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**Statement on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States**

**By**

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I have the honor to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.

We welcome the opportunity of addressing the specific difficulties of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), with whom the EU and its Member States have a long **history of cooperation**, in the context of this IPM. While SIDS face many challenges, we would like to highlight the **fundamental role of CSD** in reviewing these challenges and in discussing policy options for addressing the barriers and constraints SIDS are facing due to their increased vulnerability. Besides the devastating consequences of climate change, SIDS need to face other problems caused by **isolation and vulnerabilities**, like expensive transport and high communications costs, waste management, freshwater, etc.. Strengthened human resources and institutional capacities, including the empowerment of women and youth are also required in order to face the present and upcoming challenges.

The Mauritius Strategy provides a unique and exclusive cooperation framework. The EU welcomes this and remains committed to supporting the implementation of its priorities. Therefore, we call for the implementation of **the Outcome Document of the High-Level Review Meeting** on the Implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States held on 24-25 September 2010. *In this regard we would like to highlight the necessity of defining measurable goals and indicators for monitoring and evaluation, and strengthening capacities for data collection and analysis; scaling up resources made available to small island States, including for meeting new challenges; enhancing strategic partnerships, especially at the regional level and within the UN system; strengthening South-South cooperation, including among small island States; and placing special focus on such areas as climate change mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity, natural disasters, sustainable energy, transport and trade, fisheries, tourism, finance and debt sustainability.*

Protection of fragile **ecosystems** of SIDS is crucial not only because of their importance for the vital ecosystem services they provide but also for their attractiveness for the tourism sector providing considerable revenues for SIDS. Therefore developing sustainable tourism approaches will lead to a win-win situation (economic growth and environmental protection) for SIDS.

When considering the **cluster of issues of this CSD cycle**, there are themes which are of high relevance to SIDS. There is a clear need for an integrated approach to transport, chemicals, mining and waste management together with the cross-cutting theme of sustainable consumption and production.

On **waste management**, many SIDS have difficulties in terms of financial and technical capacity in dealing with waste management issues. Different types of wastes threaten SIDS ecological integrity. Efforts must be undertaken to strengthen the control of the trans-boundary movement of hazardous wastes, especially through the enhancement of activities under the Basel Convention. It is essential to promote sustainable waste management and to promote national,

regional and international cooperation to reduce the quantity of waste disposed of at sea.

**Sustainable waste management** can have beneficial impacts in other areas. For example composting of organic waste can produce alternatives to chemical fertilisers; waste can be converted into energy fuels, and treated through fermentation or other techniques to produce irrigation water.

**Transport** remains important challenge for SIDS to overcome the handicap of their remoteness and improve the competitiveness of their smaller and distanced markets. In analogy to landlocked countries, SIDS are "sea-locked" relying mainly on air and maritime transport connections. Moreover, the impact of climate change is likely to make these connections even more costly, particularly in terms of infrastructure resilience. In this context, while reliable, affordable, frequent and efficient transportation is key, required transport will need to be developed in a sustainable manner. Transport organized at regional level may prove to be an effective tool for addressing the challenges of SIDS's geographic remoteness, small size and lower transport volumes.

**Sustainable Production and Consumption** (SCP) is also a key element in SIDS aim to "*minimising the use of natural resources and toxic materials as well as the emissions of waste and pollutants over the life-cycle so as not to jeopardize the needs of future generations.*" The green economy focus on improving eco-efficiency will help promoting sustainable solutions, which will lower SIDS' exposure to environmental degradation. This approach will also help reducing SIDS' environmental vulnerability, as well as addressing their social and economic challenges.

Land is a scarce resource in the SIDS. In this regard, **mining** could represent an additional pressure in land use. In many areas customary and indigenous lands are under pressure from outside interests such as incoming agribusiness, timber and mining companies. Mining projects should ensure compliance with best practises and, where impacts are negative, (such as costal erosion and pollution), consider mitigation measures. On the other hand, awareness and participation is required when dealing with mining tenement issues and raising land "ownership". Due to dependency on marine resources, integrated approaches to governance may be needed that include mining, fisheries, biodiversity, energy, and shipping. , It is important for SIDS to provide incentives for economic diversification by developing other sectors that minimise the dependence on the mining sector and by improving the competitiveness the manufacturing sector.

Finally, we would like to underscore the need for **urgent implementation** of the Barbados Plan of Action and the Mauritius Strategy. While SIDS have largely made progress in formulating and implementing strategies and policies to advance sustainable development, there are still important challenges ahead. National and regional efforts must be encouraged and complemented by the international community's response particularly regarding capacity building, technology transfer and the financial resources mobilisation.

Thank you!