

*Opening statement*

**Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**Let me thank my fellow co-chair **Her Excellency  
Penelope Beckles-Robinson, Minister of Planning  
and Development of Trinidad and Tobago** and  
welcome you at the Interactive dialogue Nr4 in the  
margins of SIDS4 conference titled - Leveraging  
Data and Digital Technologies and Building Effective  
Institutions for a Resilient Future in SIDS.**

**The background of today's discussion is that  
the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is  
not just off track; it is in reversal.**

**Limited adoption of digital technologies, lack of  
data quality, and infrastructure vulnerabilities  
constrain SIDS' ability to promote coherent and  
evidence-based policymaking and realize the SDGs.  
Coherent national development plans and policies  
are essential for comprehensively implementing the**

**2030 Agenda, the SAMOA Pathway, the Sendai Framework, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, and the Paris Agreement.**

**Promoting sound and evidence-based policymaking in SIDS can pave the way for a resilient and prosperous future. This requires an integrated approach that addresses strengthening governance and institutions, data and information systems, and promoting digital transformation.**

**From the perspective of Latvia: Our engagement with the SIDS is backed by a strong conviction that the SIDS hold a great potential to leapfrog the development gaps and become the powerhouses of digital innovations in education with global impact, and to contribute to global accessibility of education through technology.**

**In this regard we also 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.**

**Let me also say that Latvia's engagement with the SIDS is well-aligned with its continued membership in the UNESCO SDG4 - Education 2030 High-level Steering Committee (HLSC) which has the oversight of the global progress towards SDG4 and the follow-up of the 2022 United Nations Transforming Education Summit.**

**At this backdrop Latvia and the SIDS Group continue cooperation in 2024 by hosting a seminar at UNESCO on the digitalization of education and low density languages in the SIDS convening a broad representation of the SIDS constituency and creating a space for sharing knowledge in designing**

**digital learning solutions and promoting linguistic equality in the digital world.**

**We believe that investing in the digital transformation of the SIDS is the key measure to achieve the sustainable development and resilience of the SIDS, including through leveraging the use of technology in education.**

**As indicated in the programme, this high-level interactive dialogue consists of a fireside chat, and it is my pleasure to hand over the proceedings to Ms. Pamela Coke-Hamilton, Director of the International Trade Centre to facilitate the Chat with the distinguished speakers.**

## **Closing statement**

**Excellencies,**

**Distinguished Delegates,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**Today's discussion provided us with number of recommendations and possible solutions. I will try to summarize few of them:**

**(1) Bolstering institutional capacities for whole-of-government and whole-of-societies approaches as well as strategic foresight and innovation for anticipatory governance;**

**(2) Promoting effective data and information management systems for evidence-based and risk-informed policymaking at all levels of government;**

**(3) Leveraging digital transformation for resilient economies and societies**

**(4) Fit-for-future mindsets, including the need to promote agile public institutions that can allow a faster response to evolving digital and development challenges and foster a culture of foresight, experimentation, and learning.**

**In general, what we heard today was that - to promote people's well-being and prosperous societies, SIDS need a long-term vision of development and policy framework that revolves around the 2030 Agenda and leverages the above four enablers.**

**This vision can only be realized with transformational leadership, new mindsets and effective human resources in the public sector and political commitment at the highest level of government.**

**It also requires listening to and engaging all citizens, especially those in vulnerable situations, and promoting effective capacity development to leverage data and digital technologies and build effective institutions for a resilient future in SIDS.**

**Excellencies,**

**Distinguished delegates,**

**Before concluding this dialogue, I would like to take the opportunity to thank all participants for their forward-looking and result-oriented interventions, and for their cooperation and goodwill.**

**The summary of our deliberations in this discussion will be presented to the closing plenary meeting of the Conference in the afternoon of Thursday, 30 May, and included in the final report of the Conference.**

**Interactive dialogue 5 on the theme of “Investing in human capital: addressing health crisis in SIDS and building the potential of youth in SIDS” will take place in this room tomorrow morning at 11 am.**

**We have thus concluded this Interactive Dialogue.**

**The meeting is adjourned. 🗡️**