

Statement by

**The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and
Cooperation of Portugal**

His Excellency Dr. Luís Campos Ferreira

on the occasion of the

**The Third International Conference
on Small Island Developing States**

Ápia, 2 September 2014

Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

Portugal would like to thank the **People and** the Authorities of **Samoa** for their excellent hospitality and the United Nations for organizing this 3rd International Conference on the Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

The designation of 2014 as the *International Year of SIDS* is **most relevant** and we firmly believe that this event is an excellent occasion to exchange views and mainstream SIDS perspectives, with the participation of civil society, private sector and relevant stakeholders.

The theme of the Conference is timely and truly important especially in view of the post-2015 process, as the countdown to New York has begun.

This Conference has a special meaning for Portugal:

- Firstly, a number of key themes are also key national priorities, **including oceans and sustainable energy.**
- Secondly, 4 (four) out of 6 (six) of our development cooperation priority partners are SIDS.

Mr. Chairman,

Portugal agrees that special attention to SIDS is most important, considering their specific challenges and vulnerabilities as a means, inter alia, to address poverty eradication, promote sustainable development, peace and security, human rights, democracy, the rule of law and good governance.

In areas of special concern to SIDS, including climate change, biodiversity, ocean governance and energy, among others, Portugal will continue to support the development efforts of SIDS both through bilateral and multilateral programs.

In this regard, we have actively contributed to the implementation of the Barbados Plan of Action (BPoA) and of the Mauritius Strategy of Implementation (MSI), both nationally and together with our European Union partners.

Portugal fully endorses the EU Council conclusions adopted for this Conference addressed yesterday by the EU representative.

I would, therefore, like to focus my speech on Oceans and Seas, which is a common priority.

Mr. Chairman,

My country shares important similarities with SIDS. We benefit since immemorial times from an intimate relationship with the Ocean and Sea.

Though considered by some as a peripheral country, I believe Portugal's centrality lays in the Ocean, as we stand between important maritime routes and at a crossroads between 3 continents: Europe, Africa and the Americas.

Portugal's maritime area is about 40 (forty) times the size of our mainland, with one of the largest Economic Exclusive Zones and Continental Shelves of the European Union and of the world (*respectively 1.7 million and 4 million square kilometers*).

This includes the insular Atlantic area corresponding to the Archipelagos of Madeira and Azores, with 2 and 9 major islands respectively, both of them ultra peripheral and prone to the same kind of unique challenges faced by the SIDS, due to their small size and remote location.

We are also suffering from the adverse effects of climate change in coastal areas with impact on the environment, people and the economy.

In other words, our relationship with the land and sea is very similar to that of most SIDS, which brings us great challenges, but above all, unprecedented opportunities.

For these reasons:

1. Portugal has been a leader in UN ocean affairs, which is reflected in our role in the United Nations Informal Consultative Process on the Law of the Seas (UNICPOLOS);
2. Portugal has been a proactive member behind the creation and development of the EU Integrated Maritime Policy;
3. Portugal has argued in favor of a stand-alone goal for the oceans, which was included in the Outcome Document of the OWG-SDGs [UN Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals].

In the context of ongoing work on the Post-2015 development agenda, Portugal has therefore stressed the importance that it attaches to the preservation of the marine environment and the conservation and sustainable use of marine biology.

We agree that productive and resilient oceans are critical for poverty eradication, to ensure adequate access to food,

livelihoods, economic development and essential ecosystem services.

Mr. Chairman,

This year, Portugal adopted a new National Strategy for the Sea that provides clear orientations to address important economic, environmental and social challenges arising from the exploration and exploitation of marine resources.

Its development model is based on the “Blue Growth” concept and charts a long term vision which integrates the economic, social and environment components, ensuring the conservation and sustainable use of marine resources, the knowledge of Oceans and the principles agreed at Rio+20 Conference.

Recently, our Parliament also approved a pioneering Ocean Framework Act, dealing with maritime spatial planning and licensing of the ocean uses.

Aquaculture, tourism, marine mineral resources and blue technology are some of the areas which we are steadily working on.

The Sea and Ocean is thus one of our development cooperation priorities, referred to in our recently approved Strategic Concept for Development Cooperation.

In this context, Portugal has undertaken important development cooperation projects with our priority partners – the African Portuguese Speaking Countries and Timor-Leste, some of which are also SIDS.

Mr. Chairman,

Genuine and durable partnerships with multiple stakeholder involvement should support the efforts of SIDS to promote sustainable development in all three dimensions, recognizing differentiated needs.

Different partnerships and cooperation modalities including Public-Private Partnerships, South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation **bring added-value** to support SIDS development efforts.

My country stands therefore ready to support and enhance partner countries' institutional frameworks and new opportunities for international cooperation in areas such as scientific research, exploration and preservation of natural marine resources.

Within this vision, Portugal will hold in June 2015 an international event on Oceans and Seas, called the “Blue Week”.

The program will integrate three components:

1. A Ministerial Meeting,
2. An International Conference of “The Economist”;
3. A Fair, which will bring together institutions and enterprises working on Sea related activities

We look forward to your participation and to welcoming you in Portugal.

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to finish my statement by quoting my President in a speech delivered this year at the World Ocean Summit 2014 in San Francisco

*I trust that we will be able to come up with a global ocean action, not least because we do not have a **Planet B**. Failing is not an option. We cannot delay action anymore. We need to put much looked-after new integrated ocean governance finally into practice.*

That means, in other words, adopting a New Deal for the Oceans

I thank you for your attention.

Luis Campos Ferreira

Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation