



Statement by South Africa during the Second Preparatory Committee Meeting for the 4th International Conference on Small Island Developing States

01 April 2024

Mr President,

South Africa welcomes this second session of the Preparatory Committee Meeting to discuss the organizational, procedural, and substantive preparations for the 4th International Conference on Small Island Developing States.

The special status of Small Island Developing States, due to their ecological fragility, vulnerability to severe effects of climate change and high debt levels, is well known and was already formally recognised in 1992 by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

We are therefore supportive of the upcoming 4th International Conference on Small Island Developing States, which seeks to chart a course towards resilient sustainable development.

The 2030 Agenda represents an opportunity for all of us to course-correct our previous developmental missteps. For Small Island Developing States, however, the 2030 Agenda represents an important global framework through which they can address their specific ecological fragility and vulnerability to climate change, to ensure their survival and prosperity.

The Secretary-General's sobering assessment about our sub-par collective efforts at implementing the Sustainable Development Goals pose a threat to our collective resilience and prosperity.

It is for this reason that South Africa continues to champion all international initiatives that seek to put us back on track toward achieving the 2030 Agenda such as the Secretary-General's Stimulus Plan, the operationalisation of the Loss and Damage Fund, reform of the international financial architecture, and adherence to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Means of implementation are important for the optimal fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda. The Stimulus Plan serves to address this through tackling debt and rising debt distress, massively scaling up affordable long-term financing to the tune of USD500 billion per year and expanding

contingency financing to countries in need, such as Small Island Developing States. Use of science, technology and innovation is another important means of implementation whose use possesses immense potential for the identification of gaps, and utilisation of innovative solutions, in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

The challenges that affect us place an extra burden on Small Island Developing States due to their geographic location and size. Through its involvement in various processes South Africa will continue to contribute to course-correcting our developmental trajectory, including in terms of those elements that would benefit Small Island Developing States.

To conclude, South Africa conveys its well wishes to Antigua and Barbuda for a successful 4th International Conference on Small Island Developing States and looks forward to participating meaningfully in the deliberations of this Second Preparatory Committee Meeting.

Thank you.