

Statement by Ms. Tang Xiaoyan, the Chinese Delegate on SIDS Day  
At the 16th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development  
May 12, 2008, New York

Mr. Chairman,

The Chinese delegation would like to thank the Secretary-General for the report submitted under this item. We associate ourselves with the statement made by Antigua and Barbuda on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Sustainable development is a common challenge facing the entire international community, and small island developing states (SIDS) are an important link in achieving sustainable development globally. For various reasons, the imbalance of the development of globalization is more acutely reflected in the case of these countries. Abject poverty, global warming, and frequent extreme climate conditions pose grave threats to their societies and ecosystems.

In 1994, the UN Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of SIDS was held in Barbados where the Barbados Plan of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small

Island Development States was adopted. In January 2005, the International Conference on the Sustainable Development of SIDS took place in Port Louis, capital of Mauritius. At that conference, the Mauritius Strategy and Declaration were adopted, which set forth substantive action-oriented measures for promoting the sustainable development of SIDS. The international community should take effective steps to implement the outcome of these conferences and help SIDS to pursue sustainable development. The Chinese delegation wishes to propose the following initiatives:

First, respond to the common challenge by fulfilling international commitments in the areas of finance, technology and capacity-building to create a favorable external environment for the development of the developing countries, including SIDS. The importance of trade for SIDS in revitalizing economy and achieving development should be fully recognized. Developed countries are duty-bound to further open their markets and eliminate trade barriers and agricultural subsidies so as to create conditions conducive to the economic development of SIDS.

Second, focus on resolving the fundamental concerns of SIDS. Due to their unique geographic and other natural conditions, SIDS bear the brunt of the grave consequences of climate change, the rise of sea level, and extreme weather conditions. The international community should, based on the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities," take effective measures to help SIDS to rise up to the challenges and overcome difficulties. The UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol have established mechanisms for the international cooperation in responding to climate change. We urge

relevant countries to fulfill their commitments and help developing countries, especially SIDS, to meet the challenges posed by climate change and other severe natural disasters.

Third, strengthen capacity-building and help SIDS implement their sustainable development strategies in a comprehensive manner. The international community should scale up investment in technology transfer and personnel training to improve the ability of SIDS to overcome current and future challenges. The United Nations and the relevant international institutions should take this task as a priority and develop effective monitoring and implementation mechanisms.

Moreover, partnerships should be further deepened to mobilize more resources and forces for the sustainable development of SIDS. The SIDS' difficulties are attributable to many causes, and as such, their solution requires close and efficient partnerships among all parties for concerted efforts. We should welcome and encourage all forms of cooperation, be it North-South, South-South, regional or intergovernmental, and the participation of businesses and civil society as long as they can mobilize more financial, technical, intellectual and capacity support for SIDS.

Mr. Chairman,

As a developing country itself, China fully understands the difficulty that SIDS are experiencing in achieving sustainable development. Over the years, the Chinese government has deepened and expanded cooperation with SIDS, and provided them with assistance to the best of its capabilities. We are willing to continue to strengthen such

cooperation, work together with SIDS and other countries in actively implementing the Mauritius Strategy and promoting sustainable development worldwide.

Thank you Mr. Chairman!