



**THE FIRST SESSION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR SIDS4, 22
JANUARY 2024, IN CONFERENCE ROOM 4, UNHQ.**

**STATEMENT BY DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CABO
VERDE MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS
MR. JOSE DELGADO**

Esteemed Participants and Distinguished Colleagues,

Co-Chairs of the Preparatory Committee,

Permanent Representative of Antigua & Barbuda,

Secretary General of SIDS4, Under-Secretary General for Economic and Social Affairs,

Special Advisor for the Conference, High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Islands Developing States,

Permanent Representatives,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

First and foremost, on behalf of the government of Cabo Verde we would like to extend warmest greetings to all members of the Preparatory Committee for the fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS4).

Cabo Verde aligns with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Samoa (on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States) and also with that made by the Permanent Representative of Cuba (on behalf of the Group of 77 and China), please allow us a few words on a national level.

Last year the SIDS family organized three regional meetings – AIS, Caribbean and Pacific, followed by an Interregional Preparatory Meeting, in Praia, capital city of my beloved country Cabo Verde. I would like to express our gratitude for the trust placed in Cabo Verde as host of this event held from August 30th to September 1st, 2023, undoubtedly important for our large SIDS family and a first step on the path to SIDS4, in Antigua and Barbuda, next May.

As we are now embarking on this significant journey of collaboration and preparation, I am confident that our collective efforts will pave the way for meaningful discussions and impactful outcomes.

Excellencies

Ladies and Gentlemen,

31 years passed since the realization of Earth Summit where Small Island Developing States (SIDS) were, for the first time, recognized as a distinct group of developing countries facing specific social, economic, and environmental vulnerabilities, the condition and challenges of these countries remain exactly the same. SIDS are still structurally vulnerable, especially due to

characteristics inherent to our insularity, small size, and isolation, which can be mitigated but never eliminated.

The integrated nature of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SAMOA Pathway requires inclusive and integrated approaches to the numerous development challenges of SIDS, particularly regarding development financing. SIDS are very strongly affected by debt, which provoke deleterious effects on their economies.

Furthermore, with limited and usually undiversified economies, small populations, geographical dispersion, and extreme vulnerability to external shocks and the consequences of climate change, SIDS need way more than fair access to financing and recognition of their structural vulnerabilities. They need financing avenues that align with their fragilities and needs. Access to financing, with difficult and unpredictable eligibility criteria, also depends on the capacities and competencies to devise initiatives and strategies for accessing both traditional and innovative financing, as well as public and private financing, including climate financing.

Otherwise, it is crucial to create opportunities to test mixed solutions, combining competitive approaches for trade and investment niches with development cooperation to build resilience in social, environmental, and economic areas. Innovative financing, such as debt swaps and carbon exchanges, should be explored, drawing inspiration from successful examples like Seychelles and Cabo Verde.

However, all development efforts are at risk if resilience to climate change is not built in these countries. International support is vital in facing extreme climate events, which can easily cripple economies and undermine progress towards Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Cabo Verde is committed to sustainable development. The second Strategic Plan for Sustainable Development aims to make Cabo Verde an advanced democracy, a dynamic economy in digitization and diversification, an inclusive nation with shared prosperity, high international prestige, and a source of pride for all by 2026.

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

The National Strategy for Small Island Developing States aims to provide a framework for global and differentiated cooperation with SIDS, maximizing their contributions in priority areas for Cabo Verde's development. Cabo Verde also seeks to share its experience and export services and goods, making SIDS a central element in the new diplomacy paradigm.

Cabo Verde serves as an example that, even with limited resources, the path of development can be pursued. However, the persistent challenges faced by SIDS, including pandemics, require unconventional solutions. The meeting aims not only to consolidate priorities but also to guide the international community on the best ways to assist, including the United Nations system and international [financial] institutions, recognizing the need for profound reforms.

Lastly, I hope that the deliberations of the First Preparatory Committee Meeting for the SIDS4 Conference will be productive and inspiring, marking a significant step towards a safer and sustainable future for all SIDS and the world. I wish you good work and a resounding success.

THANK YOU.