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MR. LI JUNHUA  
UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL  
AFFAIRS

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**Opening Remarks at the Opening Press Conference for the  
Fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States**

**27 May 2024, 1:30 p.m., Press Briefing Room**

Hon. Everly Chet Greene, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Agriculture, Trade and  
Barbuda Affairs,  
Dear Colleagues,  
USG Fatima,  
Members of the Press,

Welcome to Antigua and Barbuda, for the Fourth International Conference on  
Small Island Developing States.

The theme of the next four days is: “Charting the course toward resilient  
prosperity”, and it couldn’t be more relevant at this critical juncture.

Small island nations remain mired in the compounding aftershocks of the  
COVID-19 pandemic and the global financial crisis.

Simultaneously, they confront the rapidly intensifying consequences of climate  
change and repercussions from escalating geopolitical conflicts.

However, with the 2030 deadline for the Sustainable Development Goals just  
six years away, a dire lack of financing leaves these island states further behind in  
realizing the Goals, compared to other countries.

To rise to these challenges – and the existential threats SIDS face – this  
Conference will conclude by adopting the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS.

This Agenda – the “ABAS” – is an ambitious yet practical roadmap for the next 10 years to bring about sustainable development for SIDS. I am proud to have been involved with its preparation.

The ABAS lays out a concrete set of objectives and incremental milestones. Rather than a catalog of lofty expectations, ABAS sets out 10 actions that the international community can take to help SIDS secure prosperity and a sustainable future for our people and planet.

This Conference must foster global solidarity, strengthen international cooperation, and mobilize resources to address the unique vulnerabilities faced by SIDS.

As Secretary-General of this Conference, I am here to demonstrate the full support and commitment of the entire UN family to carry forward this legacy.

In the coming days, I expect leaders from SIDS and other parts of the world to engage with the private sector, civil society, and young people to advance new ideas, encourage new pledges of support, and kickstart delivery on agreed commitments.

I would now like to hand over to my dear colleague, Ms. Rabab Fatima, who has served as Special Adviser for the Conference.

Thank you.

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