

# SIDS Address

## International Medical Crisis Response Alliance

15 February 2024

Thank you Madame Chairman, Honored Attendees, and Global Stakeholders. The International Medical Crisis Response Alliance (IMCRA) is pleased to be given this opportunity to address issues touched upon in the Zero Draft Outcome Document Prepared for the Fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States, referred to hereinafter as the SIDS document. I am Dr. Thomas G. Hedberg, the executive director of IMCRA and am speaking on behalf of this organization.

In this intervention, we find that we will echo some of the points made by Professor Mycoo and Ms. Leotaud, and wish to address the following sections of the SIDS document:

1. Section 2 - Area A-4 – An ocean based economy
2. Section 2 Area D-2 - Conservation and sustainable use of the ocean and its resources
3. Section 3 Area 6 - Partnerships

Regarding Chapter 2 Section A-4 and Section D-2, we wish to note in addition to the good points made in the SIDS document that scientifically-informed conservation of fragile oceanic ecosystems in the waters surrounding small island nations is absolutely essential to maintaining a healthy ocean-based economy, both now and in the future. In cases we have seen previously, small national economies dependent on oceanic bounties have looked to short-term utilization of available resources for short-term economic gain without extended planning for maintaining renewable ecosystem health. In certain cases, this has included the use of fish bombs and other technologies, which have seriously impacted the health of local fisheries as well as irreversibly damaging the coral reefs many of these ecosystems are dependent on. Ultimately, this rebounds negatively to the overall health of the human communities involved. Thus, we wish to draw the attention of Conference delegates to the absolute need for SIDS nations to engage reputable marine ecologists and conservationists as advisors when conducting long-range plans for oceanic resource utilization.

Regarding Chapter 3 Section 6, we wish to note that in addition to the good points made in the SIDS document, SIDS nations occupy an important position globally due to the oceanic ecosystems they have stewardship over. In many cases these ecosystems are unique in terms of species diversity and may include breeding grounds and other locations integral to the health of both individual species as well as larger global ecosystems. Accordingly, national partnerships with large scientific and conservation organizations will provide both guidance for national planners as well as potential funding forces for SIDS efforts at marine and littoral conservation. When ecosystem conservation is shown to be a national focus the global attention of multiple funding sources can be both merited and achieved to the benefit of the SIDS nation involved.

We thank you for your attention.