



Unidade-Disciplina-Trabalho

Ministério das Infraestruturas, Recursos Naturais

Gabinete do Ministro

Presentation / Speech at the fourth International SIDS Conference in St. John, Antigua and Barbuda , May, 2024	
SIDS4 – 2024- St. John, Antigua and Barbuda	
Date	27 May of 2024
Place	American University of Antigua-AUA
Country Project	São Tomé & Príncipe
Section/Room	I/11
Keynote Adress	H.E. Honorable José Rio – Minister of MIRN-STP
Time of intervention	Global time-14:00 – 15:30 (for keynote-14:25 a 14:30)
Theme	<i>Revitalizing SIDS Economies for Accelerated and Sustainable Growth Through Ocean Energy: SIDS DOCK and UNIDO Partnership at GLOEA – Building a Bridge Between SIDS, Governments, Industry, Science and Finance to Implement Renewable Ocean Energy Solutions</i>
Expectations	To hear about how São Tomé & Príncipe is looking to implement the energy transition with OTEC project and get partnership opportunities are available in all chain processes.

Hon. Mr. Wavel Ramkalawan, President of the Republic of Seychelles and President of the seventh session of the SIDS DOCK Assembly (AIS Region)

Hon. Mr. Siaso ‘Ofakivahafolau Sovaleni (Hon. Hu‘akavameiliku), Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Tonga, Vice President of the seventh session of the SIDS DOCK Assembly (Pacific Region)

Hon. Dr. Vince Henderson, LPD, MP, Minister for Foreign Affairs, International Business, Trade and

Energy, Commonwealth of Dominica; Chair of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Council for Foreign and Community Relations (COFCOR);

SIDS DOCK Island Women Open Network (IWON) Patron and former Chair of the SIDS DOCK Executive Council,

H.E. Mr. Nikolaus Marschik, Secretary-General, Federal Ministry Republic of Austria, European and International Affairs

Mr. Gerd Müller, Director General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

Mr. Albert Binger, PhD, Secretary-General, SIDS DOCK Secretariat

Mr. Martin Lugmayr, Industrial Development Expert and GN-SEC Coordinator, UNIDO

Mr. Daniel Grech, Founder & Chief Executive Officer, Global OTEC

Heads of State and Government,

Distinguished Ministers, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Ladies and Gentlemen

First of all, on behalf of the Government of São Tomé and Príncipe and on my behalf, I greet and thank the Secretary of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) for inviting me to this side event of the fourth International Conference on Small Island States, where it will be another moment of reflection for all member countries. I would also like to extend my greetings to UNIDO-United Nations Industrial Development Organization and the Global Ocean Energy Alliance (GLOEA).

Although most of you here know my country, STP, but let me repeat that we are also a Small Island Developing State (SIDS), geographically located on the west coast of Africa, in the Gulf of Guinea, consisting mainly of two volcanic islands. The archipelago is about 1001 km² and has a population of just over 250,000 inhabitants.

Geographically, it represents the terrestrial physical space closest to imaginary zero, between the Equator and the Zero meridian. It is bordered to the west by Gabon, Angola, Nigeria to the southwest by the island of Bioko of Equatorial Guinea. The sister island, Príncipe, is 150 kilometers northeast of the island of São Tomé.

The climate of the islands is equatorial, hot and humid, with a maritime territory of 160 times its land surface. This geolocation makes it a suitable region for the splurging of electrical energy through Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion (OTEC).

Ladies and gentlemen,

Like some SIDS, Sao Tome and Principe has a heavy dependence on imported fossil fuels, despite sufficient renewable energy resources that can be fully developed to meet its energy needs. In fact, the energy sector is one of the fundamental pillars for growth and the promotion of sustainable development in STP.

However, these same challenges can be considered as justification for the increasing development of its potential to address the desired

energy transition, given that electricity generation capacity in recent decades is predominantly diesel generation.

Although the country is limited to government funding to reach the level of implementation of renewable energy, some mechanisms and strategies have been developed by the Government together with partners with regard to the implementation of the necessary measures to accelerate the decarbonization of the energy sector and thus fulfill the expected energy and sustainable transition.

In addition, São Tomé and Príncipe intends to actively contribute to the recommendations of the Conferences of the Parties (COP), based on the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

However, São Tomé and Príncipe was chosen as the demonstration site for the development and deployment of the world's first Floating Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion Platform (OTEC), a 1.5-megawatt power plant called "Dominique". But in order for us to achieve the objectives of this project, we have to overcome the next critical step to put the "Dominique" in the ocean, whether they are private or from development partners who care to meet climate causes, taking into account SIDS as the most vulnerable. Highlighting the urgent need for several studies to be completed and among them **seabed survey** to ensure the best probability of implementation of other crucial tasks/activities.

As I said at the beginning, this is a time for reflection for everyone, especially when we talk about the susceptibility/vulnerability of SIDS in relation to climate change, so this study cannot move forward completely without the support of development finance.

Ladies and gentlemen,

This is an exceptional moment as it serves as a platform to provide partnerships and facilitate support for decarbonization in Island States and overcome human, technical and financial capacity limitations, and to seize existing opportunities to promote innovative, integrated and inclusive solutions for a sustainable green and blue transition.

I believe that these actions are necessary to facilitate fair, equitable and accessible financing mechanisms, in a gender-balanced approach, with a view to strengthening climate resilience.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

São Tomé and Príncipe always counts on the collaboration of SIDS DOCK, UNIDO and others, in various aspects, especially in Renewable Energy Applications and Technological Solutions, Financing, Training and Studies. We are confident that this is the right way to be aligned with the common gain for global environmental sustainability, particularly for the future of the energy transition at the level of SIDS.

I am also pleased to say that my presence here is precisely to demonstrate to the SIDS DOCK family that my government, with less than 2 years of governance, is actively integrating the project, which is at a very advanced stage and that we will do everything to materialize. I would like to take this opportunity to invite everyone who is involved in the implementation of this project to move the STP next June in order to further strengthen the structures of the project with the new government, stakeholders in order to accelerate its implementation.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As you know, how important the outcome of this project is for STP, and in particular the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) family. This clearly demonstrates the importance of the Global Ocean Energy Alliance (GLOEA) as a coastal nations and Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and the inclusive promotion of initiatives with the private sector, in this unique context with the unique emphasis of the company GLOBAL OTEC, which together with the development partners involved to accelerate the implementation of "Dominique", expected to be completed by the end of 2026. Funding to complement the existing private sector contribution is greatly needed, which frankly has been too slow to materialize.

Ladies and gentlemen,

However, while we are hopeful that finance institutions and development banks will join us in responding to our request for climate finance, we are moving forward with our loyal partners United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), Global Network of Regional Sustainable Energy Centers (GN-SEC), Austria and the Global Ocean Energy Alliance (GLOEA). We, the SIDS, know for a fact that the ocean is our last and most abundant resource that can **"chart the path to resilient prosperity"** and **"revitalize SIDS economies for accelerated and sustainable growth,"** which is the theme of the SIDS4 Conference. Therefore, before concluding, I would like to thank our good friends and leaders of the financial institutions and development banks responsible for supporting our sustainable development for a great deal of attention, in order to support the financing of the fight against climate change with a strong emphasis.

I would like to conclude by reiterating the wishes of thanks and the commitment of SIDS DOCK and others present here to strengthen international cooperation in the field of energy and climate with São Tomé and Príncipe and encourage financial institutions, development banks to support the commercialization of ocean energy technologies suitable and scalable for SIDS. We too, advocate for ocean climate action that drives the blue and green economy aspirations for SIDS through ocean energy.

"The transition to renewables is not just a choice, it's a necessity for a sustainable future."