

**Statement by Mr Devon Rowe, Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Local Government and Environment,
High-level segment of the 15th session of the
Commission on Sustainable Development, 11 May 2007**

Mr. Chairman,

Let me begin by aligning my delegation with the statements made by Grenada on behalf of the AOSIS, and Pakistan, on behalf of the G77 and China.

Over the past two weeks, we have been involved in much deliberation on areas of action to implement the thematic cluster areas for this 15th Session of the Commission. These issues are cross-cutting in nature, interdependent, and intrinsically linked. Access to energy resources, especially renewable energy; achieving industrial development; and responding to the challenges posed by atmospheric pollution and climate change, are key preconditions to eliminating poverty, improving people's health and quality of life, and achieving sustainable development. For this reason, we underscore the importance of ensuring the full implementation of commitments undertaken in the each cluster. This requires collective action and political will at the international level, complemented by the adoption of requisite policies and strategies at the national and regional levels. The time to act is now.

As a small island developing state, Jamaica attaches great importance to the issues before this session of the Commission. With respect to energy, we have one of the highest energy intensity rates in Latin America and the Caribbean, and are highly dependent on fossil fuels to meet our energy needs. At present, and although fossil fuels presently remain a cheaper source of energy for the Government, we have, through our Energy Policy, made a commitment to increase the contribution of renewable energy sources to the energy mix from the current level of 6 percent to 10 percent by 2010 and 15 percent by 2020. In order to achieve these targets, we require the full cooperation of the international community, including through:

- The acceleration of the transfer of appropriate renewable energy technologies from developed countries to developing countries, and by stimulating the competitiveness of renewable energy supplies in the market place;
- The establishment of a global sustainable energy programme to promote adequate, affordable and clean energy technologies in SIDS, and
- Investments in renewable energy projects in SIDS to enable them to benefit from sustainable development programmes under the Clean Development Mechanism of the Kyoto Protocol.

Mr. Chairman,

There is an essential nexus between environmental and industrial policies. We have a deep appreciation for this relationship as most of Jamaica's economic activities are linked to the country's natural resources. For this reason, the government has put in place several

mechanisms for improved environmental management practices to ensure that industrial development is pursued in harmony with the preservation of the environment.

Developed countries are urged to facilitate an enabling environment for industrial development including by improving market access for products of importance to developing countries. Urgent assistance is also required for support to small and medium enterprises particularly in raising awareness of best practices on sustainable consumption and production. With respect to the latter, we would wish to underscore the importance of promoting sustainable consumption and production patterns, with developed countries taking the lead.

Mr Chairman,

Vulnerability indices show that SIDS like Jamaica are three times more vulnerable to the negative impacts of climate change than developed countries. Jamaica's economy, social and physical assets have on numerous occasions in the recent past been negatively impacted by natural and environmental disasters, including storms of increased frequency and intensity. The considerable amount of resources which have to be diverted from usual developmental use to respond to such disasters is cause for concern.

Adapting to climate change and variability is a costly undertaking which often goes beyond the financial capacity of many Governments. It is therefore important that the various commitments from the international community for technical, financial, or institutional forms of assistance are put into action now. As Sir Nicholas Stern so aptly puts it "*climate change is global in its causes and consequences, and international collective action will be critical*".

Greater support is also required from the international community for the integration of disaster risk reduction and hazard mitigation into policies, programmes and plans at the national and community levels. An area of particular need is the provision of special reinsurance arrangements for SIDS.

Mr Chairman,

The impact of poor air quality from localised and global sources continues to have serious socio-economic and health impacts on Jamaica's population. With both the generation and sharing of reliable information from local and regional monitoring networks, countries like ours would be able to provide atmospheric forecasts in tandem with community outreach programmes aimed at influencing individual behaviour. Here again, international cooperation will be critical. The provision of resources to build and strengthen capacity, and facilitate the transfer technologies to developing countries to support regional monitoring programmes, is paramount.

Mr. Chairman,

As we conclude our deliberations and formulate action plans and strategies for implementation, let us remember that our focus should be on translating commitments into action. Let us not lose the momentum. For our part, Jamaica remains committed to

promoting dialogue and working together in partnership with the international community towards the achievement of our common goals and objectives of advancing the sustainable development agenda.

Thank you.