

Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and
Stockholm Conventions

Statement for the 4th International Conference on SIDS

Mr. Rolph Payet, Executive Secretary

27-30 MAY 2024 - ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

- Excellencies,
- Distinguished participants,
Ladies and gentlemen,
- I am honored to address this Conference assembled here to work together on assisting SIDS in “*charting the course towards resilient prosperity*”.
- Taking multilateral action has become more urgent than ever as we face the triple planetary crises of pollution, climate change and biodiversity loss.
- The impacts of pollution, in particular, cannot be denied: 4.2 million deaths occur every year as a result of exposure to ambient (outdoor) air pollution and many more are exposed to heavy metals and persistent organic pollution, including the growing emissions of plastics waste into our environment.

- Pollution is one of the key drivers of biodiversity loss. It affects nature's contributions to people and ecosystems worldwide, including non-material benefits such as social cohesion, recreation, learning and inspiration.
- Moreover, measures to address pollution, such as the appropriate management of hazardous chemicals and waste can significantly contribute to efforts to address climate change.
- We have heard it loud and clear at this conference, SIDS are particularly vulnerable to these impacts. While human-induced climate change is already causing widespread disruption to human settlements and forcing mass migrations, coupled with continued deforestation and species extinctions, we must not overlook the less visible but devastating impact of pollution on all that is crucial for the resilience of SIDS.

- The Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions are three multilateral agreements that share the common objective of **protecting the environment and human health** from the adverse effects of hazardous chemicals and wastes. They address some of the most significant chemicals and waste pollution issues identified over the last several decades.
- As such, their implementation contributes to addressing pollution, climate change, the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity as well as supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.
- With these few words, allow me once again to **reiterate** the commitment of the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions to assist Member States and other stakeholders in charting the course towards resilient prosperity for SIDS and ensuring a pollution free planet for present and future generations.

Thank you!