



Ministry of the Environment Sweden

**Conference on sustainable development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) - Plenary segment statement by Sweden**

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Mr/Mme President, Ministers, Delegates, Friends,

Sweden is very pleased to participate in this timely conference on sustainable development of small island developing states. The small island developing states are facing numerous environmental and socio-economic challenges and we welcome this opportunity to participate, to learn more about the challenges facing SIDS and to discuss options for further cooperation to alleviate the pressing needs of small island developing states. We all need to move towards a sustainable, low carbon and climate resilient economy.

Mr/Mme President,

Sweden is fully aware of the immense challenges that the ongoing climate change poses for achieving a sustainable development in the small island developing states. All countries are already experiencing the consequences of climate change in the form of more frequent and intense storms, flooding and slow onset

events such as rising sea levels, coastal erosion, land degradation etc. These effects hit the poor and the most vulnerable populations in the world the hardest.

Since hosting the first United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in 1972, Sweden a world leader in addressing environmental challenges through concrete action. As a candidate for a non-permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council for the term 2017-2018, Sweden promotes a comprehensive approach to security, including the challenges posed by climate change.

We need to commit ourselves to a new international climate agreement in 2015 that limits emissions and keeps us well below a two degree temperature rise. Integrating climate change will also be essential to achieve a transformative post 2015 development agenda that secures sustainable development.

Sweden stands firm in its national mitigation commitment. Economic policies such as the carbon tax of 150 USD per tonne of CO<sub>2</sub> has already reduced greenhouse gas emissions with 20% while the economy grew by 60%, as compared to 1990. We have a national target to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 40% to 2020, and we have a clear ambition of no net climate emissions by 2050. We will reach these targets and ambitions by continued strong policy measures in Sweden and abroad.

Mr/Mme President,



Even if we manage to limit temperature rise, we will experience significant adverse effects of climate change, especially in low-lying vulnerable island states. Melting ices in the Arctic, will seriously affect the lives of the populations in small island states through sea level rise, coastal erosion, storm surges, salinization and other severe effects. Climate change is truly a global problem that needs a global solution.

Adaptation to climate change, including disaster risk reduction plans and policies need to be an essential part of a shift towards a more sustainable and climate resilient development. The ongoing negotiations on the post 2015 framework for disaster risk reduction – the Hyogo Framework of Action - is an important process to strengthen the resilience of nations and communities.

During the UNFCCC COP19 session in Warsaw in November 2013, Sweden facilitated the negotiations on the Warsaw International Mechanism on Loss and Damage together with South Africa. The negotiations were long and difficult but we fully believe that the establishment of the Mechanism was an important step forward to improve information sharing, knowledge and promote interaction and support.

Mr/Mme President,

The discussion about global climate ambition needs to move from focusing only at the costs of mitigation. It should focus more on the economic aspects of climate change – for example competitiveness and opportunities for sustainable growth. This is why Sweden, together with six partner countries launched a major new initiative - “The Global Commission on the

Economy and Climate”. The report from the Commission, led by H. E. Felipe Calderón, former president of Mexico, will be presented on September 16<sup>th</sup> and we expect it to influence the thinking of the world’s leaders during the Climate Summit on September 23<sup>rd</sup>. The message is clear. There are opportunities for low as well as high income countries to improve resource productivity, make strategic infrastructure investments and stimulate innovation while reducing GHG emissions.

Mr/Mme President,

Changing climate conditions are also affecting valuable marine ecosystems and the array of resources and services we derive from the sea. One of the most important climate trends, directly related to human-caused emissions of carbon dioxide, is ocean acidification—a trend that is expected to alter marine ecosystems in dramatic ways.

Ocean acidification is a global phenomenon that will impact significantly maritime economic activities and communities that rely on fishing, tourism and aquaculture. Addressing this complex challenge will require international coordination and cooperation. The UN plays an important role in this regards.

Sweden has recently launched a new program over the period of 2014-17 that aims at reducing poverty in developing countries through international cooperation in the marine areas, with a focus on i.e. fisheries, biodiversity, climate change.

Mr/Mme President,



Resources are scarce not the least in SIDS and a green and circular economy, including a sound management of waste, is one important tool for sustainable development. Sustainable waste management is difficult to achieve, especially in small isolated counties but still it is a necessity.

The global community has, through the Minamata convention, shown that negative effects on human health and environment caused by chemicals are taken seriously. I invite and encourage you all to sign, ratify and implement this convention as soon as possible.

Mr/Mme President,

Sweden remains committed to supporting developing countries in overcoming the obstacles to a sustainable development.

Sweden has for several years provided one percent of GNI in official development assistance. We have had among the highest level of public climate finance per capita during the fast start period, and will continue to provide funds bilaterally, regionally and multilaterally.

The Green Climate Fund has the potential to become a centrepiece in the future climate finance architecture. Sweden stands ready to make an initial contribution of 300 million Swedish crowns to the Fund, once all the necessary arrangements and standards are in place.

Mr/Mme President,

Sweden is strongly committed to supporting developing countries in adapting to climate change. We are the single largest donor to the Adaptation fund that finances projects to help developing countries

adapt to the negative effects of climate change, having contributed a total of 400 million Swedish crowns in recent years. While there are already mechanisms in place to facilitate the access of eligible countries to the Adaptation Fund, Sweden stands ready to partner with and further assist, SIDS-countries in gaining access to the funding provided by the Adaptation Fund.

Sweden is a major donor to the Global Environmental Facility that canalizes support to developing countries to address global environmental issues, also in the SIDS. During the last replenishment earlier this year, Sweden pledged an additional funding of approximately 1,3 billion crowns, an increase of more than 30 percent compared to the last replenishment in 2010.

Advancing the perspective of small and medium size states, Sweden is looking forward to strengthening existing networks and creating new ones. The insights gained from this Conference will further our ambition to create and maintain sustainable and durable partnerships between Sweden and small island states in the future spanning both the public and private sectors.

Thank you.