

Kingston Outcome of the Caribbean Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

We the Caribbean Small Island Developing States, having met in Kingston, Jamaica, from 2nd to 4th July 2013, to begin the preparatory process for the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, which will take place in Apia, Samoa, in 2014,

Reaffirming the Declaration of Barbados and the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, the Mauritius Declaration and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg Plan of Implementation), including Chapter VII on the sustainable development of Small Island Developing States;

Recalling that the unique and particular vulnerabilities of Small Island Developing States have been acknowledged by the international community since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992; the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, held in Barbados in 1994; the World Summit on Sustainable Developing States, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2002; the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, held in Mauritius in 2005; and the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio + 20) held in Brazil in 2012;

Acknowledging that Small Island Developing States remain a special case for sustainable development in view of their unique and particular vulnerabilities, including their small size, remoteness, narrow resource and export base, and exposure to global environmental challenges and external shocks, including to a large range of impacts from climate change and potentially more frequent and intense natural disasters; that many Caribbean SIDS experience high levels of poverty and inequality, disadvantages in economies of scale, heavy dependency on imports, high vulnerability to energy and food price shocks, and extremely high levels of national debt, and noting further that these combined vulnerabilities have been further exacerbated by the recent global energy, food, financial and economic crises and environmental challenges;

Recalling the international community's commitment to support the efforts of Small Island Developing States, in view of their unique and particular vulnerabilities, towards their sustainable development through the further full and effective implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy, including through the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration;

Underscoring the vital role of women in achieving sustainable development, and the need to continue the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women in Caribbean SIDS, to ensure their full and effective participation in sustainable development policies, programmes and decision making at all levels;

Stressing the importance of the active participation of young people in decision making processes, as the issues we are addressing have a deep impact on present and future generations and as the contribution of children and youth is vital to the achievement of sustainable development. We also recognize the need to promote inter-generational dialogue and solidarity by recognizing their views;

Recognizing the importance of the cultural identity of people and its importance for advancing sustainable development, and also recognizing the need to develop cultural industries and initiatives that offer significant economic opportunities, Caribbean SIDS call on the international community to recommit to developing measures to protect the natural, tangible and cultural heritage and increase resources for the development and strengthening of national and regional cultural activities;

Recalling the decision taken at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development to convene in 2014 a Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, recognizing the importance of coordinated, balanced and integrated actions to address the sustainable development challenges facing Small Island Developing States;

Recognising that as Caribbean Small Island Developing States face many multi-dimensional issues, an integrated approach to sustainable development is required to address the challenges faced by Small Island Developing States. The elaboration of the post 2015 UN development agenda provides a unique opportunity to prioritize and address the particular social, economic and environmental challenges faced by Caribbean Small Island Developing States. In this regard, it is important that ongoing processes from Rio+20, such as the Sustainable Development Finance Strategy; the Facilitating Transfer of Technology Mechanism, the intergovernmental process on the Sustainable Development Goals, the High Level Political Forum, give a new prominence and consideration to Small Island

Developing States in addressing their challenges for achieving sustainable development, taking into account their special case due to their particular vulnerabilities;

Stressing that South-South and SIDS-SIDS cooperation are not substitutes for, but rather complements to, North-South cooperation and in that context, recognizing the importance of SIDS-SIDS cooperation as an expression of political will and solidarity among our countries to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. In this regard, we highlight initiatives such as the Caribbean Biological Corridor, the regional centre for creating capacities for assessing risks and vulnerabilities of the region, Petrocaribe, SIDS DOCK, and the Partnership Initiative for Sustainable Land Management;

Recognizing that the management of the natural resource base in a sustainable and integrated manner is essential for sustainable development, taking into account the particular risk and vulnerability of Caribbean SIDS ecosystems;

Reaffirming that fundamental changes in the way societies produce and consume are indispensable in achieving global sustainable development. All countries should promote sustainable consumption and production (SCP) patterns, with developed countries taking the lead and with all countries benefitting from the process, taking into account the Rio principles, including, inter alia, the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities as set out in Principle 7 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development;

Also recognizing that the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio +20) reaffirmed that promoting sustainable patterns of consumption and production is one of the three overarching objectives of, and essential requirements for, sustainable development, and the commitment to accelerate the shift towards SCP patterns with the adoption of the Ten-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns (10YFP), further note that SCP continues to be a priority for Caribbean SIDS as included in Chapter XV of the MS/POA and in the context of the decision of the 18th Forum of Ministers of Environment of LAC.

Gaps and constraints related to Implementation of the BPOA and the MSI

While small island developing States have progressed in the areas of gender, health, education and the environment, their overall progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals has been uneven; and they still continue to face significant challenges to the achievement of their sustainable development. Recognizing that the overall development process in SIDS is well below the required levels, much more could have been achieved if the commitments made by the international community of financial resources, technology transfer, and capacity building had been fulfilled.

- a) The remaining gaps in the implementation of the Barbados Plan of Action and the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation over the last twenty years for achieving sustainable development are due in the main to the lack of political will on the part of most developed countries to fulfill their commitments to support the translation of the Barbados Plan of Action and the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation into effective actions, policies and measures at the national, regional and international levels, through the provision of adequate, new, additional, predictable and stable financial resources, technology transfer and capacity building to Small Island Developing States;
- b) Climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time, and we express grave concern that emissions and greenhouse gases continue to rise globally. We are equally concerned that SIDS are vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, including sea level rise, and underscore that combatting climate change requires urgent and ambitious action;
- c) Climate change, as well as environmental degradation, has had and continues to have an adverse effect on the tourism industry in Caribbean SIDS, which is an important contributor to employment, foreign exchange and economic growth;
- d) Small Island Developing States continue to grapple with the effects of natural disasters, and with the significant risks posed by sea level rise and other adverse impacts of climate change;

- e) The need to enhance and establish, if necessary, means and tools at the international level aimed at implementing a preventative approach for natural disasters in Small Island Developing States, reducing risks and properly integrating risk management into development policies and programmes, including through the further implementation of the internationally agreed framework for disaster risk reduction, the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015;
- f) Health is a precondition for and an outcome and indicator of all three dimensions of sustainable development, and it is acknowledged that the burden and threat of non-communicable diseases constitute one of the major challenges for sustainable development in the twenty first century. Preventive treatment, care, and support are critical to treating non-communicable diseases. We recognize the importance of strengthened health systems for the provision of equitable, universal coverage;
- g) There has been an overall decline in ODA which has affected the full implementation of the BPOA and MSI, and which has a negative impact on the achievement of the MDGs in SIDS, as well as the capacity of SIDS to mitigate and more effectively respond to multiple crises in accordance with their national priorities;
- h) The classification of many Caribbean SIDS as either middle, upper-middle, and, as applicable, high income countries, limits access to vital concessionary and development financing. The use of GDP, by itself, constitutes a limited approach to the measurement of overall development and masks persistent development challenges, including those resulting from their vulnerabilities;
- i) Caribbean Small Island Developing States remain concerned regarding slow and insufficient international action on climate change which is not commensurate with the size or scale of the problem and reiterate the need for urgent, decisive and ambitious action to ensure that the global average temperature remains below 1.5 degrees Celsius;
- j) Social integration policies should seek to reduce inequalities, promote access to basic social services, education for all and health care, eliminate discrimination, increase the participation and integration of social groups, particularly young people, older persons and persons with disabilities, and address the challenges posed to social development by globalisation and market-driven reforms in order for all people in all countries to benefit from globalisation;

- k) Recognizing that the sustainable development of Caribbean SIDS is negatively impacted by crime and violence, including gang and youth violence, and transnational organized crime, including drug trafficking and the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, as well as by terrorism in all its forms and manifestations;
- l) High rates of unemployment, particularly for women and youth, and migration of skilled labour and the resulting brain drain, are some factors which hinder progress in achieving sustainable development objectives for Caribbean Small Island Developing States, and, in this regard, we underscore the need for investment in education, training and skills development for all, as well as improving access to formal and non-formal education including entrepreneurial skills.

Strengthening the Implementation Framework

Recognizing that the Third International Conference was specially convened to review the progress to date made by SIDS and the further actions needed to overcome the challenges to sustainable development, we the Caribbean SIDS call on relevant stakeholders at the national, regional and international levels to take advantage of the convening of the Conference, and the preparatory process which will precede it, to:

1. Recognise the special concerns of Small Island Developing States in the context of financing for sustainable development. In this regard, we emphasise the need for developed countries to provide new and additional predictable financial resources for sustainable development, facilitated by foreign direct investment, relevant regional financing mechanisms including the capitalization of the Caribbean Sustainability Fund;
2. Acknowledge that the global environmental, economic and social challenges faced by Small Island Developing States require a concrete framework for enhancing the implementation of sustainable development taking into account countries' national circumstances, objectives, priorities and policy space, as well as regional perspectives;

3. Establish a dedicated mechanism to provide financing to developing countries, in keeping with the ongoing Rio+20 follow-up processes, in order to develop specific projects on sustainable development, which would be implemented through United Nations Agencies, Funds and Programmes. The modalities for supporting the projects would include multilateral, bilateral and triangular cooperation and specific consideration would be given to proposals from Small Island Developing States;
4. Exercise increased flexibility with respect to the Debt Sustainability Framework and the eligibility for debt relief; the provision of increased funds for debt rollover; innovative debt swap criteria; increased concessionality and to accelerate previous commitments regarding debt relief, taking into account the extreme vulnerability of small, indebted, middle-income countries, whose size, fragile economies and open markets have made them highly susceptible to external financial shocks. We therefore call for expansion of concessionary financing to small, indebted, middle income countries to mitigate the significant sustainable development challenges that have been exacerbated by the ongoing crisis. The access to this financing must be based on factors beyond GDP, which is, by itself, a poor indicator of economic sustainability;
5. Establish a dedicated technology transfer facilitation mechanism to provide environmentally sound and appropriate technologies to developing countries, in particular Small Island Developing States, in keeping with the ongoing Rio+20 follow-up processes in order to support sustainable development projects to be implemented through United Nations Agencies, Funds and Programmes. The modalities for supporting the projects would include multilateral, bilateral and triangular cooperation and special consideration would be given to proposals from Small Island Developing States;
6. Recall the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change's decision on establishing a technology mechanism in the form of a Climate Technology Centre and Network to enhance technology cooperation and transfer to developing countries. We call for the early integration and support for scientific and academic institutions in Caribbean Small Island Developing States within the Climate Technology Centre Network;

7. Strengthen its support for capacity building including for the implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements and the development of human resources, including through education at all levels and skills training in order to foster sustainable development and, where applicable, the establishment and strengthening of centers of excellence for training and applied research within existing national and regional institutions;
8. Support investments in Small Island Developing States to develop science, technology and innovation for sustainable development, with specific emphasis on research and development, in accordance with national interests and priorities;
9. Assist Caribbean Small Island Developing States, upon request, in strengthening their national statistical and information systems, including data collection and management, as well as analytical capabilities for decision-making, and monitoring and evaluation systems for sustainable development;
10. Ensure the balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development at all levels in the further implementation of the BPOA and MSI;
11. Ensure a holistic approach to the various Rio+20 processes and the post-2015 development agenda, and ensure concrete outcomes on means of implementation including technology transfer, financing and capacity building in advancing the Small Island Developing States 2014 process, whereby the various discussions within inform and reinforce each other;
12. Ensure that Small Island Developing States' issues are highlighted on the agenda of the High Level Political Forum and effectively addressed;
13. Address the many pressing environmental and development issues that are still major challenges for the Caribbean. We call for increased support to enable the effective implementation of Multilateral Environment Agreements and other agreements and programmes related to coastal and marine resources, freshwater resources, land resources, energy resources, tourism resources, biodiversity resources, climate change, natural disasters and waste management;

14. Undertake greater political engagement and commitment, in the context of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to address the adaptation needs of SIDS, countries which will be on the frontline of climate change impacts and have contributed the least to the problem;
15. Underscore the potential of the Green Climate Fund to contribute significantly to mitigation and adaptation actions as a key pillar in the post-2020 agreement on climate change. In this context, we support fully the operationalisation of the fund by early 2014 and urge developed countries to scale-up financing to reach USD 100 billion by 2020, including the initial capitalisation of the Green Climate Fund in the first half of 2014;
16. Support Caribbean Small Island Developing States in their efforts to build resilience and reduce risks associated with natural disasters in areas and sectors vulnerable to climate change threats, and effectively address the multiple effects of their vulnerabilities, while allowing for the adoption of sustainable development strategies that more effectively integrate the economic, social and environmental dimensions. Special consideration should be given to financing for early warning systems in order to reduce economic and social losses, inclusive of human life, recovery, reconstruction, and rehabilitation;
17. Continue to support Small Island Developing States in enhancing their efforts to strengthen regional and national efforts in disaster risk reduction, management and coordination, including creating or strengthening insurance mechanisms, where appropriate, for natural and environmental disasters in Small Island Developing States;
18. Support Small Island Developing States in their efforts to develop and utilize new and renewable energy as well as foster energy efficiency and conservation, and further provide special funding in the assessment and identification of renewable energy technologies, including technical assistance and capacity building;

19. Welcome the Barbados Declaration on Achieving Sustainable Energy for All in Small Island Developing States aimed at promoting transformational activities in the areas of, inter alia, affordable and modern energy access, renewable energy, energy efficiency and low carbon development, in the context of sustainable development, including the commitments by some Small Island Developing States to undertake the actions contained in its Annex I, and we call on the international community to support the implementation of the Declaration;
20. Emphasize the importance of revitalizing sustainable agriculture and rural development in SIDS within the context of efforts to eradicate poverty and promote food and nutrition security;
21. Provide, upon request, increased support for programmes geared towards security for our citizens and to address crime and violence especially involving our youth;
22. Support national efforts in building community empowerment by assisting vulnerable groups to prepare for, adapt to and mitigate their own susceptibilities;
23. Provide dedicated financial resources and technological support for the development of a Caribbean SIDS platform on SCP to be served by Caribbean SIDS, upon request, and taking into account national and regional priorities, strategies, legislation and plans to enable the implementation of the 10YFP;
24. Maintain a people-centered and focused approach to poverty eradication, acknowledging that challenges remain in the area of poverty eradication and recognise that policies should, inter alia, ensure that people living in poverty have access to education, health, water and sanitation and other public and social services, as well as access to productive resources, including credit, land, training, technology, knowledge and information, and ensure that citizens and local communities participate in decision-making on social development policies and programmes in this regard;
25. Acknowledge the important nexus between international migration and development and the need to deal with the challenges and opportunities that migration presents to countries of origin, transit and destination;
26. Support the efforts of the Caribbean SIDS to implement the UN Political Declaration for the Prevention and Control of NCDs at the regional and national levels;

27. Strengthen health systems to address, inter alia, both non-communicable and communicable diseases through increased financing, recruitment, development, training and retention of the health workforce, through improved distribution of and access to safe, affordable, effective and quality medicines, vaccines and medical technology, and through improving health infrastructure; a focus will be placed on the impact on the poor, elderly and persons with disabilities and enhancing their capabilities to protect themselves;
28. Emphasize the need for strengthened institutional frameworks among entities comprising the UN system, in order to increase effectiveness and efficiency in fulfillment of its functions and mandates in providing more coherent support to Caribbean SIDS in the implementation of the BPOA and MSI, while ensuring appropriate accountability to Member States;
29. Contribute to the effective implementation of the BPOA and MSI through concrete projects on sustainable development.