

AT speaking points on SIDS, Monday 12 May

- Alignment to EU statement
- Austria welcomes the special day on SIDS during this year's CSD session
- SG report identifies clearly the challenges that SIDS face in their efforts to advance implementation of the Mauritius strategy, e.g.
 - Limited land resources
 - Impacts of urbanisation
 - Impacts of climate change
- This CSD session reminds us of the special circumstances and difficulties in implementing international commitments on sustainable development in SIDS. And I agree with G77 and AOSIS, that the SIDS day should not become a remembrance day.
- The interrelated cluster of CSD issues being examined this year are key factors for strategies to reduce the economic, social and environmental vulnerability of SIDS.
- When the Barbados Programme of Action was formulated in 1994, in the wake of the Rio Summit we all joined forces with SIDS against the threats of climate change. Today the agenda has become wider with Doha, Monterrey, the MDGs and the international commitment towards the SIDS has been reinforced in Mauritius in 2005.
- Through these processes we all should maintain our cooperation and share a common agenda which is not limited to environmental issues. And I agree with the Ambassador of Barbados that the cooperation needs to be filled with concrete action and support.

Reaction to panellists:

- Highlight the role of sustainable agriculture management and the potential role of organic farming in SIDS
- Agro-tourism and eco-tourism are an important income generation in rural areas. Austria has a lot of experience in this area ('farm holidays') – 15.500 farmers in Austria offer 170.000 tourist beds. This is 1/5 of all tourist enterprises in Austria.
- We would be happy to share our knowledge and experience, in particular in the areas of organic farming and agro-tourism, with SIDS.