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Brussels, 12 June 2014

ACP DECLARATION
ON THE
THIRD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES
(SIDS)

ACP House, Brussels

June 2014

Preamble

We, the Ministers of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States meeting at the 99th Session of the ACP Council of Ministers, in Nairobi Kenya;

1. **Recalling** that the African Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States is one of the largest groups of developing countries in the world consisting of 80 Member States of which 36 are Small Island Developing States (SIDS).
2. **Reaffirming** the continued relevance of the Barbados Programme of Action (BPOA) for Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and the Mauritius Strategy for the further Implementation (MSI) of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development, particularly Chapter VII, on the Small Island Developing States..
3. **Recalling** the guiding principles contained in the Millennium Declaration, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), the Rio+20 Outcome Document, the Monterrey Consensus and the Doha Declaration.
4. **Recognizing** that, the persistent development challenges and the unique vulnerabilities facing SIDS, including, inter alia, their small size, narrow resource and export base, high levels of poverty and indebtedness, remoteness, increased exposure to global environmental challenges and exogenous shocks, including the impacts of climate change and resulting frequency and intensity of natural disasters, make SIDS a special case for sustainable development.
5. **Noting with concern** that scientific evidence indicates that SIDS will become increasingly more vulnerable to the devastating effects of climate change including sea-level rise and storm surge, floods, droughts and extreme weather events, coral bleaching, coastal erosion and changing precipitation patterns.
6. **Noting** that while SIDS have made significant efforts at the national and regional levels to implement the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy for the further Implementation, their overall progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals has been uneven.
7. **Recognising** the vital role that global community can play, through Cross Sector Partnerships, between government, the private sector and civil society, in eradicating poverty and driving inclusive and sustainable economic growth and noting with concern the major challenges facing private sector development in SIDS.

8. **Welcoming** the designation of 2014 as the International Year of the SIDS and recognise that the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to be held in Samoa from 1 – 4 September 2014, under the theme “*The sustainable development of small island developing states through genuine and durable partnerships*”, is a good opportunity for SIDS to ensure that their concerns are taken into account in the post-2015 development agenda.

Hereby:

9. **Urge** the international community to renew its political commitment to address the special needs and vulnerabilities of SIDS, including through the full and effective implementation of the BPOA and the MSI, in order for SIDS to eradicate poverty, build resilience and achieve sustainable development.
10. **Reaffirm** that climate change poses the most serious long-term threat that undermines the achievement of sustainable development and the very survival of Small Island Developing States and call for Parties to the UNFCCC to agree to an ambitious new legal instrument under the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action by December 2015.
11. **Reiterate** the need to enhance and establish, where necessary, means and tools at the international level aimed at implementing a preventative approach for natural disasters in SIDS, reducing risks and integrating disaster risk management into development policies and programmes, including through the further implementation of the international agreed framework for disaster risk reduction.
12. **Recognize** that access to energy, including renewable energy, remains a major challenge impacting on the development of SIDS and call for the removal of barriers, including technology transfer and development in order to improve energy efficiency and to promote the use of renewable energy in SIDS.
13. **Recognize** that the green economy could be used as one of the tools in attaining sustainable development in SIDS, through, inter alia, poverty eradication, increased employment, increased food security, improved management of freshwater resources and increased energy efficiency.
14. **Recognize** the importance of the blue economy - oceans and marine resources - to the survival of many Small Island Developing States (SIDS) as well as the need to implement the various relevant marine related Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs).

15. Emphasize the urgent need to address the many challenges impacting negatively on freshwater resources in SIDS, including pollution, saline intrusion, soil erosion, changes in rainfall patterns due to climate change, as well as waste water management at the national level.
16. **Note** with concern that food security and persistent high food prices threaten the attainment of sustainable development in many SIDS and call for a global response to minimize the impacts of volatility in commodity prices at a global level.
17. **Emphasize** the need for greater attention to the social dimension of development challenges in SIDS, including, inter alia, the controlling and prevention of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), the empowerment of women, gender equality and youth.
18. **Further emphasize** that a coherent, integrated and balanced approach to sustainable development is required to address the challenges faced by Small Island Developing States and in this regard, stress that the elaboration of the post-2015 UN development agenda should prioritize and address the particular social, economic and environmental challenges faced by SIDS, including the eradication of poverty, building resilience and improving the health and well-being of their peoples.
19. **Call** for the strengthening of existing partnerships, such as North-South, South-South, SIDS-SIDS and triangular cooperation and the establishment of new, innovative and concrete partnerships, including public-private partnerships, in order to facilitate the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda, at the national, regional and global levels and serve as a catalyst for diversifying and transforming the economies of SIDS .
20. **Emphasize** the urgent need for new, additional and predictable financial resources are needed by SIDS, to effectively respond to the challenges of sustainable development and acknowledge that Official Development Assistance (ODA) remains an important source of financing which contributes to the implementation of the BPOA and the MSI and in this regard call on developed countries that have not done so to fulfil their pledge to commit 0.7% of Gross National Income (GNI) as ODA.
21. **Note** that the majority of countries that have been graduated to middle income and upper middle income status on the basis of GDP are Small Island Developing States resulting in their limited access to concessionary and development financing despite their persistent development challenges resulting from their vulnerabilities. In this regard, we urge the international community to

exercise flexibility in order to ensure that SIDS are able to continue to benefit from such financing.

22. **Acknowledge** that high levels of debt threaten the sustainable development of many SIDS and thus we call on the international community and financial institutions to consider exploring innovative means to address this challenge.

23. **Emphasize** that means of implementation, including technology development and transfer and capacity building, should be comprehensively addressed in the post-2015 development agenda in order to support all efforts of SIDS to develop in a sustainable manner.

24. **Reaffirm** that each country and the international community at large need to do their part and pledge our commitment to work together to ensure a successful outcome of the SIDS Conference that will contribute to an inclusive, transformative and effective Post-2015 Development Agenda.
