



**Solomon Islands Government's National Statement on 4<sup>th</sup> International  
Conference on Small Islands Developing States (SIDS).**

**Theme: "Charting the course toward resilient prosperity"**

**27th – 30th May, 2024**

***Mr/Madam President,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and gentlemen,***

**Let me convey warm greetings from the Government and the people of Solomon Islands to the SIDS family and everyone here. Thank you Antigua and Barbuda for the generous hospitality accorded to us thus far, and congratulations for successfully hosting this SIDS landmark event. We also commend the support of the UN DESA & UNOHRLLS, for the successful execution of this 4<sup>th</sup> SIDS Conference.**

**Mr/Madam Chair, allow me to join in sharing our deepest heartfelt condolences, to the Government and people of Papua New Guinea, for the tragic landslide disaster, that resulted in the loss of innocent lives recently in Papua New Guinea. Our thoughts and prayers goes out to the affected families and wantoks during this difficult time.**

**Mr/Madam President,**

**This week marks a significant milestone in the journey of Small Islands Developing States (SIDS), in determining and shaping the future that we collectively want. We're further encouraged by the forward-looking perspectives shared thus far since the conference started.**

**We are here in beautiful Antigua and Barbuda, to endorse the bold and forwarding looking, Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS (ABAS) for the next 10 years. ABAS provides the basis to reinvigorate our shared commitments, and forge renewed dural partnerships for implementation that will bring transformative changes to SIDS.**

**Mr. President,**

**The world we live today is vastly different to when SIDS first gathered in Barbados and Mauritius or in Samoa 10 years ago. The impact of increasing multidimensional crisis, pandemics and conflicts contributed immensely to most of our countries' record of being off track in achieving the SDG targets. After three decades and three programmes of actions, SIDS development trajectory is still characterised as follows; First, it remains a special case for sustainable development. Second, SIDS continue to be disproportionately exposed, to external shocks that occur with increasing frequency, and causing damage that not only, impede overall socio-economic progress achieved, but often reverses the hard-earned development gains made.**

**Climate change continues to exacerbate this volatility and vulnerabilities. While the challenges persist, they are not insurmountable with SIDS's determination.**

**Solomon Islands is confident that ABAS provides the vision for 'Charting the Course Toward Resilient Prosperity' for SIDS. This framework provides the platform, for transforming these challenges into opportunities, through durable partnerships with targeted result-based interventions and investments.**

**Be rest assured of Solomon Islands support.**

**Mr. President**

**For Solomon Islands, our National Development Strategy, 2016-2035 remains the key framework for Sustainable Development. Like other SIDS, our national economy had been hit hard by internal and external economic shocks. Our graduation out of the LDC category has been delayed on several occasions as well.**

**A mid-term review of the National Development Strategy was undertaken last year. The review report prioritized key transforming sectors infrastructure resilience, digital connectivity, technology transfer, investment, trade and energy reforms, as the way forward to ensure a resilient, sustainable and irreversible graduation process. Solomon Islands will present its second Voluntary National Review (VNR) at the upcoming High Level Political Forum in July 2024. The outcome of these two processes will inform the country's, Smooth Transition Strategy in readiness for graduation in 2027. We are committed to align the ABAS to our national development**

framework, and to establish a mechanism that would render oversight on its implementation domestically.

**Mr/Madam President,**

**SIDS are the stewards of the resources representing 16% of the world's exclusive economic zones. It also hosts some of the world's richest ecological diversities for both land and sea. These have helped to build thriving sectors in tourism and fishery in many SIDS.**

**Our Pacific Islands region has the largest and healthiest stocks of tuna in the world. In 2022, the value of the tuna catches, taken by national fleets of the Forum Fisheries Members was US\$1.8 billion. This highlights the significance of tuna fisheries to the Pacific Islands region, in sustaining the livelihoods of Pacific peoples and strengthening economic recovery in our national economies. In recognition of the unique opportunity Fisheries provides to SIDS economies, the Solomon Islands Government in collaboration with the Forum Fisheries Agency, and the Office of the UN Envoy for Oceans, will hold a Summit on SDG14.4 in Honiara in early 2025. The focus will be on the sustainable management of the fishery resources in SIDS. This Summit will reinforce the importance placed, for the sustainability and effective conservation of marine and land resources in the Programme of Action. Furthermore, it will serve as a springboard to highlight fishery management issues leading to the 3rd UN Ocean Conference.**

**Plastic pollution is a major concern for our environment as well and Solomon Islands calls for the timely conclusion of the negotiations of the proposed Treaty on this.**

**Mr/Madam President,**

**Climate Change remains the greatest existential threat, to the wellbeing and livelihoods of our people and communities.**

**Solomon Islands is located in hot spot, where the impact of climate change is three times the global average. The 2021 World Risk 4 Report, identified Solomon Islands, as the second most exposed country to disaster. Addressing Sea level rise, ocean acidification, frequent flash flooding and intense cyclones, places immense financial pressure on the Government and it keeps us on constant recovery mode. We have a runaway climate change increasing SIDS vulnerabilities. In this connection, Solomon Islands welcomes the convening of the High-Level meeting on Sea Level rise and the Climate Summit in September this year.**

**Mr. President,**

**Given the persistent challenges faced by SIDS, its economic resilience will be dependent on access to affordable financing and transformative partnerships to translate ideas into actions. Like many SIDS, for Solomon Islands to reach its development objectives, affordable and sustainable finance that is fit for purpose, tailored to the small size and capacity constraints, needs to be provided to propel our economic recovery.**

**Solomon Islands struggles with high debt levels and the debt servicing obligations only reduces further government's provision of necessary basic services. In short, it is the people who are paying the price. We therefore support the call for debt restructure for SIDS.**

**In addition, these persistent systematic and the cross dimensional vulnerabilities of SIDS necessitate the reform of the international financial architecture. Solomon Islands supports the call for the establishment of a SIDS permanent seat in the decision making body, within the international financial architecture to ensure inclusivity. In a similar manner, we support the call for the adoption of the Multi-Dimensional Vulnerability Index (MVI) and its operationalization and effective implementation.**

**Other financing mechanisms, such as Loss and Damage facility needs to be resourced and less restrictive on its conditions, to enable greater accessibility by SIDS.**

**Mr. President,**

**The successful implementation of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda is our collective responsibility. Solomon Islands acknowledges the continued support and commitment from our development partners in the implementation of our National Development Strategy. We look forward to renewed engagement in transformative partnership models, focused on initiatives to drive economic growth, resilience, and sustainability. This is critical for improved delivery of health care systems, social services, opportunities for education and strengthening of national institutions.**

**Solomon Islands acknowledges that the SIDS Partnership Framework is a useful platform for catalysing new and innovative actions for the implementation of ABAS for the next decade.**

**Mr. President,**

**Solomon Islands support the ABAS vision for institutionalizing the review process under the HLPF, which will ensure measured progress annually against commitments made. We further support the call for a Secretary General's progress report because it encourages greater accountability and transparency for SIDS, the partners and the stakeholders.**

**Mr. President,**

**In conclusion, Solomon Islands reaffirms its cooperation and solidarity, with the SIDS family for the successful implementation of the ABAS. We have a great opportunity to make transformative changes in the lives of our people and humanity. Let's seize that opportunity - starting here at St. Johns.**

**I thank you Mr. President.**