

**Meeting of the First Preparatory Committee for the Third International Conference on
Small Island Developing States,**

Statement by Ireland

delivered by Ambassador David Donoghue, Permanent Representative

UN HQ, New York, 24 February 2014

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Co-Chairs,

Thank you for the opportunity to address the first Preparatory Committee for the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States. I align my statement with that delivered earlier by the European Union.

I would like to congratulate both Co-Chairs and the Bureau on your respective elections and I extend best wishes to you for the important discussions ahead.

I wish to emphasise Ireland's strong support for your work as we prepare together for a successful Conference in Samoa. Ireland welcomes the convening of the Conference and supports its overarching theme, namely, the sustainable development of Small Island Developing States through genuine and durable partnerships. The Conference will, we hope, build on successful partnerships that already exist and at the same time launch innovative and creative new partnerships which will advance sustainable development for SIDS. There is a clear positive read-across, potentially, to our collective work in crafting the Post 2015 Development Agenda.

The specific vulnerabilities and development challenges of SIDS must continue to be given our attention and recognition. Samoa 2014 is an opportunity to renew our shared vision and to focus on the latest challenges we are facing and how these are to be tackled.

The Conference has the potential to bring together the many messages which are being communicated by the SIDS in fora such as the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals and the programme of Post 2015 events which has been prepared by the President of the General Assembly.

While the SIDS have achieved some progress in particular areas covered by the MDGs, overall we need to redouble our efforts to support them. The evidence base suggests that issues around resilience merit consideration as priority – fiscal and physical resilience, indebtedness, the high cost to SIDS of doing business, ocean, marine and biodiversity conservation, land degradation, food and nutrition security, sustainable energy solutions and climate change. For many SIDS, such issues are a question of existential importance.

In preparing for Samoa 2014, Member States have agreed on the need for a concise, focussed, effective and action-oriented outcome. Colleagues responsible for making and implementing policy at the national level will hope that we provide them with such an outcome.

Ireland supports an open and participatory approach to the Conference, to its preparatory phase, and to the implementation of its outcome. It is heartening that colleagues from SIDS have been in a position to travel here and to enrich our discussion with their insights and updates from the ground. The important input of civil society and NGOs will be another vital element for a successful outcome to this process. Ireland looks forward to arrangements being put in place to facilitate their participation in the Conference and its preparatory process.

We should also grasp the opportunity the Conference gives to showcase successful partnerships and to encourage their scaling-up and their transferability.

In concluding, I would like to say that Ireland has made a contribution of EURO 100, 000 to the SIDS Conference Trust Fund. This funding has now been transferred.

Co-Chairs, Ireland will play its full part as we work collectively to support the needs of the Small Island Developing States.

Thank you.