

STATEMENT BY THE EQUALITY FUND

Presented by Amina Doherty, Vice President of People, Equity and CUlture with Responsibility to the Executive Office

Excellencies, Distinguished guests... All Protocols Observed.

The Equality Fund is honoured to share space with you in Antigua and Barbuda for the Fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States. We are a Canadian-based, global philanthropic institution robustly resourcing women's rights organizations and feminist movements worldwide. Directly and in partnership with allied funders, we provide core, long-term, flexible funding to over 1,000 organizations across a number of Small Island Developing States.

Through a groundbreaking initial investment of CAD \$300 million from the Government of Canada—and bolstered by additional resourcing from the Government of the United Kingdom, institutional funders, and philanthropists—we are shifting power and resources to organizations and movements tackling the issues at the forefront of concern to Small Island Developing States.

Current research shows that less than 1% of philanthropic funding goes into the hands of women's rights and social justice movement organizing. Chronically underfunded and underestimated, women's rights organizations and movements are a vital untapped resource. And yet, despite working at the frontlines to hold and break new ground for justice and rights, they are largely excluded from the humanitarian system and crisis response.

Since 2019, the Equality Fund has been committed to changing this trend. To date, we have dispersed approximately CAD \$10.5 million to emerging and evolving responses globally. In the Caribbean, through the Women's Voice and Leadership initiative we have disbursed CAD \$1.2 million.

Our message is clear: it will take multi-sectoral collaboration working in unprecedented ways to bring about change. We envision responses that move beyond small, short-term, and one-time grants for immediate response when disasters strike, to flexible long-term funding to prepare and build resilience, confront crises and strategize on the solutions that will define our futures.

We look forward to deeper collaboration with all members of the SIDS community and invite each of you to work with us to drive change by boldly and unapologetically resourcing women's rights and social justice movements. Working rapidly and urgently. Strategically and collectively. Because we simply can't afford to wait.

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