

**SIDS Global Business Network (SIDS-GBN) Forum 2024**

**25-26 May 2024**

**Antigua & Barbuda**

1. **Background**

The SIDS Global Business Network (SIDS-GBN) convenes SIDS and international private sector actors to share best practices and lessons learned in forging private sector partnerships for SIDS. The network facilitates collaboration among SIDS regional private sector organizations and works towards strengthening inter-regional business alliances. Similarly, SIDS-GBN encourages international businesses to focus on SIDS as potential market opportunities and vice versa. Its core activity is the SIDS-GBN Forum held biennially to bring together SIDS, private sector actors and other stakeholders to share best practices, discuss ways forward, and form new collaborations.

Spearheaded by OHRLLS, the SIDS-GBN was established at a private sector forum held in 2014 on the sideline of the Third UN Conference on SIDS in Samoa.

Since then, OHRLLS convened the first SIDS-GBN Forum in Aruba in 2016 focusing on public-private Partnerships, the second in Mauritius in 2018 focusing on sustainable tourism, and the third in Palau in 2022 focusing on ocean partnerships.

The fourth Forum will be convened on 25-26 May 2024 in Antigua & Barbuda as a special event of the Fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS4).

As the last Forum under the SAMOA Pathway, the 2024 Forum will provide a unique opportunity to take stock of the Network’s first decade and hear from the private sector on the new Programme of Action for SIDS. It also allows for the private sector to have a seat at the table in discussions on the new SIDS agenda and provide recommendations to governments on how to build an enabling business environment which allows the private sector to contribute to the sustainable development of SIDS.

The outcomes of the SIDS-GBN Forum will be brought into the SIDS4 Conference at the Private Sector Roundtable.

1. **Objective**

The Forum will bring together businesses and governments to discuss how to strengthen public-private partnerships that contribute to the sustainable development of SIDS, including resilience building of the private sector in SIDS.

Based on the outcomes of the Forum, the SIDS Global Business Network will develop a report with priorities and recommendations for how SIDS governments can build an enabling business environment in support of the new Programme of Action for SIDS.

These outcomes will be brought into the private sector roundtable at SIDS4 on 28 May 2024 from 6-8PM.

Following the Conference, OHRLLS will follow up on the recommendations and work towards their implementation through SIDS-GBN activities.

1. **Participants**

The 2024 Forum will convene:

* Government representatives from SIDS who work in relevant areas such as trade ministries,
* The private sector from across all SIDS regions including MSMEs, particularly female and youth entrepreneurs,
* International companies, investors, chambers of commerce, trade and investment promotion organizations, small business development agencies,
* UN organizations,
* Civil society and academia.

Most speakers will be from the private sector, primarily from the SIDS and from global businesses.

OHRLLS will also sponsor the travel of small businesses from the SIDS to ensure representation of the private sector, particularly youth and female entrepreneurs.

1. **Preparatory Process**

A preparatory process started in 2023, engaging relevant stakeholders to identify key focus areas and to mobilize partners for the Forum. Themes of the Forum and the outlook for the Network’s next decade are being finetuned through this preparatory process and will inform the Forum agenda.

The preparatory process involves a webinar series, knowledge products, and stakeholder consultations. More information can be found on at: [SIDS Global Business Network Forum 2024](https://www.un.org/ohrlls/sids-global-business-network-forum-2024)

1. **Advisory Group**

In 2023, OHRLLS established an informal advisory group to guide preparations for the 2024 Forum.

The group includes the following members:

* Ms. Matilda Bartley on behalf of H.E. Fatumanava Luteru, Permanent Representative of Samoa to the UN and Co-chair of the Steering Committee on SIDS Partnerships
* Mr. Duarte Valente on behalf of H.E. Ana Paula Zacarias, Permanent Representative of Portugal to the UN and Co-chair of the Steering Committee on SIDS Partnerships
* H.E. Stan Smith, Permanent Representative of The Bahamas to the UN
* Ms. Manuela Stravens, Owner Eco-Tourism Villas, Seychelles
* Mr. Deodat Mahat, Executive Director, Caribbean Export Development Agency
* Mr. Howard Politini, Chairman, Pacific Islands Private Sector Organization
* Ms. Mira Bergem, Public Affairs Manager, Mærsk Mc-Kinney Møller Center for Zero Carbon Shipping
* Ms. Lucie Brigham, Chief of the UN Office for Partnerships
* Mr. Darian Stibbe, Executive Director of the Partnering Initiative
* Mr. Gabriel Torres, Manager, UN Relations & Partnerships, UN Global Compact
* Mr. Escipion Oliveira, Director of Enterprise Competitiveness and Institutions, International Trade Centre

1. **Partners**

OHRLLS has mobilized various partners from across sectors. Partners are also consulted on the process on an ongoing basis, and each thematic session will be co-organized with partners.