



Strengthening the capacity of Experts from Small Island Developing States (SIDS to meaningfully engage in intergovernmental negotiations on the outcome document for the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FFD4)

**Statement by Mr Sainivalati S. Navoti
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Opening session: Welcome and workshop objectives

- On behalf of the Acting Director, Division for Sustainable Development Goals, and the UNDESA SIDS Unit, it is my pleasure to welcome you to this workshop.
- I extend a particularly warm welcome to colleagues joining us from capitals from across the three SIDS regions.
- My thanks to Shari for her opening remarks and for the support and collaboration of the Financing for Sustainable Development Office in organising this workshop.
- Financing issues were among the most prominent at the Fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States, which took place in Antigua and Barbuda from 27-30 May this year.
- For SIDS to meet their sustainable development objective, the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS (ABAS), which was adopted at the conference, recognized that SIDS need assistance to diversify their economies and strengthen state capacity.
- ABAS also recognized that the international financial architecture should go further to fully address the unique development circumstances of SIDS and make accessing concessional finance easier for them, which could mitigate their fiscal constraints and reduce the risk of indebtedness and prevent the reversal of hard-earned development gains.
- The Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FFD4) is an important opportunity for SIDS and for the international community to reinforce and build upon these commitments.
- For FFD4 to do so, SIDS' voices and priorities must be heard and pursued both in the preparatory process and intergovernmental negotiations on the outcome document.
- The objective of this workshop is to support you in your advocacy and to help you begin to coalesce around a set of shared priorities to guide your engagement, at FFD4 and in its preparatory processes.



- At last week's Preparatory Committee meeting, we already heard that the Elements Paper does not go far enough and does not meet the level of ambition of SIDS, particularly around embedding the consideration of vulnerability at the heart of the international community's approach to financing for sustainable development.
- We trust that this workshop will also provide a space to help strengthen linkages between staff from Permanent Missions and capitals, to facilitate engagement in the intergovernmental negotiations.
- Over the next two days we will "deep dive" into the four priority issues you selected. International Development Cooperation, Trade as an engine for Development, Debt Sustainability and Development and domestic and international private business and finance.
- In these two days, we will consider the evolving landscape on each issue for SIDS and then provide space for you to reflect on your national experience.
- We are also grateful that our colleagues from Antigua and Barbuda (Host of SIDS4), will present their progress in developing the Debt Sustainability Support Service for SIDS, a SIDS-led solution to address debt issues which could be extended to all developing countries.
- Finally, in the Workshop programme, we have also set time aside for you to consider your approach to the negotiations and how you can work together most effectively to ensure that the final outcome helps you on your path to resilient prosperity.
- The SIDS Unit will develop a summary of the key issues discussed at this workshop, which will be presented in the final session and shared with all participants after the workshop. We hope that it will help you to develop a group position.
- I would also encourage you to consider how you can engage partners to support and advocate for these priorities alongside you.
- Let me conclude by reiterating DESA and the SIDS Unit's commitment to supporting SIDS throughout this process.
- I wish you all the best for a successful workshop.
- Thank you.