

**Global Multi-Stakeholder Small Island Developing States  
Partnership Dialogue 2024  
10 July 2024 10am-1pm Trusteeship Council Chamber**

**Co-organized by the Co-chairs of the Steering Committee on partnerships for  
SIDS - Ireland and Palau, UNDESA and UN-OHRLLS**

**Summary of Discussions**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. The Global Multi-Stakeholder Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Partnership Dialogue (the “Global Dialogue”) took place on 10 July 2024, on the margins of the 2024 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). This event is mandated by the UN General Assembly (UNGA) and organized under the UNGA’s SIDS Partnership Framework. This year, the Global Dialogue was held at a critical juncture—just after the fourth International Conference on SIDS (SIDS4) in May and before the Summit of the Future scheduled for September 2024. The dialogue focused on scaling up partnerships for SIDS to implement the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS (ABAS), a Renewed Declaration for Resilient Prosperity. Additionally, the third UN SIDS Partnerships Awards ceremony was held during the Global Dialogue.

**OPENING REMARKS**

2. **H.E. Ms. Ilana Victorya Seid**, (Co-Chair) Permanent Representative of the Republic of Palau to the United Nations, reaffirmed that equitable, durable, and enduring partnerships are crucial for the successful implementation of the ABAS. She recalled the fruitful discussions at the SIDS4 side event on "Partnerships in the New Decade of Action for SIDS," noting that a multi-stakeholder approach—incorporating perspectives from public, private, civil society, academia, and youth—brings diverse views that can inspire innovative ideas and lead to concrete actions. She highlighted that the SIDS4 conference demonstrated a strong spirit of collaboration and that it was heartening to witness meaningful SIDS partnerships throughout the event.

3. **H.E. Mr. Fergal Mythen**, (Co-Chair) Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations, reaffirmed Ireland’s commitment to tracking progress and ensuring that the commitments made at SIDS4 are fulfilled. He highlighted that the commitments made in Antigua and at last year’s SDG summit, along with the ambitions set for the Summit of the Future 2024, underscore the essential role of the UN and multilateralism in fostering global partnerships. Ambassador Mythen emphasized the need for a more action-oriented SIDS Partnership Framework to enable meaningful partnerships, including with the private sector and other stakeholders. He noted that collaboration among diverse stakeholders is crucial for driving innovation and developing solutions to the challenges faced by SIDS.

4. **Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, Mr. Li Junhua**, noted that SIDS have demonstrated leadership in addressing their unique and structural challenges while spearheading innovative solutions. With only 17 percent of SDG targets currently on track, Mr. Li emphasized the urgent need to accelerate actions to implement the SDGs and the ABAS through partnerships. He highlighted the potential to maximize value creation and deliver benefits to all partners by leveraging resources and competencies and sharing risks. Recalling the ABAS's request for recommendations to the UN Secretary-General on strengthening the SIDS Partnership Framework, he called for views and suggestions on how partnerships can advance the ABAS, including through the SIDS Partnership Framework.

5. **Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries, and Small Island Developing States, Ms. Rabab Fatima**, emphasized that strengthening the SIDS Partnership Framework and the SIDS Global Business Network, along with its Forum, is crucial for implementing the ambitious roadmap set by the ABAS. She highlighted that the private sector will play a central role in her office's approach. At the SIDS Business Forum held during SIDS4, businesses and investment communities provided valuable insights and recommendations that will guide the work of the SIDS Global Business Network in implementing the ABAS. The Under-Secretary-General conveyed her office's intention to focus on developing specific workstreams, including crafting a collective blue-green roadmap for SIDS, establishing a Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) fund, devising strategies to strengthen the business environment, and formulating a joint financing and investment framework for SIDS.

#### **INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE, SCALING UP PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ABAS.**

6. **H.E. Mr. Walton Alfonso Webson, Permanent Representative of Antigua and Barbuda to the United Nations** emphasized that the successful implementation of the ABAS depends on strong global multi-stakeholder partnerships. Noting that the ABAS goes beyond the SDGs and provides guidance for a resilient post-2030 future, he highlighted the upcoming establishment of the SIDS Center of Excellence as a key mechanism for these partnerships. Designed to be SIDS-responsive, SIDS-tailored, and SIDS-led, the Center will serve as a pivotal hub for data collection and analysis, innovation, investment, and best practices in climate resilience and sustainable development. Ambassador Webson also stressed that partnerships are essential in responding to global crises and expressed hope that the Global Multi-Stakeholder SIDS Partnership Dialogue will catalyze actions on the SDGs and the ABAS, leading to a meaningful future for SIDS.

7. **H.E. Ms. Tania Serafim Yvonne Romualdo, Permanent Representative of Cabo Verde to the United Nations** proposed four strategies to enhance collaboration between partners:

1. Organize forums and conferences that bring together representatives from local governments, civil society, NGOs, foundations, the private sector, academia, and international financial institutions to facilitate dialogue, exchange ideas, and form strategic partnerships.
2. Develop digital platforms that enable seamless communication and collaboration among all partners.

3. Encourage multi-stakeholder initiatives to collaborate on project design, implementation, and monitoring.
4. Integrate the participation of local communities in all phases of the process, including engaging indigenous populations and local communities.

Regarding the mobilization of financial and human resources to support ABAS implementation, Ambassador Romualdo emphasized the need to establish dedicated partnership funds and tax incentives to attract private investment. She also called for stronger engagement by international financial institutions. Additionally, the Ambassador noted her delegation's intention to host a regional AIS meeting in 2025 to establish the AIS coordination mechanism.

8. Recalling the theme of the Third International Conference on SIDS (SIDS3), "The Sustainable Development of SIDS through Genuine and Durable Partnerships," **Ms. Matilda Bartley, Deputy Permanent Representative of Samoa to the United Nations**, stated that SIDS have an equal stake in steering their development aspirations, which reflects their hopes for addressing ABAS implementation. Ms. Bartley acknowledged the challenges in monitoring the partnerships announced at SIDS3 and underscored the need for strengthened monitoring and evaluation of these partnerships.

9. **H.E. Mr. Rui Vinhas, Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations**, reaffirmed Portugal's commitment to promoting partnerships for SIDS in alignment with their 2030 Cooperation Strategy. He highlighted key SIDS partnerships, including the debt-for-climate swap signed with Cabo Verde last year and the UN-Portugal Ocean Fellowship, a capacity-building program focused on ocean governance, marine conservation, the blue economy, and the continental shelf regime. Mr. Vinhas also noted that a strengthened SIDS Partnership Framework could contribute to the implementation of the ABAS by enhancing monitoring and evaluation, synergizing with the SIDS Global Business Network and Forum, and aligning with the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

10. **Mr. Matias Bendersky, Manager of the Office of Outreach and Partnerships at the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)** highlighted that the IDB has developed a range of instruments to provide tailored debt support and relief, as well as to increase financing. For instance, the ONE Caribbean program focuses on four key areas: climate adaptation and disaster risk management, citizen security, private sector engagement, and food security. Mr. Bendersky noted that the IDB was the first Multilateral Development Bank (MDB) to offer Climate Resilient-Debt Clauses and currently holds \$1.9 billion in such loans. As the Chair of the MDB Heads Group for 2024, the IDB supports the recent Call to Action on mobilizing resources for SIDS, which urges MDBs to collaborate on addressing multifaceted challenges and reforming the international financial architecture.

11. **Ms. Helena Fraser, Director of the Policy and Programming Branch at the United Nations Development Coordination Office**, noted that Resident Coordinators in SIDS are implementing new-generation Cooperation Frameworks to advance the 2030 Agenda in line with national contexts. The Joint SDG Fund of the Resident Coordinator System and the UN Development System have provided \$62.1 million in direct financial commitments to SIDS and launched a dedicated portfolio for them. Ms. Fraser highlighted that Resident Coordinators play a crucial role in helping SIDS harness the potential of their private sectors as engines of sustainable

growth and development, particularly in climate-resilient infrastructure and climate adaptation measures.

12. **Mr. George Gray Molina, Head of Inclusive Growth and Chief Economist at UNDP**, noted that over the past 10 years, UNDP has mobilized \$4 billion through 1,900 development projects and programs. Emphasizing the critical role of partnerships in addressing SIDS' challenges, Mr. Molina highlighted that UNDP's Rising Up for SIDS 2.0 initiative aims to help SIDS implement the ABAS and create future opportunities. On the ground, he underscored UNDP's commitment to scaling up support in areas such as climate action, blue and green economies, digital transformation, financing for development, gender equality, and inclusive growth. Recalling SIDS4, where UNDP announced a GEF-funded \$135 million program on the blue and green economy for 15 SIDS, Mr. Molina conveyed UNDP's commitment to expanding its SIDS Data Platform, enhancing digital readiness assessments, and advancing the Small Island Digital States program. He also noted UNDP's support for the MVI implementation and its ongoing commitment to participating in discussions on metrics beyond GDP.

13. Stressing the importance of engaging civil society in the sustainable development of SIDS, **Ms. Nicole Leotaud, Executive Director of the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI)**, noted that the SIDS Civil Society Action Plan and Roadmap, launched at SIDS4, recommends that governments and development partners better support civil society. This includes strengthening laws and regulations to support the non-profit sector; setting standards to ensure meaningful participation of civil society in decision-making processes; creating formal spaces for civil society in legislative processes; establishing mechanisms for including social groups in decision-making; and ensuring that civil society has access to financing.

14. **Mr. Mark Pereira, CEO of Zed Labs**, emphasized the crucial role of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in fostering sustainable and resilient prosperity in SIDS. He highlighted the agility of MSMEs in economic recovery, the importance of building strong partnerships—including with diasporas—and the significant role of remittances in SIDS. Mr. Pereira called for the development of public-private partnerships, improved financial infrastructure, and the adoption of innovative technologies like blockchain to enhance capital distribution and resilience. He also stressed the importance of engaging the SIDS diaspora, youth, and technologists in driving growth and prosperity.

## INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION

15. During the interactive discussion, many participants welcomed the adoption of the ABAS and echoed the critical role of multi-stakeholder partnerships for successful implementation. **INTERPOL** said that the SIDS Partnership Framework may be strengthened by further recognizing the nexus between security and development as illicit financial flows, violent crime, and environmental crimes hinder sustainable development. INTERPOL's Small Islands' Lighthouse Programme supports the ABAS vision by enhancing the security architecture of SIDS. INTERPOL expressed its intention to contribute to strengthening the SIDS Partnership Framework by integrating law enforcement expertise and promoting international police cooperation.

16. Recalling the paragraphs of the ABAS on partnerships, **Malta** welcomed the work of the Steering Committee on partnerships for SIDS and highlighted its support for SIDS through scholarship programme for eligible SIDS and development of climate vulnerability and resilient index that complements the MVI.

17. **Germany** noted its 5 million EUR commitment for the programme on blue economy and online repository for preserving cultural heritage threatened by climate change and sea level rise. Germany has supported 250 projects in SIDS in the last ten years, with projects equivalent to 380 million EUR that are currently being implemented, as well as on carbon accounting through the Caribbean Cooperative MRV Hub. Recalling the SIDS Global Business Network Forum held at the SIDS4.

18. **Denmark** stressed the critical role that the private sector would play in implementing the ABAS. Denmark noted its support for the decision to convene the High-Level Meeting Address Existential Threats Posed by Sea-Level Rise and for the development of the MVI and said that the country is part of AOSIS-Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of OECD which shows stronger partnership between AOSIS and OECD.

19. **International Science Council (ISC)** noted that Academia, with its research expertise and capacity building potential, can bridge sectors, advance knowledge exchange, and co-create innovative solutions. Collaborative research efforts can identify innovative financing models, such as public-private partnerships and blended finance approaches, tailored to the unique challenges of SIDS. In addition, ISC said that the Global Multi-Stakeholder SIDS Partnership Dialogue provides a crucial platform to translate ambition into action.

20. **Latvia** noted their priority areas in addressing challenges of SIDS, namely accessing to financing, taking urgent climate action, strengthening resilience, and expanding partnerships. Latvia supports SIDS by providing space for knowledge sharing, harnessing digital technology and digital education, and supporting for judicial action in SIDS.

21. On the role of Steering Committee, the **United Kingdom (UK)** stressed the importance of the SIDS Partnership Framework to track the delivery and facilitate partnerships to ensure the ABAS implementation. To implement the ABAS, UK has committed to 7.3 million GBP for 8 years till year 2030 and technical support in programme designing for Infrastructure for Resilient Island States Facility; allocation of ODA to SIDS through UK Caribbean Infrastructure Fund; a new 200 million GBP to support SIDS to access financing for climate and resilient infrastructure; and support AOSIS-DAC taskforce to improve donor coordination.

22. **ITU** focuses on two areas, one on universal connectivity aimed at universal access to affordable and secure information and communication technology, and second on promoting sustainable digital transformation. ITU's Smart Village and Smart Islands Initiatives aim to deliver connectivity and digital services in SIDS, enhancing livelihoods, economic opportunities, and overall well-being through a whole-of-government approach.

23. **International Organization of Employers (IOE)** noted the seven-point plan presented by a delegation of presidents and CEOs from IOE Caribbean members at the SIDS4, which emphasizes the need for governments to nurture competitive and resilient private sectors. This require reducing regulatory barriers, promoting free and fair competition, and maintaining a stable economic environment based on the rule of law. IOE called for stronger collaboration between governments, the private sector, and educators to better align education with labor market needs.

## THE THIRD UN SIDS PARTNERSHIPS AWARDS CEREMONY

24. The SIDS Partnerships Awards 2024 were presented in each of the three dimensions of sustainable development as follows:

- (i) **Economic category:** UAE Pacific Partnership Fund and UAE Caribbean Renewable Energy Fund, represented by His Excellency Mohammed Saif Al Suwaidi, the Director General, Abu Dhabi Fund for Development (ADFD);
- (ii) **Environmental category:** Infrastructure for Resilient Island States (IRIS), represented by Mr. Amit Prothi, Director General, Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI);
- (iii) **Social category:** Transcultura: Integrating Cuba, the Caribbean and the European Union through Culture and Creativity, represented by Ms. Alessandra Borchì, Senior Programme Coordinator, UNESCO.

### Closing

25. In closing, Co-chair, **Ambassador Seid (Palau)** highlighted the value of hearing voices from diverse stakeholders and stressed the importance of creating space that facilitate sharing of different perspectives. She reaffirmed the pivotal role of partnerships, including SIDS-SIDS cooperation in implementing the ABAS, and expressed her support for the Center of Excellence, which promotes sharing of lessons learned and knowledge. **Ambassador Mythen (Ireland)**, Co-chair, **noted** that a key takeaway from this Dialogue is that ‘partnerships make things happen’ and reaffirmed that challenges faced by SIDS can be overcome by genuine partnerships.