



## MAURITIUS INTERNATIONAL MEETING: THURSDAY, 13 JANUARY 2005

In the morning, the High-Level Segment of the IM opened with speeches by the Prime Minister of Mauritius, the UN Secretary-General, and the President of the 59th session of the UN General Assembly, following which delegates heard statements throughout the day on the comprehensive review of the implementation of the BPOA. In the afternoon, a High-Level Round Table discussed mobilizing resources for the further implementation of the BPOA, while the Main Committee met to approve the Strategy document, agreeing to forward it to plenary for adoption. The contact group on climate change concluded its deliberations on Thursday morning, following all night consultations.

### HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT

#### COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF SIDS:

**General debate:** The High-Level Segment commenced with the handing over of the custodianship of the SIDS process from Barbados to Mauritius.

Paul Bérenger, Mauritius' Prime Minister, called for the creation of a special trust fund to operate early warning systems, and urged consideration of SIDS-specific issues in the outcome of World Conference on Disaster Reduction (WCDR) and the UN 2005 major event.

Kofi Annan, UN Secretary-General, called for a global early warning system and stressed that the UN will work to ensure that SIDS feature prominently on the international agenda, noting that SIDS issues are indispensable for global collective security.

Jean Ping, President of the 59th session of the UN General Assembly, said the UN needs more machinery for early warning, risk prevention and managing the consequences of natural disasters. He expressed hope that the WCDR will enable global consensus on these issues.

Speakers expressed condolences regarding the earthquake and tsunami in South and Southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean regions. Many SIDS outlined their national sustainable development plans, and identified new and emerging challenges facing SIDS.

On graduation, the SEYCHELLES and SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES called for more realistic eligibility criteria and a review of the graduation criteria. SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS called for the use of the vulnerability indices and recognition of shared responsibility for debt reduction. Several countries called for SIDS' special treatment in multilateral trade negotiations. CAPE VERDE welcomed the ECOSOC resolution on a smooth transition and encouraged the UN to guarantee the involvement and accountability of the international community in such processes. The WORLD BANK committed to ensure that

no State is prematurely graduated from the Bank's borrowing eligibility.

On trade and globalization, BARBADOS said erosion of trade preferences and trade liberalization have had adverse impacts on SIDS. SURINAME highlighted the need for improved market access, and a greater say for SIDS in international financial institutions. FIJI said the costs of SIDS integration into the multilateral trading systems will affect progress towards agreed development goals.

INDONESIA expressed gratitude for the condolences received regarding the tsunami disaster, and stressed the need for transnational and multisectoral collaboration in addressing the aftermath, as well as for collective preparedness to quickly and effectively respond to future crises. The COMOROS and SEYCHELLES supported calls for the establishment of an early warning system for the Indian Ocean. THAILAND said the tsunami "hammered home" the importance of cooperation networks in implementing effective early warning systems, risk reduction strategies and relief efforts to mitigate disaster effects. He said a regional ministerial meeting on 28-29 January in Phuket would map out a work plan for the Indian Ocean early warning system. SEYCHELLES called for the establishment of a special disaster fund to help the long-term recovery of SIDS and coastal States in their region. Qatar for the G-77/CHINA stressed the need for international support for early warning systems, disaster preparedness, risk reduction strategies, and financial assistance for rehabilitation and reconstruction projects. EQUATORIAL GUINEA, HAITI, AUSTRALIA and others called for regional early warning systems. SURINAME, supported by ITALY, called for a global early warning system, and DOMINICA called for a Global Disaster Fund. SOUTH AFRICA called for establishing a UN-managed International Disaster Fund to enable the UN to address the immediate needs of those affected within 24 hours of a disaster, while more assistance is mobilized. BAHRAIN called for a moratorium on bilateral debt repayments from countries hit by the tsunami. MADAGASCAR highlighted the pivotal role of the UN in assistance, reconstruction and early warning. JAMAICA called for special reinsurance arrangements for SIDS. UNESCO announced a technical meeting of experts in Paris to harmonize early warning initiatives, and an Indian Ocean tsunami regional conference with WMO. UNDP announced the launch of the SIDS Resilience Building Facility aimed at assisting SIDS to develop the capacity to formulate and implement initiatives to reduce vulnerabilities.

On the WCDR, TONGA stressed that the IM should provide the impetus for work on disaster preparedness at the conference. SOLOMON ISLANDS said it would present a draft Pacific Regional Action Plan for disaster reduction at the WCDR. CHINA announced a draft resolution on regional mechanisms for surveillance, prevention and assessment of natural disasters, to be tabled at the WCDR. The UK said the WCDR provides a timely



opportunity to consider how the Indian Ocean early warning system and other needs can be met. GERMANY announced that it would host the third international conference on early warning in 2005.

On financing, the G-77/CHINA called for greater investments in capacity development and energy programmes, direct assistance for poverty eradication, and the transfer of environmentally sound and appropriate technologies. INDIA provided an overview of its financial contributions to SIDS. CHINA encouraged partnerships for mobilizing financial, technological, intellectual and capacity support for SIDS. SOLOMON ISLANDS urged resource mobilization and coordination at the national and international levels to address HIV/AIDS. KIRIBATI underscored the need for additional and innovative sources of investment. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA urged GEF to embrace SIDS' financial needs as expressed in the Strategy document. GRENADA requested international resources for SIDS' capacity and resilience building.

On climate change, several speakers called for the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol and implementation of, and resource mobilization for, mitigation and adaptation measures. The G-77/CHINA said adaptation to climate change is a priority for many SIDS and that SIDS look forward to support from the international community in capacity building to adapt to climate change. The EU said it is crucial to strengthen the international response to climate change. NAURU expressed concern that industrialized countries and oil producing countries "continue to be in a state of denial" that the changes to the climate are human-induced. KIRIBATI called for immediate and comprehensive action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and on developed countries to be more forthcoming in meeting their UNFCCC commitments. The UK said it would focus on the man-made impacts of climate change that threaten to undermine international efforts to promote sustainable development during its G-8 Presidency. GERMANY urged the prioritization of renewable energy and energy efficiency, and urged the US to ratify the Kyoto Protocol. The UNFCCC SECRETARIAT said the case of SIDS is a clear example that, without appropriate international action on climate change, the sustainable development of SIDS cannot be achieved.

On the UN 2005 major event, NAURU said the IM's outcomes should be featured in the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration. The EU, IRELAND and ITALY urged SIDS to participate in the major event. SOLOMON ISLANDS, supported by CHINA, called for incorporating SIDS concerns into the upcoming UN General Assembly discussion on UN reforms. On UN reform, ITALY highlighted the relevance of the principles of inclusivity and democratic participation for SIDS, particularly regarding the membership of the Security Council.

On education, capacity building, participation and culture, SAMOA and TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO welcomed the Commonwealth proposal for the establishment of a SIDS Virtual University. COOK ISLANDS highlighted the importance of promoting SIDS' culture for sustainable development and ecotourism. KIRIBATI called on the international community to support SIDS' efforts to increase their capacity to manage marine resources, protect against overexploitation, and establish marine protect areas. ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA and NIUE underscored broader roles for women, youth and civil society in the further implementation of the BPOA. MADAGASCAR supported protection of cultural diversity. JAMAICA expressed support for the cultural diversity convention. UNESCO announced a special programme to provide assistance to SIDS in the preparation of nominations to the World Heritage List.

CUBA rejected unilateral and extraterritorial measures that hinder and limit the fulfillment of development plans, including the objectives adopted by UN conferences and summits. TIMOR-LESTE said poverty eradication and human development are key to reducing conflict.

On monitoring and follow-up to the IM, SEYCHELLES urged strengthening of CARICOM, the Pacific Island Forum and the Indian Ocean Commission, and called on the UN Secretary-General to consider expanding and strengthening the capacity of the SIDS-Unit, with NAURU proposing the appropriation of resources under the regular UN budget, to allow it to operate as a stand alone unit within DESA. BELIZE underlined the need for States to work together to address SIDS issues, and find common solutions to common problems. The WORLD BANK said they would continue to host the annual Small States Forum on the occasion of the World Bank/IMF Annual Meetings.

**ROUND TABLE ON THE WAY FORWARD: Mobilizing resources for the further implementation of the BPOA:** The roundtable was moderated by José Antonio Ocampo, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, and co-chaired by Owen Arthur, Barbados Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and Economic Affairs, and Louis Michel, European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Affairs.

Discussion centered on ways to mobilize resources, given the gap between what is needed for SIDS' sustainable development and what is, and has been, available via ODA. Some delegates identified attaining financing from international capital markets, while others called for increases in ODA. The US and EU highlighted their respective ODA contributions, with the US noting that although ODA is important, countries have the primary responsibility for their sustainable development. This view was opposed by several participants, including Co-chair Arthur and Cuba, both of whom noted that developing countries are generally starting from a disadvantaged position compared to that of industrialized countries.

Delegates also discussed donor coordination and criteria for ODA and other aid, with TUVALU expressing concern that it has not realized many benefits from being an LDC, as this is only a UN designation, and is not used by individual donor countries.

Several participants agreed that the appropriate role of the State in economic development is to establish and nurture an investment climate that allows private sector entrepreneurship to flourish.

Participants also discussed the importance of international trade to SIDS' development, and called for special status for SIDS given their vulnerability.

The importance of strengthening social capital, especially human resource capacity, was also widely discussed, with CARICOM supporting the proposal by Co-chair Michel to develop regional centers of excellence for education/human resources, which would build capacity and help to stem the 'brain drain'. FINLAND noted that attention must also be paid to ensuring gender equality in human resource areas.

#### **MAIN COMMITTEE**

Delegates met informally to approve the chapter on Climate change and sea-level rise, as agreed in the contact group. During the Main Committee's consideration of the Strategy document, JAPAN noted that the text on transport of radioactive materials should not be viewed as a precedent in other international fora. NAURU suggested, and delegates agreed to amend the title of the document to the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the BPOA. Delegates adopted the Mauritius Strategy, as amended, and the report of the Main Committee.

#### **IN THE CORRIDORS**

The morning's corridors were abuzz with news that the climate change contact group, which had worked through the night, had agreed to outstanding text. Several delegates were excited about the prioritization of renewable energy, interpreting this as a step forward for the global renewables agenda. Spirits were high as the Main Committee concluded its work on the Strategy document and delegates headed off to the State House reception for a well-earned celebration. While not everyone got everything they wanted, delegates from both SIDS and donor countries expressed satisfaction with the negotiated outcome.