



## UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

Programme des Nations Unies pour l'environnement      Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Medio Ambiente

Программа Организации Объединенных Наций по окружающей среде      برنامج الأمم المتحدة للبيئة

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### Statement at the first Meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States

#### Ozone Secretariat

Co-chairs, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

The Ozone Secretariat for the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone layer is pleased to address this first preparatory committee meeting for the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States to be held in September this year.

Considering the importance of this meeting in determining the substantive theme of the conference, the Ozone Secretariat wishes to highlight the good work done by the Small Island Developing States in implementing the Montreal Protocol to date and the relevance of the accomplished achievements and emerging challenges to the outcome of the Inter-regional preparatory meeting that was held in Barbados in August last year. We also wish to convey an important mandate entrusted to the Ozone Secretariat by the Parties to the Montreal Protocol pertaining to the challenges faced by SIDS in implementing the Protocol.

Co-Chairs,

The Montreal Protocol has been ratified universally and, encompassing time-specific benchmarks for the phase-out of the consumption and production of ozone-depleting substances, has managed to achieve to date a global reduction in such substances of more than 98 per cent. The SIDS have been active players in the phase-out of many harmful substances, such as chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), and most of them managed to do so well ahead of the required schedules. As a consequence of this global reduction, atmospheric levels of ozone-depleting substances are decreasing and estimates show that full implementation will result in the recovery of the ozone layer by around the middle of this century. Thus, large-scale adverse impacts of ozone depletion on human health and ecosystems have been and will continue to be averted. From an economic viewpoint, the global community will be spared huge expenditure on healthcare and environmental protection.

Furthermore, and what is often not realised, because most ozone-depleting substances are also powerful greenhouse gases, implementation of the Montreal Protocol has contributed significantly to mitigating climate change, an issue of particular concern to Small Island Developing States.

There are a number of important factors behind the success of the Montreal Protocol. These include effective mechanisms established early on for financing, capacity building, technology transfer, institutional strengthening, data collection and management. In the Barbados outcome document all these factors are considered to be vital in enabling the sustainable development of SIDS.

Co-chairs,

One major challenge the Parties to the Protocol have been concerned with in recent years has been the phase-out over the next two decades of the bulk of the remaining ozone-depleting substances, that is, hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs). In SIDS, HCFCs are used almost entirely in air conditioning and refrigeration equipment. Such use affects a number of sectors that are of vital importance in the socio-economic life of these countries such as fisheries, food security and safety, tourism and buildings. The desire is to replace HCFCs with alternative substances that are technically and economically feasible, safe, climate friendly and energy efficient. Traditional alternatives such as hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) are indeed non-ozone depleting but have high-global-warming-potential with adverse consequences for climate. As the phase-out schedule of HCFCs for developing countries kicked in 2013, the prompt replacement of HCFCs with environment-friendly alternatives has become critical. In paragraph 68 of the Barbados outcome document, the SIDS declared their support for a gradual phase down in the consumption and production of HFCs and noted that they were exploring the use of the Montreal Protocol in that regard.

Beyond the environment-friendly phase-out of HCFCs, the SIDS are confronted with a number of other challenges. Prevention of illegal trade in ozone-depleting substances is one of them. In realizing this goal, the ozone regime would greatly benefit from close partnerships and collaboration with Customs regimes and institutions dealing with the management of chemicals and hazardous waste.

Co-Chairs,

In the light of these various challenges, the Ozone Secretariat is pleased to have the opportunity to convey to this meeting decision XXV/9 on the implementation of the Montreal Protocol with regard to Small Island Developing States that was adopted by the 25<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol in October 2013.

In that decision, the Parties to the Protocol noted that the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro in June 2012, recognized in its outcome document, "The future we want", that the phase-out of ozone-depleting substances was resulting in a rapid increase in the use and release of high-global-warming-potential HFCs to the environment. They also recognized the importance of phasing-out HCFCs through transitioning to alternatives that minimized environmental impact, in particular impact on climate, as well as meeting other health, safety and economic considerations. Taking further note of the fact that SIDS

remained a special case for sustainable development in view of their unique and particular vulnerabilities, the Parties requested the Ozone Secretariat to liaise with the organizers of the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, to be held in Apia from 1 to 4 September 2014, with a view to promoting discussions on the challenges associated with the implementation of the Montreal Protocol, and to report to the parties on the outcome of that liaison at the thirty-fourth meeting of the Open-ended Working Group to be held in July 2014.

Co-chairs,

In line with the Secretariat's mandate, we have submitted a Note for the consideration of this meeting. We do hope that in the context of this and follow up meetings in the lead-up to the Conference in Samoa, our input will contribute to promoting discussions on the challenges associated with the implementation of the Montreal Protocol. The Ozone Secretariat will remain, as always, firmly supportive of and fully committed to working with all parties and in particular with the Small Island Developing States in seeking to realize the objectives of the Protocol.

Thank you very much for your attention.