



AOSIS Statement
Opening of SIDS Day
CSD-16
12th May 2008

Delivered by Dr. Angus Friday
Permanent Representative of Grenada to the United Nations
Chair of the Alliance of Small Island States

Thank you Mr. Chairman

I have the honour to speak on behalf of AOSIS, 37 UN Member States currently feeling the impact on climate change. At the outset we wish to associate with the statement of Antigua and Barbuda on behalf of the G77 and China.

Through you Mr. Chairman, I also wish to thank the delegates who have braved the rain and storm clouds gathering overhead. I think these clouds are an appropriate metaphor for the situation that has arisen over the scheduling of the SIDS Day.

Mr. Chairman, we have registered our disappointment on the overlap between SIDS day and Water and Sanitation. Firstly, given the importance of both issues it is unfair to the SIDS who with their small missions cannot attend both events. Mr. Chairman, you have already made reference to the limited capacity of SIDS and this is one such reflection of this.

The CSD is the mandated mechanism for the review of the Mauritius Strategy of Implementation and the General Assembly gave a mandate for the devotion of one day of the CSD for the SIDS.

To avoid this most regrettable treatment of the SIDS day in future we are tabling a decision for the approval of the CSD and I shall elaborate on this later.

Mr. Chairman Climate Change is at the root of the very issues that we are discussing in this thematic cluster – It is exacerbating the worsening of water security and food security. And Climate Change and Sustainable Development are inextricably linked. The SIDS symbolizes the frontline of the fight against Climate Change - As the canary in the coal mine we have, for 20 years, been drawing the attention of the global community to the challenges of Climate Change.

So to bury SIDS day, is to bury the evangelists of Climate Change. And to bury the Climate Change issue is to commit the SIDS to a burial by sea. As our colleague from Antigua and Barbuda mentioned the SIDS day must not become a day of remembrance of SIDS.

The SIDS must be vigilant, other vulnerable groups must be vigilant and our partners must be vigilant in protecting the SIDS day and the importance of Climate Change issues on the international agenda.

Mr. Chairman the SIDS do not attest to be the merchants or the vendors of doom and loom. No – we have made a clarion call for urgent global action on Climate Change and the SIDS day is a billboard alerting to its dangers. Let us never cloak this billboard in a shroud of ignorance.

Mr. Chairman, it is often said that a crisis is a terrible thing to waste; despite the storm clouds gathering, we must find the silver lining in these gray clouds. This silver lining should purchase us the hope and optimism we need to face this crisis together. Hope and optimism should mobilize us to develop the solutions for clean energy, clean environment improved water resources, better food security, and the preservation of the world's natural heritage – including the terrestrial and marine resources of the SIDS.

Mr. Chairman, unsustainable patterns of production and consumption have given rise to this problem of Climate Change. A consumer culture has evolved with scant regard for the environment. This culture must be replaced by a culture of citizenship – where citizens have both rights and responsibilities. In this regard, we the SIDS share in the responsibility for developing solutions to the climate crisis.

We urge the entire UN community to exercise this spirit of citizenship by taking greater responsibility for the impact of Climate Change on the vulnerable economies.

In taking responsibility, Mr. Chairman, we are calling on the support of member states for a decision that we are tabling for the approval of the Commission:

Recalling the decision taken by the Commission at its 13th session to devote one day of its review sessions to review the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation (MSI), further decides that this day should be devoted exclusively to the reviews of the implementation of MSI.

We look forward to the strong support of all member states for this decision and we look forward to its approval by the Commission.

I thank you.

Minutes

**AD Hoc Meeting held on Thursday 17 April 2008, held at
U N Conference Room 7
Chaired by H. E. Ambassador Collin Beck**

The following members were in attendance:

Antigua & Barbuda	Marshall Islands
Bahamas	Mauritius
Barbados	Papua New Guinea
Cape Verde	Palau
Cuba	Samoa
Comoros	Sao Tome & Principle
Dominican Republic	Seychelles
Fed. State of Micronesia	Solomon Islands
Fiji	St. Lucia
Grenada	St. Vincent & the Grenadines
Guyana	Tonga
Haiti	Trinidad & Tobago
Jamaica	Tuvalu
Maldives	Vanuatu

Agenda Item 1: Background to SIDS Day.

The meeting was called to order at approximately 4:25 p.m. The Chairman informed members that the purpose of this emergency meeting is to hold further discussion after members have expressed a number of concerns and disappointment of how SIDS Day is treated. He stressed that it was mandated from CSD13 that the Mauritius Strategy and that a SIDS Day would be the appropriate way forward to address issues on climate change, as a result SIDS Day should not create conflict with Water and Sanitation Review.

He said that SIDS Day starts at 9:00 am and Water and Sanitation Review starts at 11:30 a.m. therefore from 11:30 delegates would make decision as to which event they will attend. He further went on to say that Water and Sanitation Review is very important to all.

In this regard, it is the belief of the Chairman and member states that the manner in which SIDS Day is treated shows that SIDS Day will be diminished and will be less important. He therefore asked members what do they think is the most appropriate way forward, "if it is to continue with the agenda for SIDS Day as it is or to protest?"

Agenda Item 2: Approach to SIDS Day

The Permanent Representative of Cape Verde expressed his total un-acceptance of SIDS Day being placed with an important event as Water and Sanitation, as everyone has something to discuss under water and sanitation. He stressed that it was decided by a General Assembly Resolution that SIDS Day has to be a whole day and not a half-day. The Permanent Representative of Seychelles also expressed his disturbance about the

treatment of CSD to the developing countries, in that they can be forcing a division in the developing world. He called for SIDS members to stay in solidarity of this meeting and further emphasized that issues discussed in SIDS Day are meant to be shared with the international community so that they can see how vulnerable we are and need financial assistance. He also said that he has noticed a pattern where SIDS is being marginalized and that if the agenda is accepted as it is it will happen again in the future and may even happen in other groups like the LDCs. He therefore called on fellow member states to boycott SIDS Day and go to Water and Sanitation Review and pronounce their solidarity.

The Permanent Representative of Barbados informed members that SIDS Day is important to AOSIS and its Partners. He also is in disagreement with the clashing of the two events and gave a different dimension as to how he thinks this situation should be handled. He advised that the Bureau of AOSIS should meet with the Bureau of CSD to see if we can get the partners to change the time. He also advised that the Bureau of AOSIS should meet with the Under Secretary General of DESA, the Triaca of the EU and the US Ambassador.

The Permanent Representative of Mauritius said that SIDS and AOSIS are integral parts of the United Nations, and that if SIDS don't participate in the day's it will be a missed opportunity. He further suggested that the Chairman should speak to responsible persons about the concerns raised with the hope that a better representation be given to SIDS. He also suggested moving the time from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. instead of 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

The Representative from Cuba raised the idea of calling on the support of the G77 in making a request regarding SIDS Day issue.

The Permanent Representative of Solomon Islands stressed that any way forward for AOSIS should be based on unity and solidarity, and spoke of making statements to the Bureau of CSD regarding the issue at hand. It is believed that based on past experience what has started would become precedence. He also recalled from previous meeting that it was discussed that the day given for SIDS was not fully utilized.

The permanent Representative of Samoa and St. Lucia suggested changing some of the events of the programs and have them as joint activities

The permanent Representative of

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Cape Verde	Samoa	
Comoros	Seychelles	
Dominican Republic	Solomon Islands	
Fed. State of Micronesia	St. Lucia	
Fiji	Tonga	
Grenada	Trinidad & Tobago	

Also present:

**DESA/SIDS UNIT
OHRLLS**

Agenda Item 1: Adoption of the Agenda.

The meeting was called to order at approximately 10:16 a.m. and the agenda was adopted as presented.

Agenda Item 2: Briefing by UNDESA on Activities Proposed for SIDS Day – 12 May 2008

DESA Representative expressed her appreciation for the acceptance of SIDS Day on Monday 12 May 2008 after several consultations and informed the meeting that copies of

the Report of the Secretary General on the Thematic Cluster with regional groups is now available by the Director of the SIDS Division. The Representative of DESA reiterated the importance of sharing this information with Capitals.

The meeting was informed that the Opening Ceremony of SIDS Day is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on 12 May 2008, in an effort to facilitate senior representatives of the Secretariat participating in the opening of the Water and Sanitation Review Event.

The Representative of DESA circulated a detailed proposed programme for SIDS Day (same attached). There will be opening remarks by the Chairman of AOSIS along with a few other members. She highlighted that this year's SIDS Day opening will feature a winning mass band from Trinidad and Tobago, (which worked in collaboration with UNDP). Its theme was "Earth" it effectively exhibited issues of Sustainable Development.

Regarding Side Events, the meeting was informed that there would be an Exhibition of products and produce from SIDS. The Representative of DESA noted that Iceland was kind enough to donate monies towards the transporting of these items (list of suggested items for Expo attached). She added that in lieu of the time, one suggestion would be for countries to give their representatives these products to carry with them as organizing shipment at this stage might be unrealistic. Questions were raised in regards to US Customs clearance and it was agreed that countries should only provide exhibits, which would not pose problems. It was also suggested that countries could rely on their local (NYC) agents for supply of the exhibition products.

Another Side-Event will be the launching of a handbook that can be used by decision makers in SIDS. There will be wide advertisement of the handbook in order to get the attention of the international community. This event will be highly publicized to attract the wider International Community.

A discussion ensued regarding concerns of the sharing of SIDS Day with Water and Sanitation Event. To this, the Representative of Tonga informed the meeting that the Pacific Islands Forum is sending a letter to express its concerns. The Chairman requested Tonga to share its letter with AOSIS. Other members also expressed their concerns with the CSD's proposed programme for 12 May 2008. It was then decided that AOSIS should also send a letter to the CSD Bureau regarding this. Letter to be sent by Friday, 18 April 2008, (copy attached).

Agenda Item 3: Any Other Business

The Representative of Barbados apologized for his Ambassador's absence and raised the issue of the importance of AOSIS playing an integral role in the forthcoming Special Meeting of the President of the General Assembly on Vulnerable Countries and Climate Change, which is scheduled for June. He suggested, and the meeting agreed, that there should be a discussion among AOSIS on what should be on the agenda. He also

suggested that the AOSIS Bureau meet and consult with the President of the General Assembly as soon as possible.

The Charge d'Affaires of Belize requested that the Chair of AOSIS circulate a listing of the meetings in which he is attending in this capacity, and also to provide some comments on these meetings, so that capitals can be duly informed.

The Representative of Comoros inquired as to the status of the Commonwealth Negotiation Training Workshop in London. The Charge d'Affaires of Grenada informed that there has been conflict in setting up a date, however she would contact the focal person and inform the Group accordingly.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:55 a.m.

MINUTES OF AOSIS MEETING, WHICH TOOK PLACE ON 6 NOVEMBER 2007

The Chair called the meeting to order at approximately 3:20 p.m. and requested a move to adopt the agenda.

He welcomed everyone and said that the meeting would be short due to the Financing Round Table meeting scheduled for 7 November 2007.

Members shared their sentiments that an AOSIS meeting should be held before Bali's meeting. The Chair said that as we are looking towards Bali we realize that a lot of climate change meetings are taking place. We need to take a look of what is coming out of the St. Kitts meeting as there is a lot for LDCs to benefit.

He also said that it is important to share with the experts on financing for vulnerable states. He briefly mentioned that at the Bonn meeting a lot was said on financing climate change, mitigation and adaptation.

Mention was also made that at the World Bank meeting held in Washington the issue of climate change is seen as a driver. The Chair indicated that the IMF does not realize that vulnerable states need more flexibility to access finance. Emphasis was also placed on mitigation and financing mitigation in the developing world. Therefore it was raised that AOSIS needs to put some direction towards FFF, making it a more formal process and seek support for other colleagues in the UN.

Belize Representative raised the point that with mitigation and adaptation issue mitigation allows for equity. This was supported by the Chair who said that we need to ensure that we can influence policy.

New Business

The Chair made mention that they have worked with the UN Foundation which has collated ideas from the first meeting to prepare a green paper that would be circulated in order to develop strategies to access finance.

He called on Member States to share their projects at the meeting as JEF/CEO would be present at the meeting and can offer assistance as to how we can go about financing some of those projects. Members were informed that the Finance Round Table Meeting will begin at 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Selwyn Harte

Mr. Harte informed members that the SIDS Resolution was submitted for consideration by members last week; they also requested more time to study the draft resolution in order to make their input into it. He said that there was no formal objection as yet on the draft. DESA advised that we should not await any formal objection.

In relation to the Mauritius + 5 no one has pronounced themselves on that due to insufficient time to look at the document.

DESA said that a Millennium + 5 Summit will be held in 2010, therefore 2010 would be a busy year for the General Assembly. Mauritius suggested to have the in 2009 instead.

The Chairman congratulated Selwyn for a good job done on the draft resolution. He also mentioned that the experts should be allowed to fashion AOSIS. Spoke on Climate Change as a challenge to global security, and believed that we should use the opportunity to push AOSIS to have some impact with the G8.

Trinidad and Tobago

Agreed that it is important for the Chair to attend the meeting with the G8 members as the internal community is realizing the impact AOSIS is having.

Barbados

Suggested that according to the outcome of the meeting in St. Kitts the outcome document/information can be used in your statement, and then circulate the draft for comments by members.

The Chair suggests that taking into account what comes out of St. Kitts along with any new ideas from the Maldives meeting.

Strategies for Bali Meeting

The Chair said that it is important to see what comes out of St. Kitts meeting in order to get some strategy for Bali meeting.

Mitigation target – Adaptation financing – have a meeting with the LDCs and the High Representatives.

Any Other Business

The Maldives suggests that a side event should take place in Bali

**The 2007 UNITED NATIONS PLEDGING CONFERENCE FOR
DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES HELD ON 12 NOVEMBER 2007**

H. E. Ms. Sanja Stiglic of Slovenia was elected as President of the 2007 United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities, by acclamation.

The President addressed the Conference and read the statement of Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, Secretary General of the United Nations. One of the areas highlighted in the Secretary General's speech was the importance of financing which is fundamental for the effective functioning of the United Nations development system. It was also noted that developing countries are the one pledging the greatest amount of resources at today's conference.

At the conference statements and pledges were made by the following representatives:

Luxembourg

Turkey

Croatia

Thailand

Algeria

Malaysia

Kuwait

The United Arab Emirates

Spain

Bahrain

Indonesia

Uruguay

Singapore

India

The Islamic Republic of Iran

Saudi Arabia

The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya

The Russian Federation

Bhutan

Mauritania

Brazil

Argentina

Djibouti

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

The conference adopted the draft report on its 2007 United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities as contained in document A/CONF.208/2007/L.1.