

[Opening remarks by Co-Chair 1 (Trinidad and Tobago) (2 minutes)]

**Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is an honour to co-chair this session on "Leveraging Data and Digital Technologies and Building Effective Institutions for a Resilient Future in SIDS". Today's focus is crucial as we explore the transformative power of digital technology in addressing SIDS' unique challenges, from climate vulnerability to geographical isolation.

Digital transformation is essential in this era of rapid technological advancement. It offers tools like advanced analytics and artificial intelligence, which can significantly enhance disaster resilience, optimise resource management, and improve public services. For example, real-time data is revolutionising our approach to disaster management, enabling better preparedness and a more efficient response.

Furthermore, embracing digital solutions opens economic opportunities, fostering new industries and jobs through e-governance

and digital platforms. These innovations streamline administrative processes, enhance transparency, and bolster public trust.

However, achieving a digitally inclusive future requires international cooperation. Initiatives like the United Nations Global Digital Compact emphasise the importance of global collaboration to ensure no one is left behind. This Compact advocates for universal internet access and the safe, equitable use of technology to achieve sustainable development.

This afternoon, as you exchange best practices, pinpoint gaps, and propose strategies that use digital technologies to foster sustainability, inclusivity, and resilience, remember that our specific goal is to adopt new technologies and integrate them in ways that empower SIDS to thrive, innovate, and lead.

I appreciate your commitment to this meaningful dialogue, and I look forward to hearing the actionable insights that will emerge.

[Closing remarks by Co-Chair 1 (Trinidad and Tobago) (2 minutes)]

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Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I am deeply grateful to all panellists and participants for your active participation and insightful interventions today. Thank you also, to our very competent moderator and support staff for a job well done. Through this shared commitment and mutual support, we will navigate the complexities of our unique challenges and seize the opportunities that digital advancements present. Together, we will forge a resilient future for our nations.