

Preparatory Committee of the Fourth International Conference on Small Island  
Developing States

**General Statement by the Republic of Latvia**

*First plenary meeting, 22 January 2024*

Excellencies, colleagues,

I would like to **congratulate** Dr. Ali Naseer Mohamed on his appointment as the co-chair of the Preparatory Committee **and also thank** the co-chairs Maldives and New Zealand for their devoted work and convening this Preparatory Committee session, as well as the rest of fellow Bureau members. **You can count on Latvia's continued active engagement** throughout the rest of the preparatory process and in the fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States.

**Latvia aligns with the statement delivered by the European Union.**

For us coming into the preparatory process of **the SIDS conference, it was important that it should follow the leadership of the SIDS**. Our approach and position in preparation for this conference is formed by the needs of SIDS. We are certain that the Conference in Antigua and Barbuda and its outcome will reflect their main challenges and give a new vision and impetus to overcome them. It is also an opportunity to reestablish the common support of the UN system.

Financial stability, strengthening resilience, expanding partnerships and meeting SDGs **is the core of our joint action when addressing the obstacles SIDS are facing.**

Dear colleagues,

Ambitious and urgent climate mitigation action remains the crucial element for managing the climate risks, and limiting sea level rise. It is important to **assist low-lying and SIDS with climate adaptation and resilience**. Recognizing the existential threat that sea level rise poses for SIDS, we also believe that **gaining legal clarity** on

climate crisis and its consequences is important.

Since the adoption of SAMOA Pathway in 2014, the world has and continues to experience significant transformations especially digital. Digital skills, equal opportunities and data gathering and analysis are essential for sustainable development. Therefore, we **welcome the proposal to establish a SIDS Centre of Excellence** in Antigua and Barbuda which will also include SIDS Data Hub and we are open to discuss how we can contribute to it with our national expertise and share our own experience in digitalization and promoting digital skills.

In conclusion, Dear Co-chairs, I once again reiterate Latvia's commitment to contribute to this process as the Rapporteur of the Preparatory Committee and as a friend of SIDS. I thank you!