



SAINT LUCIA

STATEMENT BY

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MINISTER FOR PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENT AND HOUSING

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(Check against delivery)

Mr. Chairman, my delegation is extremely pleased that this session is dedicated to the way forward, since we had hoped that SIDS Day would have produced such an outcome. It has also been quite encouraging to hear suggestions on practical measures that SIDS, with the support of the international community should undertake if sustainable development is to be achieved.

Mr. Chairman, since 1999, the Government of Saint Lucia has sought to place the country on a sustainable energy path and to achieve this objective, Saint Lucia, together with national, regional and international partners, has developed and adopted a sustainable energy plan, which among other things, sets targets for including renewable energy into the national energy portfolio and identifies strategies for achieving those targets. Saint Lucia has also embarked on the development of a National Energy Policy.

In his opening remarks on SIDS Day, the Chairman of AOSIS emphasized the need for streamlining of measures to facilitate access by SIDS to resources, and we are pleased to note that this was included in the your summary, Mr. Chairman. Donors also called for appropriate enabling environments in SIDS. This, we intend to pursue with the establishment of National Sustainable Development Strategies (NSDS), which could be the most appropriate framework for investments and grants in pursuing sustainable development.

The way forward then is to build on the experiences from the SIDS regions and develop a full scale program of support for the development and implementation of NSDS. We should learn from the Barbados Model regarding Solar Energy, and the work on sustainable development indicators from Papua New Guinea and Saint Lucia.

Mr. Chairman, with regard to biofuels, we should also move forward by enhancing the experiences and capacity of agencies like the UNDP so that SIDS would be better positioned to continue working towards maximizing opportunities in the development of biofuels. Despite the abundance of solar radiation, the use of photovoltaic technology is not widespread in Saint Lucia. This is due mainly to the relatively high installation cost and the fact that almost 100% of the population has access to the national power grid

However, solar water heaters are increasingly used. In recent years, the Government of Saint Lucia has introduced fiscal incentives such as income tax relief in order to promote the use of solar water heaters. Government also provides incentives for the importation of renewable energy technologies in general.

Mr. Chairman, various delegations have emphasized adaptation to climate change. We should ensure that measures relating to adaptation are vigorously pursued. From a SIDS' perspective, adaptation has many facets. Our coastal zones are of high economic importance to our economies. We need to access the necessary support needed to implement protective measures. These could include underwater wave-breaks, rejuvenated coral reefs or artificial reefs, or enhancements of mangroves and seagrass beds. We should also heed the advice of the AOSIS Chairman in his CSD 14 opening remarks, that adaptation and mitigation measures, in isolation, make no sense.

We note with concern, **Mr Chairman**, that the GEF benefit index for Climate Change is based solely on a country's ability to contribute to mitigation. This effectively means that SIDS have the lowest indicative allocation under the Resource Allocation Framework (RAF). We believe that the benefit index should be revisited.

Mr. Chairman, we are extremely disappointed that the SIDSNet no longer has the staff to assist in advancing the work of SIDS. I understand however, that there is a project proposal for its reactivation. We can use SIDS Net to, among other things establish, an outreach process so that statistical information can be exchanged with meaningful effect.

In the context of SIDS-SIDS and South-South cooperation, Cuba has offered assistance with capacity building in the form of training activities, the transfer of knowledge on the issues of adaptation, early warning systems and disaster preparedness. This, **Mr. Chairman**, is a commendable effort, and it is thus incumbent on us to seek an end to the application of unilateral coercive measures which create obstacles to achieving sustainable development and the MDGs.

Mr. Chairman, we need to further advance support and cooperation among Inter-governmental organizations (IGOs) of the SIDS. Dialogue must be ongoing and the SIDSNet will be an invaluable tool in this respect.

Finally, SIDS are indeed ready for, and on the path to implementation of the Mauritius Strategy. We are particularly eager to implement the results of CSD 14 as regards the four themes, and we should not have to wait for CSD 15 deliberations for this to happen. We are therefore ready to play our part, assisted by the rest of the international community, to ensure that we move forward.

I thank you.

