

## MEETING SUMMARY

### Inter-Agency Consultative Group (IACG) on Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

Date: 19 May 2017

Venue: S-2827

Time: 9:30 am – 11:30 pm (New York Time)

**Members in attendance:** UN-DESA, UN-OHRLLS, OECS Secretariat, Commonwealth Secretariat, FAO, GEF, GLIPSA, IAEA, IMF, IOM, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNIDO, UN-Habitat, UN-Women, WIPO and World Bank.

**Chair:** Mr. Sai S. Navoti, Chief of SIDS UNIT, SOCB, Division for Sustainable Development/ UNDESA

### Summary

At the meeting of the IACG, members were informed of the progress made on the preparations for the upcoming Ocean Conference to be held 6-10 June 2017 and HLPF 10-19 July 2017 in New York. A number of participants including *inter alia* IAEA, UNDP, FAO, Commonwealth Secretariat and OECS Secretariat among others briefed the meeting on their related side events to be held during the Oceans Conference as well as other activities/projects related to SIDS. UN-OHRLLS reminded the Meeting about the upcoming Global Partnership Stakeholder Dialogue to be held on 7 June 2017. Members were also encouraged to provide inputs to the 2017 Secretary General's report on the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway. The new deadline for contributions is 26 May 2017. Discussions will continue on the Terms of Reference for the IACG, to be finalized by the next meeting, to be held in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2017, and chaired by UN-OHRLLS.

### 1. OPENING REMARKS

#### (i) UN-OHRLLS

Ms. Heidi Schroderus-Fox, Director of UN-OHRLLS thanked UNDESA colleagues for convening the Meeting. She gave a quick overview of that office's contributions to the Ocean Conference, including the side event "high level dialogue on oceans and small island states OHRLLS is organising together with AOSIS and SIDS DOCK. Information was also shared on side event OHRLLS is organizing on "Disaster-risk management and fostering resilience in SIDS and LDCs" in the margins of the 2017 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, in Cancun, Mexico on Friday 26 May 2017 Ms. Schroderus-Fox also announced that UN-OHRLLS now has a new female Under Secretary General (USG) from Tonga Ms. Fekitamoelea Katoa 'Utoikamanu noting that this provides renewed leadership, enthusiasm and high visibility to further strengthen the UN system-wide concerted efforts in favour of SIDS and other vulnerable groups of countries.

(ii) UNDESA

Mr. Juwang Zhu, Director of UNDESA, expressed appreciation to all colleagues involved in the Ocean Conference. He advised that based on the registrations to date, the Conference would be well attended, including by at least 14 Heads of State, 30 Ministers and over 1200 NGOs. The Outcome documents for the Conference include a Call for Action Document (negotiated) and a Conference Report. With respect to the High Level Political Form, preparations are ongoing. There will be a formal session on SIDS to be held on 12 July 2017, as well as a side event. The Director also reminded the Meeting about the importance of science, technology and innovation for SIDS. He indicated that the second Annual STI Forum was held on 15-16 May 2017 in New York, and that SIDS stand to gain tremendously from the ongoing discussions in this Forum.

## 2. UN MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES

(i) The Oceans Conference, 5-9 June 2017

Ms. Irena Zubcevic, Chief of SOCB of DSD/UNDESA updated the meeting on the preparations for the upcoming Ocean Conference. She indicated that the co-chairs and panellists for the Partnership Dialogues of the Conference had all been confirmed and that the concept papers for each dialogue was currently being translated into all UN languages. Ms. Zubcevic also announced a number of formal and informal events to be held prior and during the Ocean conference including *inter alia*:

- On 4<sup>th</sup> of June, there will be events and art exhibitions.
- Informal opening with a cultural event from Fiji at 9:00a.m. on June 5<sup>th</sup> at the Conference hall
- Official opening will be at 10:00 a.m. on June 5<sup>th</sup> at the General Assembly Hall

In addition, the opening day of the Conference (June 5th) is also World Environment Day, and Canada will be hosting an event, while on World Ocean Day (June 8<sup>th</sup>) there will be a show on the theme "Our Oceans, Our Future" which will raise awareness for the beauty and fragility of the oceans and highlight the most promising initiatives to reverse their decline, focusing especially on the power of creative collaboration and eco-innovation in the successful realization of SDG 14. Features will include talks from world-renowned ocean experts and explorers, representatives from coastal communities, and voices from current and future generations. Ms. Zubcevic informed that in order to gain access to the venues and events of the Conference, all participants will be issued with a secondary pass. Further information on logistics will be issued, and posted to the web site in the coming days.

(ii) The High Level Political Forum, 10-19 July 2017

The HLPF preliminary programme is already available on the website and further details are being determined. The SDGs goals to be reviewed are:

- **Goal 1.** End poverty in all its forms everywhere

- **Goal 2.** End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
- **Goal 3.** Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
- **Goal 5.** Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
- **Goal 9.** Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
- **Goal 14.** Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

ECOSOC will be covering Goal 9, 'Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.'

Forty-Four Countries, including two SIDS (Belize and Maldives) will present their Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) in week 2 of the Meeting, and as such all other sessions will take place during the first week. Parallel to these, there will be 248 side events. The BBNJ process will also be taking place simultaneously (10-21 July 2017).

Ms. Zubcevic announced that specific details on HLPF will be sent out after the Ocean Conference. There will also be a general debate which will start on the afternoon of July 10, to the morning of July 13.

### **3. IACG meetings related to SIDS**

Mr. Navoti opened the floor and invited the participants to update the Group on their meetings and any other activities related to SIDS.

IAEA informed the participants about a project which they have been working on with SIDS and other UN agencies. In line with Samoa Pathway, the project is covering 4 areas i.e. food security, nutrition, cancer and the marine environment. The Marine environment component focuses specifically on capacity building for SIDS. So far a meeting has been held in Sidney, Australia to finalize the design of the proposed interregional technical projects for SIDS. The information would be circulated by IAEA.

Mr. Craig Hawke, UNDP informed the meeting that UNDP has been supporting countries to undertake National Ocean Consultations, and 27 consultations are expected to be completed by the Ocean Conference, including in a number of SIDS such Mauritius and Seychelles. The object of these is to foster voluntary commitments. He also advised that UNDP will be partnering with a number of organisations and displaying in multiple exhibitions, including with DOALOS on World Oceans Day. UNDP will also release three reports on large marine ecosystems, marine protected areas and community engagement in support of oceans.

FAO thanked the group for the many valuable contributions and inputs to the GAP from IACG members, and other SIDS partners. The Global Action Programme on Global Food Security and Nutrition in SIDS will be presented in July in Rome. The final document will be circulated by FAO with more information.

The OECS Secretariat informed the Meeting of their plans to participate in the Ocean Conference during 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> of June.

Ms. Shifaana Thowfeequ of UN-OHRLLS reminded the Meeting that Global Multi-stakeholder SIDS Partnership Dialogue (which is a mandate of the GA as a component of the SIDS Partnership Framework) will take place on 7 June, 1:15~2:30. This year the Dialogue will focus on Ocean partnerships for SIDS. She indicated that a request had been sent out to all stakeholders to complete a template which reports on progress on their activities. She indicated that a Steering Committee meeting had been held 2 weeks ago in New York, where Member States had requested for there to be more analysis on the current status of Partnerships. Ms. Thowfeequ also informed the meeting that as a part of the Dialogue new commitments for SIDS will also be announced and thus UN-OHRLLS is in contact with many of the SIDS partners in order to find out who will be announcing new commitments during the Ocean Conference.

The Commonwealth Secretariat also advised that they will be participating at the Ocean Conference with a delegation to be led by SG. The Secretariat will be participating in side events on fisheries subsidiaries with UNCTAD. The Commonwealth will also co-host a side event with the Government of Seychelles: a high-level panel discussion on blue economy entitled 'the Blue Commonwealth' This will be opened by the Prime Minister of Fiji, and the Commonwealth Secretary General will seek support for the development of a Blue Commonwealth Charter.

Mr. Navoti informed the Meeting about the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction which will be held in Cancun, Mexico from May 22<sup>nd</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup>. The World Bank in collaboration with UNDESA, UNIDSR, UN-OHRLLS and UNFCCC are organizing a SIDS event prior to the Meeting. The event will allow SIDS to share on experiences and lessons learned on the disaster risk reduction related activities.

UNEP office in Nairobi addressed a question to UN-OHRLLS, regarding the request to report on the partnerships registered, inquiring how a voluntary commitment can be reflected in the SIDS partnership framework, if it is registered on SDGs platform and is related to SIDS. UN-OHRLLS answered that if it is listed as beneficiaries for SIDS looking at the voluntary commitment of SDG 14, the ones that related to SIDS would be selected to be reflected in the SIDS partnership platform. However, UN-OHRLLS pointed out that since the platform was set up after several Pathways, everything that goes into the voluntary commitments will be automatically put into the platform. However, that process has not been done yet but matters that are related to SIDS will be identified first and then incorporated into the platforms.

IAEA inquired whether it was possible to register other partnerships that are broader than oceans on the Partnership. UN-OHRLLS answered that it is possible although this year will focus on Oceans but in the future, will consider other issues.

#### **4. PREPARATIONS FOR THE SECRETARY-GENERAL'S REPORT ON SIDS**

Mr. Navoti reminded of the Meeting of the call for inputs to the SGs Report, sent out on 13<sup>th</sup> of April, although the due date was 19<sup>th</sup> of May only three submissions were received. Mr. Navoti encouraged the members to not limit them in giving out any information and emphasized that any information given by members would be important. Since, there was a request for extension of deadline Mr. Navoti informed the group that this would be extended until 26<sup>th</sup> of May. For contribution submitted afterwards, there is no guarantee that all of it would be reflected and thus requested the members to submit before the deadline. He also announced that internal deadline for Secretary General Reports would be 31<sup>th</sup> of July before going into translation.

#### **5. DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR) OF THE IACG**

Mr. Navoti reminded that the drafts of TOR which has been circulation for some time. He indicated that from the last meeting (Jan 2017) to this meeting, three additional comments were received. Mr. Navoti requested the members to further reflect and submit comments in time for the next meeting of the IACG.

#### **6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There being no other business, Mr. Navoti closed the meeting by thanking all the members for the efforts and hard work made of the members for the interests and benefits of the SIDS and expressed that is an honour to be working with all. He also apologized for the technological difficulties and thanked IACG members for their patience and understanding. Next meeting will be hosted by co-chair, UN-OHRLLS of SIDS.