

Statement by

**Senator the Hon. Maxine McClean
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade
Barbados**

at the

**High-level Breakfast Meeting on
'SIDS 2014: Genuine and Durable Partnerships
In Support of SIDS Sustainable Development**

on

25 September, 2013

First, let me use this opportunity to convey regrets on behalf of the Prime Minister who is unable to attend the meeting this morning due to a prior commitment.

I wish to join others in thanking the Prime Minister of the Independent State of Samoa for hosting this very important High-Level Breakfast Meeting on “SIDS 2014: Genuine and Durable Partnerships in Support of SIDS Sustainable Development”.

This breakfast event takes place one week after the conclusion of the SIDS Inter-regional Preparatory Meeting and the adoption of the Outcome Document - the “Small Island Developing States Integrated and Enabling Cooperation Framework for the BPOA and MSI”. It is therefore well placed to commence the conversation between SIDS and the global community, on issues pertaining to island survivability, island sovereignty and ultimately island sustainability, ahead of the Third International Conference scheduled for Apia in September 2014.

Excellencies,

For us in Barbados, this encompasses SIDS-SIDS cooperation mechanisms, including the building on inter- and intra- regional SIDS platforms; SIDS-South cooperation mechanisms as well as SIDS-North and triangular cooperation platforms. It also includes the building of durable institutional mechanisms in support of SIDS sustainable development. Of importance, also, is the provision of adequate opportunity and space for Major Groups to contribute to partnership development and execution.

The Inter-regional Meeting underscores the need for partnership including SIDS-SIDS technical cooperation, to be interwoven in the three dimensions of sustainable development. That meeting did in fact endorse the very theme of this breakfast meeting as the theme of the 2014 conference.

Almost twenty years after, the critical importance of partnerships and cooperation, in particular SIDS-SIDS cooperation, resonate with even deeper meaning and resolve as we prepare for Samoa. This is particularly so as SIDS take account of the commitments and support required from the international community towards the further implementation of the 1994 Programme of Action and the 2005 Mauritius Strategy.

Moreover, if partnerships are to be durable, it is incumbent upon us to ensure that they are firmly built upon appropriate enabling platforms. This point cannot be understated and in fact cuts to the core of the mission before us. The success of partnerships in contributing to the SIDS sustainability agenda will in fact be largely premised on our will and ability to strengthen the SIDS institutional architecture at the national, regional, inter-regional and international levels. Further, such an undertaking must ensure that the issues pertaining to partnership development, capacity support, communication and monitoring are incorporated in the resulting institutional and governance frameworks.

At this point, I need to single out the contribution that SIDS themselves can make to each other with respect to partnership and cooperation development. We have witnessed several successful SIDS-SIDS driven initiatives to date. There is however significant scope for improvement through the establishment of the appropriate institutional modality. I

believe with the requisite UN System support, such a mechanism should be operationalized in time for a launch at the Samoa 2014 Conference.

Excellencies,

The “Road to Samoa” represents a journey of both struggle and opportunity for SIDS. It will build on the Outcomes of the Rio+20 Conference, and will link the aspirations of SIDS to a new global development agenda in 2015. It is also an unprecedented moment for the Alliance of Small Island Developing States as it takes place in parallel with the Celebration of the first United Nations International Year of SIDS. It is of equal significant that it takes place under the guidance of the 68th President of the General Assembly, Ambassador John Ashe of Antigua and Barbuda, and a son of the Caribbean SIDS region.

I say, let us seize the moment. Let the “Road to Samoa” and the UN International Year of SIDS be regarded as a Partnership that focuses global attention on our vulnerabilities, that highlights our technological achievements, and one that celebrates island people and their culture.

Barbados will play its part. As many of you may be aware, during the recently concluded SIDS Inter-regional Preparatory Meeting, the Government of Barbados, in collaboration with the Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (OHRLLS) and the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), hosted a side-event on ‘Fostering Private Sector Partnerships for SIDS’.

We believe the positive engagement, rich dialogue and ideas witnessed during that event can serve as the basis for developing a new private sector driven initiative. And, I intend to have follow-up discussions during the coming weeks with a view to supporting the effort towards its launch at the Apia September 2014 conference.

Excellencies,

I thank you.