

**NOTES FOR AN ADDRESS BY DAVID ANDERSON, PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO  
CANADA'S MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**3<sup>RD</sup> INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES (SIDS)**

**APIA, SAMOA, SEPTEMBER 1-4, 2014**

Mr. President, Excellencies, Honoured Guests,

Talofa. Good afternoon, everyone.

On behalf of the Government of Canada, I would like to thank the organizers of this conference for their hard work in preparing for our important time here in Samoa. I would also like to thank our hosts for warmly welcoming us to your beautiful island and for caring for us so well.

This is a conference of global interest. We are here to discuss the future of small island developing states around the world.

Over the past two decades, the international community has acquired a new understanding of the particular development challenges that small countries surrounded by water face.

Environmentally, issues of sea levels, limited natural resources including land and potable water, frequent and violent storms, very fragile ecosystems. Economically, dependency on limited commodity exports, isolation, high transport costs, dependency on imported food and fuels, and the growing threat of communicable and non-communicable diseases.

In recent years, the world has been regularly reminded of the special vulnerability of coastal states. Hurricanes and major storms have devastated or had major impacts on many countries in the Caribbean and in the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans. Political instability has also affected some communities. At such trying times, Canada has consistently worked with other partners in the international community to provide relief, recovery and reconstruction assistance.

Canada has a long history of partnership with small island developing states. That is why Canada supported — and remains committed to — the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States that was set out two decades ago in Barbados and built upon in Mauritius in 2005.

The objectives of the original Barbados Programme of Action remain a sound framework for inter-regional and international partnerships between small island developing states and the wider international community. Much has changed in the world since 1994 and our efforts too must evolve.

In the 22 years since the special vulnerabilities of SIDS were recognized at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio in 1992, we have learned:

- that we need programming in priority areas such as ocean governance, climate adaptation biodiversity, and transport and communications;
- that we need long-term interventions;
- that we need cooperation and coordination at the national and regional levels;
- that we need to strengthen our partnerships and harmonize our efforts;
- and last but not least, that small island developing states must take charge of their own future and lead on implementation.

Sustainable development is not just about increased funding. It is about targeted, focused efforts to help people to help themselves. But to build better lives for themselves, their communities, and their countries, SIDS inhabitants must participate and lead in decision-making that affects them.

We see the importance of a continued relationship with donor countries, but also for the involvement of the private sector, remittances and other non-traditional sources of financing for development. Partnerships are key to implementing the Barbados Programme of Action. Canada encourages the different stakeholders, including non-governmental organizations, local communities, and the private sector, to work together closely with governments, and with their counterparts on other islands in their regions, in order to successfully address their common challenges.

Samoa itself provides an excellent example. Despite facing significant challenges and vulnerabilities as a small island developing state, Samoa has made substantial development progress over the past two decades and is now graduating from the United Nations' Least Developed Country category. This shows that sustained efforts, sound policies and effective partnerships can lead to greater economic empowerment and opportunity.

Canada supports the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action, or S.A.M.O.A., Pathway, negotiated in New York for approval by Heads of Delegation at this Conference. Canada is ready to contribute to its implementation.

Since 1994, Canada has supported a large number of initiatives directly related to the Barbados objectives. For example, in line with Prime Minister Stephen Harper's 2007 announcement to provide \$600 million in development assistance for the Caribbean (CARICOM) region, development funding to the region totalled \$130.6 million in 2011–2012, including imputed funds for multilateral organizations and mechanisms. The program focuses on promoting sustainable economic growth by enhancing public financial and debt management, promoting private sector development and building skills for youth employment. We are also contributing to enhancing security through the rule of law and better management of natural disasters. For example, Canada was the largest contributor to the World Bank's Caribbean Catastrophic Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF) which is now financially self-sufficient. Since 2007, the CCRIF has provided more than \$32 million in payouts to 7 countries to help them respond to natural disasters.

In the Pacific Islands, through the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives our diplomatic missions in the region have distributed over \$2 million since 2009 for small but high-impact projects in the areas of sustainable economic growth, education and training. Canada is also active in discussions around strengthening the Hyogo global framework for resilience to disasters, and global discussions around a new climate change agreement in 2015.

Canada sees strong parallels between our work here this week in support of SIDS, and the Post-2015 Development Agenda process underway in New York. Good development comes down to long-term commitments and investments. To that end, we remain committed to our previously established aid effectiveness agenda, and the continued focus on key themes and partner countries.

Canada will maintain our focus on five thematic priorities for the Post-2015 Agenda - sustainable economic growth, children and youth, food security, advancing democracy, and security and stability - as well as having a particular emphasis on maternal, newborn, and child health.

To demonstrate our commitment to this last issue, Prime Minister Stephen Harper convened global leaders at the Saving Every Woman, Saving Every Child Summit this past spring in Toronto. The purpose was to ensure that the world's attention remains focused on supporting

maternal and newborn child health. Canada's new commitment of \$3.5 billion over the next five years was built on the Muskoka Initiative for mothers' and children's health, which was spearheaded by Prime Minister Harper, during Canada's presidency of the G8. Canada's leadership on this issue has impacted six million children who were at risk of dying before their fifth birthday. We will also continue to focus on accountability, transparency and results.

Moving forward we have recognized the need to engage with new partners in addressing development challenges. The issues range from maternal health to disaster resilience, from smallholder farmers to climate adaptation. We recognize the need to leverage non-traditional funding. Many actors are now providing development assistance. This includes new, emerging donors, as well as private citizens and companies. The relative importance of official development assistance, in terms of its overall size, is far outpaced by foreign direct investment and remittances.

We have recognized that we have to work with all actors who have the resources and skills to tackle challenges, in order to meet our shared objectives. This is why Canada, under the Chairmanship of Minister Christian Paradis, is proud to Chair the global steering committee looking at redesigning development finance, in conjunction with the OECD and the World Economic Forum.

Through all these partnerships we can facilitate investment in support of our priorities, such as disaster risk insurance to unlock investments for women and small holder farmers, or first loss guarantees to leverage capital for small and medium scale enterprise. For example, Canada has contributed \$20 million to the Least Developed Countries Fund of the Global Environmental Facility, which is currently funding climate adaptation activities in this region in Samoa, Kiribati, the Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

Moving forward, Canada's development cooperation mandate will not change - poverty alleviation and humanitarian response are still our highest priorities.

It is Canada's hope and expectation that by continuing to work together closely, with all relevant actors and with the support of the international community as a whole, small island developing states will be able to access the tools and resources they need to build resilient societies and economies which can reach the goals of reducing poverty, protecting the environment, halting

and reversing the spread of disease, and fostering vibrant economies - for the benefit of all peoples.

Thank you.