

First Preparatory Committee Meeting for the SIDS4 Conference

22 January 2024 - CR4

Statement of Italy delivered by Ambassador Maurizio Massari

Excellencies, colleagues,

First of all, I would like to thank the co-chairs of the Bureau of the Preparatory Committee, as well as all the other fellow members of the Bureau, for their excellent cooperation and joint work over the recent weeks.

As a member of the said Bureau, we are sparing no effort so as to achieve a successful outcome of the Conference. We kicked off by allocating 1 million Euro for the preparatory process and we have continued both our work within the Bureau and outreach.

Coming to substance, the 5 themes identified for the interactive dialogues [focusing on access to finance, partnerships, data, digital technologies, human capital, diversification of economies] really capture the structural challenges the SIDS face nowadays. They also highlight the enablers for a substantial shift in the next decade of action, also bearing in mind the implementation weaknesses of the Samoa Pathway, especially with regard to the access to finance, which is a crucial aspect.

In our longstanding bilateral cooperation with PSIDS and CARICOM (which predates the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement), Italy particularly focused its efforts on projects related to energy transition, climate change adaptation, disaster preparedness and response, protection of oceans and seas, marine plastic pollution.

In line with our traditional support to the most vulnerable countries in countering the adverse effects of climate change, at COP28 our Prime Minister announced a pledge of 100 million Euro for the new Loss and Damage Fund, as well as a pledge of 300 million Euro for the replenishment of the Green Climate Fund.

COP28 has been a crucial building block towards the 4th SIDS Conference, but let us recall that the development of SIDS goes beyond COP. All together, we have to ensure that SIDS development encompasses all the SDGs, not only the climate change issue, even though we all know that this is the most pressing issue.

That is also why we are currently discussing with our partners from PSIDS region how to strengthen our cooperation on several cross-cutting issues, like women and youth empowerment, gender equality and social inclusion, food security in the Pacific region.

On another note, the 4th SIDS Conference is the best occasion to also deepen the ongoing discussion on SIDS-specific recommendations on how to address public health needs as an integral part of climate change resiliency and pandemic preparedness and response. As a matter of fact, meaningful action on health and climate means additional financing to unlock resources in investment for climate action, good health and wellbeing.

I am looking forward to continuing this discussion with all of you in the next days and weeks, during the negotiations on the outcome document, which are about to start, but also in the context of the FFD Forum and towards the Conference in May.

Please, count on Italy to continue to leverage the political, financial and technical support for SIDS sustainable development.

I thank you.