

Statement by H.E Collin Beck, Permanent Representative of Solomon Islands to the United Nations on SIDS Day at the 16th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, May 12th 2008, New York

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to begin by associating this statement with the statement issued by G 77 delivered by Antigua and Barbuda and Grenada on behalf of the Alliance of Small Islands Developing States and Tonga on behalf of the Pacific/SIDS.

Solomon Islands values this session as we regard the CSD Review process as the primary intergovernmental body that follow up on the commitments related specifically to SIDS. Both AOSIS its Programme and Strategy and CSD process were conceived in Rio. As stated by Maldives, Barbados and Bahamas we must protect and nurture the Rio spirit.

The situation that befalls SIDS day at this session in which that AOSIS is made to fight for a SIDS inclusive day, is regrettable and disturbing. In this connection, Solomon Islands support the proposal by AOSIS Chair for CSD 16 to adopt a decision to preserve SIDS Day but also improve the structure of discussion of CSD as alluded to by Marshall Islands.

Mr. Chairman,

Climate Change for us is a reality that we are living with on a daily basis as underlined by Maldives and others. Implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy unfortunately continues not to receive much attention by the international community. More than 80% of the populations of most Pacific SIDS are located in the rural areas. Much of the land in Solomon Islands is traditionally and customary owned where we rely on for food, shelter and income. Much of this ownership under the various land tenure system remains undocumented making agriculture commercialization a challenge. Efforts to document the land has started but will need international system and investment if we are to open up the international system. Rising cost of food require more investment in rice production to reduce importation of food, freeing up funds to achieve other mitigation and adaptation challenges.

Mr. Chairman

The challenge of Climate Change require new and additional resources if we are to achieve our MDG. Corrective measures will need countries to do more on acquiring renewable energy, in this instance Solomon Islands would like to acknowledge Italy for the Pacific renewable energy Initiatives, Austria and the City of Milan of their contribution to this people centered and driven approach that moves beyond policy to activities on the ground. Finally also acknowledge Turkey who continues to support SIDS and LDCs and encourage others to join such efforts.

I close by registering a sector that needs support is forestry, carbon credit opportunities to all, include to SIDS to implement BPOA and the Mauritius requires deeper partnership.