area of science, technology and innovation. We invite you to attend this side event.

[Closing]

In conclusion, I reiterate DESA's commitment to fostering partnerships that catalyze transformative change in SIDS. By working collectively, we can overcome challenges, unlock opportunities, and ensure that no one is left behind on the path to sustainable development.

Thank you.