I T A L Y

HIGH LEVEL BREAKFAST EVENT
PREPARATIONS FOR THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE ON SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES (SIDS)

STATEMENT BY

MINISTER OF THE ENVIRONMENT, LAND AND SEA
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(NEW YORK, 25 SEPTEMBER 2013)

We are very proud of the partnership that Italy has established with the SIDS, in the spirit of the eighth Millenium Development Goal, and well before "partnership" has become a synonymous for a best practice in development cooperation. We therefore support the emphasis given to partnerships in the Outcome document agreed in Barbados in preparation of the Third International Conference on SIDS, which will take place next year in Samoa when Italy will be president of the European Union. We have good reasons for supporting such an approach because the success of our cooperation with the SIDS is due to the fact that our collaboration is nothing else but a genuine partnership.

Together we have designed projects and activities, we have established priorities and mechanisms of mutual accountability, and we have forged regional and local partnerships with all segments of society and groups. Italy and SIDS have made a pioneering and foresighted experiment in cooperation for development, and the result is now being quoted by the SIDS themselves as a model that ought to be replicated.

In the Caribbean region we have supported the establishment of the Caribbean Community Climate Change Center (the now well known 5C of Belize) and strengthened its capacity to serve the Caribbean Community to mitigate the negative impact of climate change. We are honored to have been part of what was then a truly pioneering effort by the Caribbean Community and we take pride in the fact that we contributed to its success.

In August 2007, we launched the Cooperation Programme with the Pacific SIDS, itself a genuine partnership. It has been particularly successful because it is based on mutual trust, thus allowing the Pacific SIDS to be recognized as skillful implementing agents of their own development strategies and projects. The program is a product of national development planning and, as a consequence, it has much strengthened the national institutions. It has proved to be a concrete contribution to address the negative impacts of climate change, improving the lives of communities, especially the most vulnerable. It has done so because it has adapted international cooperation to national realities. The programme has also proved to be a catalyst of participation from other donors: Austria joined it in 2008, then Luxembourg in 2012.

Both these Programmes have also supported the construction of the SIDS collectivity which is the engine for implementing the Barbados Plan and the Mauritius strategy. We are also pleased to note that thanks to the recently launched SIDS - Dock initiative, a partnership between the 5C Centre and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), the Caribbean SIDS and the Pacific SIDS are deepening their collaboration in the field of renewable energies, which is a well established SIDS priority that Italy has supported.

More recently, and in collaboration with United Nations organs, Italy has launched in the Caribbean region a programme aimed at strengthening the capacity of the region to manage risks deriving from natural disasters, and increasing the region's resilience to these occurrences. In the Pacific, Italy is supporting an initiative to strengthen the statistical capacities of the PSIDS.

Italy is determined to continue to assist the SIDS, both bilaterally and through international or regional organizations. The success stories of international collaboration with the SIDS, like the ones I have mentioned before, deserve to be disseminated and duplicated so that partnership may become the main mechanism of international and regional

cooperation. It is with this idea in mind that Italy has recently allocated one hundred thousand dollars to the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs for the preparatory activities of the Samoa Conference.