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4th International Conference on Small Island Developing States

Interactive dialogue 4

“Leveraging data and digital technologies and building effective institutions for a resilient future in small island developing States”

Statement by H.E. Mr. Krzysztof Szczerksi
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Poland to the United Nations

Antigua and Barbuda, 29 May 2024
Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for giving me the floor.

Sustainable economic and social development requires strong and transparent public institutions. They are indispensable to build resilience in all dimensions, in particular by creating an appropriate legal framework or the right business environment. Building capacity of public administration is also necessary in Disaster Risk Reduction.

The modern world brings us complex challenges, and multi-faceted crises but it also provides new solutions, such as digital technologies. They are undoubtedly a great opportunity for developing countries to reduce all inequalities and gaps, to build efficient digital public services that lead to reduction of unnecessary regulatory and administrative burdens, and to support economic growth and sustainability. Poland can offer solutions in terms of digitalization of public services – most notably in digital transformation of the healthcare system towards the personalized, preventive, participatory, pre-emptive system – which has been widely applauded, including through United Nations Public Service Awards.

Accelerating progress in these spheres, however, requires focusing on digital skills, and promoting formal and non-formal education and training in ICT and science. In Poland we believe that bridging digital divides, including the gender digital divide, and reducing digital exclusion of older people should be our top priority.

We also need to support digital literacy and media skills, in particular in the context of building resilience to disinformation and combating negative phenomena such as discrimination, illegal content online or cyber violence. Another important issue is data protection, and here again the democratic, transparent, and effective institutions play the key role.

Distinguished Colleagues,

The basic condition to reduce digital divides is development of effective and safe digital infrastructure. Poland recognizes the importance of enhancing
connectivity, as well as quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure for achieving the SDGs, accelerating economic and social development worldwide, and strengthening resilience. For this reason last year we tabled a UN GA resolution on building resilience through infrastructure connectivity, which also recognizes the role of digital infrastructure.

Poland shares the view that digital technologies are of particular importance for SIDS and we see room for our cooperation, including sharing best practices at the regional and the UN level.

Thank you.