



## SUMMARY OF THE INTER-REGIONAL PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE TEN- YEAR REVIEW OF THE BARBADOS PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF SIDS: 26-30 JANUARY 2004

The Inter-regional Preparatory Meeting for the Ten-year Review of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) took place from 26-30 January 2004, at the Radisson Cable Beach Hotel in Nassau, the Bahamas. Over 300 participants, including 13 ambassadors, 22 ministers and deputy ministers, and representatives of UN agencies, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations were in attendance.

During the week, delegates engaged in a general debate and six panel discussions, and considered and adopted the Nassau Declaration and the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) Strategy Paper for the Further Implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action (BPOA). The outcomes of this meeting will be forwarded to the G-77/China for consideration in advance of the intergovernmental preparatory meeting at UN headquarters in New York from 14-16 April 2004, during the 12th session of the Commission on Sustainable Development. This preparatory meeting will then make recommendations to the International Meeting for the Ten-year Review of the Programme of Action on SIDS, scheduled to take place in Mauritius from 30 August to 3 September 2004.

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE REVIEW AND FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BPOA ON THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF SIDS

The vulnerability of islands and coastal areas was recognized at the 44th session of the United Nations General Assembly (GA) in 1989, when the GA passed resolution 44/206 on the possible adverse effects of sea-level rise on islands and coastal areas, particularly low-lying coastal areas. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in June 1992, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, brought the special case of such islands and coastal areas to international attention when it adopted Agenda 21, a programme of action for sustainable development. Chapter 17 of

Agenda 21, on the protection of the oceans, all kinds of seas, and coastal areas, included a programme area on the sustainable development of small islands. Agenda 21 also called for convening a global conference on the sustainable development of SIDS.

**GLOBAL CONFERENCE ON THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF SIDS:** The UN Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of SIDS, held in Bridgetown, Barbados, from 25 April to 6 May 1994, was established by GA resolution 47/189 in 1992. Some 125 States and territories participated at the conference, 46 of which were small island developing States and territories. The Conference led to the adoption of the BPOA, a 14-point programme that identifies priority areas and indicates specific actions necessary to address the special challenges faced by SIDS. The priority areas requiring action include: climate change and sea level rise, natural and environmental disasters, management of wastes, coastal and marine resources, freshwater resources, land resources, energy resources, tourism resources, biodiversity resources, national institutions and administrative capacity, regional institutions and technical cooperation, transport and communication, science and technology, and human resource development. The BPOA further identified several cross-sectoral

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areas requiring attention: capacity building; institutional development at the national, regional and international levels; cooperation in the transfer of environmentally sound technologies; trade and economic diversification; and finance. The Conference also adopted the Barbados Declaration, a statement of the political will underpinning the agreements contained in the BPOA. The UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) was given the responsibility to follow up on the implementation of the BPOA.

**UNGASS-19:** Five years after UNCED, the 19th Special Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGASS-19) met in June 1997, and addressed SIDS issues in relation to its general theme: "Review and Appraise the Implementation of Agenda 21." In that context, the Special Session requested that the CSD at its sixth session in 1998 undertake a review of all the outstanding chapters and issues of the BPOA. It was also decided that a two-day Special Session of the General Assembly would be held in 1999 immediately preceding its 54th session to conduct a full review of the implementation of the BPOA. The CSD was requested to serve as a preparatory committee for that Special Session.

**UNGASS-22:** Five years after the Barbados Conference, the 22nd Special Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGASS-22) met in September 1999 and undertook a comprehensive review and appraisal of the implementation of the BPOA. UNGASS-22 adopted the "State of Progress and Initiatives for the Future Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS," which identified the following six sectoral areas in need of urgent attention: climate change; natural and environmental disasters and climate variability; freshwater resources; coastal and marine resources; energy; and tourism. In addition to these areas, the review document further recommended the following means of implementation: sustainable development strategies; capacity building; resource mobilization and finance; globalization and trade liberalization; transfer of environmentally sound technology; vulnerability index; information management; and international cooperation and partnership. UNGASS-22 also adopted a Declaration in which member States, *inter alia*, reaffirmed the principles of and their commitments to sustainable development embodied in Agenda 21, the Barbados Declaration and the BPOA.

**MILLENNIUM SUMMIT:** In September 2000, at the UN Millennium Summit world leaders adopted the UN Millennium Declaration (A/Res/55/2) and in doing so, resolved to address the special needs of SIDS by implementing the BPOA and the outcome of UNGASS-22 "rapidly and in full."

**WSSD:** The World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) convened from 26 August to 4 September 2002, in Johannesburg, South Africa. The Summit negotiated and adopted two main documents: the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI), which is an 11-chapter framework for action to implement the commitments agreed at UNCED, and the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development. The WSSD reaffirmed the special case of SIDS, and dedicated a chapter of the JPOI to the sustainable development of SIDS, which identified a set of priority actions, called for a full and comprehensive review of the BPOA in 2004, and requested the GA at its 57th session to consider convening an international meeting for the sustainable development of SIDS.

Non-negotiated partnerships/initiatives for sustainable development, also known as Type II outcomes, proved to be an important outcome of the WSSD. Over 300 such partnerships have been launched, 18 of which focus on SIDS.

**UNGA-57:** In December 2002, the 57th session of the General Assembly adopted resolution 57/262, which decides to convene an international meeting in 2004 to undertake a full and comprehensive review of the implementation of the BPOA, and welcomed the offer of the Government of Mauritius to host the meeting. The General Assembly also decided that the review should seek a renewed political commitment by all countries to, and focus on, practical and pragmatic actions for the further implementation of the BPOA, including through the mobilization of resources and assistance for SIDS. The resolution further decided to convene regional preparatory meetings, as well as an inter-regional preparatory meeting in order to undertake the review of the BPOA at the national, subregional and regional levels. The resolution also requested strengthening the SIDS Unit to enable it to assist in preparations for the review process.

**CSD-11:** During the 11th session of the CSD, which convened from 28 April to 9 May 2003, the Commission took a decision on SIDS and agreed to hold a three-day preparatory meeting during CSD-12. The decision specifies the dates and venues of regional and inter-regional preparatory meetings, and requests the UN Secretary-General to work within existing resources, and to use budgetary savings and voluntary contributions for the preparatory process.

**REGIONAL PREPARATORY MEETINGS:** From August to October 2003, three regional preparatory meetings were held for: Pacific SIDS (4-8 August, Apia, Samoa); Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Sea (AIMS) SIDS (1-5 September, Praia, Cape Verde); and Caribbean SIDS (6-10 October, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago). Each of these meetings sought to prepare a regional position for the BPOA review process, and highlighted the achievements, key issues, challenges and opportunities for the implementation of the BPOA in each region.

**EXPERT MEETINGS:** In preparation for the inter-regional meeting, a series of expert meetings were convened in 2003, in conjunction with the UN Development Programme (UNDP), which addressed: capacity building for renewable energy and energy efficiency (7-11 July, Niue); vulnerability of SIDS and enhancing resilience: the role of the private sector, civil society and trade in the sustainable development of SIDS (29 September to 3 October, Dominica); waste management (27 October to 1 November, Cuba); and capacity building for sustainable development (3-9 December, Fiji).

**UNGA-58:** In December 2003, the 58th session of the UN General Assembly in resolution 58/213 decided that the International Meeting would convene from 30 August to 3 September 2004, and include a high-level segment to undertake a full and comprehensive review of the implementation of the BPOA. The resolution also decided to hold, if deemed necessary by an open-ended preparatory meeting and funded from voluntary resources, two days of informal consultations in Mauritius, on 28 and 29 August 2004, to facilitate effective preparation for the International Meeting.



**APPOINTMENT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL MEETING:** On 9 December 2003, UN Under-Secretary-General Anwarul Chowdhury was appointed the Secretary-General of the International Meeting. Chowdhury is also the UN High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and SIDS.

### REPORT OF THE INTER-REGIONAL MEETING

On Monday morning, 26 January, Marcus Bethel, Minister of Health and the Environment of the Bahamas, welcomed all participants to the meeting, which he said would finalize the global strategy for SIDS, forge common priorities, and develop a blueprint defining SIDS relationships with the international community.

Speaking on behalf of the G-77/China, Jamal Nasser Al-Bader (Qatar) said the review of the implementation of the BPOA should embrace emerging socioeconomic issues, and noted that this meeting presents a unique opportunity for SIDS to create a new vision for the future.

José Antonio Ocampo, UN Under-Secretary-General for Social and Economic Affairs, expressed his department's commitment to SIDS, underlined the importance of building on the outcomes of the regional meetings, and stressed the value of meeting the goals set out in Agenda 21, the BPOA and the JPOI.

Anwarul Chowdhury, Secretary-General of the International Meeting, drew attention to the emerging issues of HIV/AIDS, use of information technology, market access and security, and urged delegates to be realistic and practical to enable international support and implementation.

Rajesh Bhagwan, Minister of the Environment and National Development Unit of Mauritius, on behalf of AOSIS, emphasized the importance of developing a common SIDS position to form the basis for negotiations for the International Meeting. He called for action-orientated outcomes, and identified the need to address new and emerging challenges.

Børge Brende, CSD-12 Chair and Norway's Minister of Environment, said the International Meeting must create a new platform for SIDS and the international community. He said the process needs to inspire international action, generate more political will, and define a clear set of priorities.

Julian Hunte, President of the 58th session of the UN General Assembly and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Saint Lucia, said the meeting must give new momentum to the sustainable development of SIDS, which can only be done if participants give forthright assessments of priority issues. He said action at the national and regional levels is important, but in itself is insufficient to tackle critical issues such as market access, natural disasters and HIV/AIDS.

In his keynote address, Perry Christie, Prime Minister of the Bahamas, indicated that competing demands on the policy agenda require a careful balancing of priorities, and said particular attention is needed to increase SIDS' capacities to improve governance.

Following the opening ceremony, participants elected by acclamation Marcus Bethel (Bahamas) as the Chair of the Meeting and a Bureau with Belize, Mauritius and Tuvalu as its members. A

drafting group tasked to prepare a draft Strategy for the Further Implementation of the BPOA was also elected by acclamation. Delegates then adopted the provisional agenda.

During the five-day meeting, participants heard statements by ministers, heads of delegation, observer States and organizations in a general debate session. Participants also engaged in six panel discussions and heard reports from the Youth Forum and civil society. The draft Political Declaration and draft Strategy for the Further Implementation of the BPOA were considered in the drafting group, informal ministerial consultations, and plenary. The meeting closed on Friday afternoon with the approval of the Nassau Declaration and the AOSIS Strategy Paper for the Further Implementation of the BPOA, which will be forwarded to the G-77/China in advance of the intergovernmental preparatory meeting at CSD-12. The following report presents the discussions that took place during the Inter-regional Meeting and summarizes the outcome documents.

### GENERAL DEBATE

During the General Debate, many SIDS reaffirmed their commitment to pursue sustainable development within the framework of the BPOA. Statements focused on recommendations on the outcomes of the Inter-regional and International Meetings, the issues addressed in the BPOA, and new and emerging challenges. Many speakers also identified poverty as a major impediment to sustainable development.

On the meeting's outcomes, Mauritius said the draft AOSIS Strategy should clearly reflect SIDS' commitments to sustainable development in order to attract international assistance. The US Virgin Islands and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) emphasized that the draft Strategy should focus on implementation of the BPOA. Civil society organizations called on governments to include targets and time-bound actions in the draft AOSIS Strategy and underscored the need to ensure full and active civil society participation at the International Meeting. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) called for an explicit reference to agricultural issues in the meeting's outcome documents. Belize and Tuvalu, speaking for the Pacific Islands Forum, said the International Meeting should focus on new partnerships. The International Telecommunications Union (ITU) and Tonga suggested that the outcomes of the International Meeting should be coordinated and integrated with the activities of relevant UN agencies.

On climate change, several speakers highlighted the challenges posed by climate change to SIDS. Barbados and others called for the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol. The Comoros called for the application of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. Kiribati described the social and economic consequences of sea-level rise and climate change, noting that these impacts have been exacerbated by environmental degradation and population growth. Iceland said the Arctic environment is as an indicator of climatic change. Noting that SIDS are key partners in its climate agenda, Ireland, on behalf of the EU, stressed the importance of the Kyoto Protocol and development of renewable energy.

On natural and environmental disasters, a number of Pacific SIDS, with others, called attention to the vulnerability of SIDS. Seychelles called for the development of early warning systems, disaster management plans, and insurance and reinsurance



schemes. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies underscored the need to address the underlying causes of vulnerability and include risk reduction strategies into national development planning frameworks. The WMO said it would continue to help SIDS address natural disasters and build capacity for disaster management.

Several speakers noted the reliance of SIDS on coastal and marine resources and a number of speakers underscored the need for SIDS to further capitalize on these resources. The Bahamas underscored the importance of developing and enforcing laws protecting marine resources and prioritizing coastal zone management. Seychelles expressed concerns regarding coral reef destruction and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. Madagascar stressed the importance of the rational management of marine resources. The Dominican Republic underscored the need to prohibit the passage of ships transporting toxic or radioactive substances through SIDS' waters. Iceland noted the reliance of SIDS on marine resources and the need for improved ocean resource assessments, reporting and management. The Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism urged governments to increase capacity for the sustainable management of oceans and fisheries.

Regarding land resources, the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF) supported the implementation of national forest programmes, and urged the participation of SIDS in the 2005 UNFF review of the international arrangement on forests.

Many speakers noted the need to shift toward and capitalize on renewable energy sources. Germany and Iceland stressed the need to promote and implement renewable energy initiatives. The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) said the current state of technology transfer and assistance from financial institutions discourages renewable energy use. The UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) supported the deployment of technologies to promote energy efficiency.

On biodiversity resources, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) informed participants that it will launch a work programme on island biodiversity. The Nature Conservancy announced a partnership with the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), governments and other civil society organizations to support marine biodiversity and sustainable livelihoods.

Regarding graduation of SIDS Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Cape Verde called for addressing the development challenges faced by these States, and called for the application of the economic vulnerability index in determining the graduation of SIDS from their LDC status. Samoa said LDCs that do not meet the threshold criteria for economic vulnerability should not graduate from their LDC status, and the Maldives, with others, underlined the need to address the vulnerability of SIDS.

On trade, Guyana said globalization had increased the difficulties facing SIDS and, with the Dominican Republic, called for the elimination of agricultural subsidies and export barriers to SIDS products. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines described the social and economic consequences of trade barriers to SIDS exports. Dominica and others called for preferential and differentiated treatment. Australia underlined the need to conclude the Doha Round and for the improved participation of SIDS in that process. The US stressed the importance of moving forward with the Doha Round and the value of partnerships with the private sector in advancing

sustainable development. New Zealand said that the International Meeting should emphasize the importance attached to the successful outcome of the Doha Round, particularly in removing trade distorting policies in the agriculture sector. The United Arab Emirates and Mauritius called for efforts to strengthen trade preferences for SIDS. CARICOM said non-compliance with air and sea security regulations may have an adverse impact on trade in SIDS. The Commonwealth Secretariat informed participants that it is addressing challenges faced by SIDS, such as lack of participation in trade negotiations.

On sustainable capacity development and education for sustainable development, Kiribati, with others, emphasized the importance of education and training in achieving sustainable development. Grenada emphasized the need to develop human capital, and enhance investment in education and research and development. UNEP reported on its programmes to assist AIMS and African SIDS, and the preparation of a proposed Caribbean SIDS Programme.

On national enabling environments, Haiti underscored the link between weak governance and accelerated deterioration of the environment. Samoa stressed the importance of building strong institutions, ensuring effective resource utilization, and increasing capacity building programmes. Jamaica highlighted the important contribution that National Strategies for Sustainable Development (NSSDs) have made to eradicating poverty. The Solomon Islands said its national economic and reform strategy formulated with donors has helped to establish civil order and address the BPOA's objectives. Suriname stressed the need for institutional strengthening to build the resilience of SIDS.

Regarding health, Guyana, Tuvalu and the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization prioritized addressing HIV/AIDS. Saint Kitts and Nevis highlighted how HIV/AIDS has posed obstacles to sustainable development, noting that women have been disproportionately affected and limited resources have been allocated to HIV treatment.

On implementation, Barbados called for the establishment of a regional SIDS implementation organization for the Caribbean. Palau called for further implementation measures to address good governance, population growth and, with Mauritius, Nauru and Papua New Guinea, emphasized the need for concrete means of implementation. Trinidad and Tobago and the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) drew attention to the inadequate integration of the BPOA into national and regional planning processes and urged greater involvement of civil society. Cuba and Tuvalu underscored the importance of integration and cooperation among SIDS. Canada recommended that SIDS increase intra-regional pooling of technical capacity and the establishment of regional centers.

On access to financial assistance, several SIDS noted declining official development assistance (ODA) levels and urged the provision of new and additional resources. Haiti called for more financial resources to fight poverty. UNDP said it would establish a window for SIDS within a small grants facility. The Global Environment Facility (GEF) informed participants of its Capacity



Development Initiative and noted that it has financed numerous projects totaling US\$507 million to help SIDS address environmental challenges that affect economic and social development.

On monitoring and evaluation, Saint Lucia supported the continuation of addressing SIDS issues through the SIDS Unit in the UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), and Mauritius underscored the need to restructure the Unit.

On Friday morning, the Plenary heard reports from the Youth Focus of Bahamas Forum held from 28-29 January, and the outcomes of the civil society consultations held throughout the week. A representative of the Youth Focus of Bahamas Forum presented the declaration of their meeting. The declaration highlights the role of youth in sustainable development, and emphasizes the need for measures to address, *inter alia*, education, ecotourism, environmental education, healthcare services, waste management, and the protection and promotion of culture and cultural industries.

A representative from civil society presented the outcomes of the civil society discussions. He highlighted the need to facilitate the maximum participation of civil society at the International Meeting, in particular women, youth, farmers and indigenous peoples. Regarding the draft Political Declaration and AOSIS Strategy, he called for increased recognition in the documents of the need for sustainable agriculture, donor coordination, civil society partnerships, regional coordination mechanisms, and monitoring and evaluation. He welcomed references to gender assessments and the development of sustainable development indicators, and informed the meeting of the launching of the civil society sustainability fund.

### PANEL DISCUSSIONS

Participants engaged in six panel discussions during the week on:

- new challenges and emerging issues: integrating human and social development imperatives;
- implementing NSSDs;
- enhancing competitiveness: trade, finance, entrepreneurship and partnerships;
- cultural diversity, developing cultural industries and empowering youth;
- towards knowledge-based societies: building capacity for more effective application of science and technology in SIDS; and
- building resilience: strategies for overcoming risk, uncertainty and vulnerability in SIDS.

On Wednesday afternoon, delegates engaged in a brief wrap-up session during which participants highlighted issues concerning the different panel discussion themes and identified priorities for the meeting's outcomes. These discussions are outlined in detail in the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* daily reports of the meeting, available online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/sids/bpoa10/bahamasprep/>

### CONSIDERATION OF THE NASSAU DECLARATION AND AOSIS STRATEGY PAPER FOR THE FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BPOA

The drafting of the Nassau Declaration and the AOSIS Strategy Paper on the Further Implementation of the BPOA was undertaken by the small drafting group elected on Monday. This drafting group included: Barbados, Belize and Cuba representing the Caribbean region; Cape Verde, Mauritius and Seychelles representing the

AIMS region; and Kiribati, Papua New Guinea and Tuvalu representing the Pacific region. Chaired by René Nunez (Belize), the drafting group met daily to finalize the draft Political Declaration and AOSIS Strategy for the Implementation of the BPOA, which was based on the Regional Synthesis Reports, follows the chapters outlined in the BPOA, and identifies new and emerging issues since 1994. Following the conclusion of its work on Thursday morning, the drafting group presented the draft documents to an informal AOSIS ministerial consultation involving ministers and heads of delegations of SIDS, which met on Thursday afternoon to consider and give input to the draft documents. The drafting group resumed its work, with the mandate to integrate the concerns and issues expressed by ministers and concluded with a revised text on Thursday evening. In the final plenary on Friday morning, AOSIS member States considered and adopted as the meeting's outcome documents, the Nassau Declaration and the AOSIS Strategy Paper.

Discussion in the final plenary session focused on clarifying elements of the Declaration and Strategy Paper.

The draft declaration was introduced to the plenary on Friday by AOSIS Chair Jagdish Koonjul (Mauritius). On designating a title for the meeting's declaration, Saint Kitts and Nevis, supported by CARICOM and Mauritius, proposed and delegates agreed to call it the "Nassau Declaration."

On the draft AOSIS Strategy, delegates adopted text with minor amendments to the introduction and to chapters on climate change and sea-level rise, natural and environmental disasters, coastal and marine resources, freshwater resources, land resources, energy resources, tourism resources, biodiversity resources, transport and communication, science and technology, trade: globalization and trade liberalization, sustainable capacity development and education for sustainable development, sustainable consumption and production, national enabling environments, health, knowledge management and information for decision making, culture, implementation, access to financial resources, and monitoring and evaluation. On these chapters, proposals from AOSIS delegations and civil society were tabled and adopted on:

- recognizing the increasing vulnerability of SIDS and the prioritization of adaptation to climate change (Tonga);
- strengthening national frameworks for disaster reduction (Samoa);
- requiring international assistance for SIDS to develop national fisheries management mechanisms (Tuvalu), and strengthening sustainable and responsible fisheries management (Belize and FAO);
- stressing the need for international support regarding access to safe water, provision of sanitation and promotion of hygiene (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Jamaica);
- diversifying economies and markets and creating enabling environments for agricultural intensification and diversification, removing production constraints, and enhancing food processing, marketing and quality (Guyana);
- requiring the international community to strengthen land tenure and management systems (Cook Islands);
- seeking international assistance for the development and implementation of action plans to reduce deforestation and promote sustainable forest management (Guyana);
- enhancing efficient and sustainable agricultural production



(Tonga and civil society);

- developing and strengthening partnerships for sustainable forest management (civil society);
- requesting international support for setting up regional clearinghouse mechanisms for SIDS-specific technologies (Mauritius);
- recognizing the consequences of trade liberalization and the erosion of trade preferences on social stability, education and health (WHO);
- giving greater attention to the environmental dimensions of trade and the need for continued examination of the trade implications of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) (civil society);
- promoting the development of traditional medicines including medicinal plants (civil society);
- recognizing the importance of cultural identity and its role in advancing sustainable development (Cuba);
- facilitating greater participation by civil society in all sustainable development initiatives (Saint Lucia); and
- utilizing innovative financing mechanisms such as debt swaps, the Clean Development Mechanism, and micro-financing (civil society).

Substantive discussions regarding management of wastes and graduation of LDC SIDS also took place. On management of wastes, discussions focused on text regarding the transportation of radioactive material in and through SIDS waters. Chair Bethel drew attention to the two proposals, one which called for the cessation of such transport, supported by the Caribbean SIDS, and the other that encouraged further dialogue within the International Maritime Organization on this issue, supported by the Pacific SIDS. Following a discussion, delegates agreed to a compromise suggestion by AOSIS Chair Koonjul to integrate the two proposals, recognizing the need for cessation as well as for the dialogue.

On graduation from special and preferential treatment, several SIDS LDCs, including Cape Verde, Samoa and Kiribati, recommended reference to the vulnerability of LDC SIDS and the fact that there is not a smooth transition process in place for countries graduating from LDC status. CARICOM and several Caribbean States, including Barbados and Saint Kitts and Nevis, opposed references to LDCs, noting that the issue applies to various forms of graduation beyond those related solely to LDCs. They urged text on graduation of non-LDC SIDS from access to concessionary resources. After informal consultations, delegates agreed to new language expressing concern regarding graduation of both LDC and non-LDC SIDS and underlining that all discussions on future graduation should be held in abeyance.

#### **CLOSING PLENARY**

Following consideration of the Nassau Declaration and the AOSIS Strategy Paper on Friday, AOSIS member States adopted these documents. Several observer States then made statements. Canada, the EU, the US, and Australia, also speaking for New Zealand, said they were not in a position to comment on the meeting's documents, but welcomed the opportunity to participate in the meeting as observers. They stressed their commitment to the

BPOA review process and their participation at the three-day preparatory meeting in New York in April, and expressed support for the successful outcome of the International Meeting.

In his closing statement, the Secretary-General of the International Meeting, Anwarul Chowdhury, expressed his hope that the outcome of the Inter-regional Meeting would contribute to carrying forward the hopes and aspirations of SIDS to Mauritius and beyond, and bring a change in the lives of people living in SIDS. He also noted the opportunity for the International Meeting to become a landmark in the development efforts of SIDS, and said the UN stands by the side of SIDS as a true partner in their sustainable development efforts.

In closing, Chair Bethel thanked participants for their constructive inputs to the meeting, and noted that the meeting's objectives had been accomplished. He said AOSIS member States had made significant progress during the meeting to capture the inter-regional commitment of SIDS to sustainable development and observed their common sense of unity and purpose. He closed the meeting at 2:20 pm.

#### **NASSAU DECLARATION**

In the 14-paragraph Nassau Declaration, SIDS reaffirm the continued validity of the BPOA as the fundamental framework for sustainable development of SIDS, as well as their commitment to the goals set out in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the JPOI. Acknowledging that they have made some progress in the implementation of the BPOA, the Declaration expresses SIDS' concern regarding their weakening economic performance since 1994 and their inability to effectively participate in multilateral trade negotiations. In this regard, the Declaration calls upon the World Trade Organization (WTO) to recognize the special case of SIDS. SIDS further recognize the importance of establishing an AOSIS structure to strengthen the profile of SIDS in global affairs and undertake to complete the review of the institutional arrangement for strengthening AOSIS and its role in the implementation and monitoring of the Strategy by the time of the AOSIS Summit to be held during the International Meeting.

#### **AOSIS STRATEGY FOR THE FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BPOA**

**INTRODUCTION:** The introduction states that the BPOA provides the blueprint for addressing sustainable development in SIDS and that SIDS have shown commitment to sustainable development and poverty eradication. SIDS recognize that good governance is necessary for achieving sustainable development, and note the need for more support to address security issues, including HIV/AIDS, the drug and small arms trade, and food and water security. The introduction calls for greater transparency and inclusiveness in the international financial and economic system, underscores South-South cooperation in strategic areas, and recognizes the importance of culture, youth and gender equality for sustainable development. SIDS further acknowledge the role of DESA and the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and SIDS in the preparatory process and in mobilizing international support and resources for, and follow-up on, the outcomes of the International Meeting.



**CLIMATE CHANGE AND SEA-LEVEL RISE:** This section recognizes the adverse effects of climate change on the sustainable development, livelihoods and existence of SIDS. SIDS highlight actions the international community should take to:

- implement the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC);
- ensure entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol;
- reduce domestic greenhouse gas emissions;
- support SIDS in the development and implementation of national climate change action plans; and
- remove technology transfer barriers.

SIDS also encourage the international community to provide financial and technical support, particularly through the GEF, and calls for broadening and strengthening of regional and national coordination mechanisms using assistance from regional development banks and other financial institutions.

**NATURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL DISASTERS:** This section notes the particular vulnerability of SIDS to natural disasters. SIDS call for, among other things, the following actions by the international community:

- strengthening the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction as a facility to address national disaster mitigation;
- mainstreaming risk management into the national planning process;
- using opportunities at international conferences to establish mechanisms such as appropriate insurance and re-insurance arrangements; and
- establishing an international fund.

**MANAGEMENT OF WASTES:** This section recognizes that most SIDS have made insufficient progress in planning and implementing waste management policies and underlines concerns about: the transport of radioactive materials, marine debris and ballast water, and World War II shipwrecks. SIDS call for the following actions:

- the international community should provide support to SIDS for the development, transfer and implementation of appropriate technologies;
- the control of the transboundary movement of hazardous waste should be strengthened;
- the international community should assist SIDS in: developing waste management systems and institutions; establishing national environmental trust funds; and promoting recycling and using waste as a resource;
- the quantity of waste disposed of in the sea should be reduced through regional cooperation;
- the International Maritime Organization (IMO) should expedite the process of concluding a convention on ballast water;
- States whose vessels were sunk in SIDS waters during World War II should recognize liability;
- SIDS, with UNEP's support, should implement the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities; and
- the cessation of transportation of radioactive materials in SIDS regions through on-going dialogue, including through the IMO with the shipping States, should be achieved.

**COASTAL AND MARINE RESOURCES:** This section recognizes the link between SIDS and oceans, their dependence on marine resources and the necessity to enhance implementation of UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). SIDS call for:

- the establishment of a financial mechanism to assist SIDS in their implementation of UNCLOS;
- the international community to assist SIDS in the area of regional fisheries management, monitoring and fish stock data gathering;
- distant water fishing States to support SIDS to establish sustainable and equitable resource management;
- SIDS, with the help of other States and using regional mechanisms, to adopt integrated management tools; and
- relevant regional and international development partners to support SIDS in the development and implementation of regional initiatives.

**FRESHWATER RESOURCES:** This section notes the challenges faced by SIDS in water management and access, and notes the agreement by SIDS to call on the international community to support SIDS-SIDS cooperation and provide assistance for capacity building for the development and further implementation of freshwater and sanitation programmes and the promotion of integrated water resources management. SIDS also request international, regional and private sector financial institutions to provide assistance in meeting the Millennium Declaration target of halving the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water by 2015 and require the WMO, supported by the international community, to continue to implement actions to strengthen national capacity.

**LAND RESOURCES:** This section recognizes increasing pressures on land resources and states the agreement by SIDS to call on the international community to assist SIDS in: developing capacity to meet various WTO and other international requirements; strengthening land tenure and management systems; and moving from primary to tertiary agricultural production. In the Strategy, SIDS are encouraged to present funding proposals under the Convention to Combat Desertification and the Convention on Biological Diversity through the GEF, and request the GEF to facilitate SIDS' access to GEF financial and technical resources for addressing land degradation. SIDS request:

- the international community to assist SIDS in creating an enabling environment for agricultural intensification and diversification, remove production constraints, and enhance food processing, marketing, and quality;
- practical support from the UN system to enhance efficient and sustainable agricultural production and ensure food security, and recommend the prioritization by SIDS ministers of agriculture of actions for enhanced contribution of agriculture, forestry and fisheries to SIDS' sustainable development policies;
- the international community to assist SIDS to: facilitate legislation implementing sustainable logging and replanting, increase stakeholder participation regarding forest resources, safeguard rights of resources owners, develop and strengthen partnerships for sustainable forest management, and develop and implement action plans to reduce deforestation and promote sustainable forest management; and



- international assistance to build SIDS legislative and negotiating capacity regarding mineral sector projects and to: establish fair and transparent compensation schemes for natural resources loss due to mining in both monetary and non-monetary terms, legislate and manage national mineral policy frameworks and environmental management plans, facilitate institutional capacity to address mining issues, and develop regional mineral databases and assess and evaluate mineral and aggregate resources.

**ENERGY RESOURCES:** This section recognizes the important role of energy resources in supporting the sustainable development of SIDS. Among the actions outlined, SIDS call on the international community to support the development of comprehensive assessments of energy resources and current and future energy use, and, with the support of regional development banks, to assist SIDS in the identification, development and implementation of affordable and adaptable renewable energy technologies. SIDS also call for support from the international community to implement the JPOI target to strengthen ongoing and new efforts on energy supply and services by 2004, support SIDS-SIDS cooperation, and significant strengthening the UN Renewable Energy Fund.

**TOURISM RESOURCES:** This section recognizes the important role of tourism in contributing to the economic growth in SIDS and notes the need to find a balance between tourism development and that of other economic sectors. SIDS call on regional and international tourism organizations to provide resources to: ensure that tourism development and social and environmental management are mutually supportive; facilitate the design and/or refinement of guidelines and best practices; and develop and implement sustainable tourism development plans.

**BIODIVERSITY RESOURCES:** This section notes that many SIDS have ratified the CBD and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. SIDS call for financial and technical support through the GEF as well as new and predictable sources of funding such as the establishment of National Biodiversity Trust Funds. Among other actions, SIDS also request that the international community assist SIDS in:

- building effective partnerships;
- addressing island biodiversity under the CBD;
- ensuring tourism guidelines take into account SIDS-specific cultural identities;
- supporting the implementation of a strong Programme of Work on Protected areas;
- controlling pathways for potential alien invasive species in SIDS;
- promoting fair and equitable use of genetic resources;
- developing capacity to promote SIDS-SIDS cooperation regarding biodiversity resources;
- establishing regulations to prevent and discourage bio-piracy;
- developing research facilities in biodiversity at the national and regional levels in SIDS; and
- supporting the development and implementation of national biosafety frameworks.

**TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS:** This section recognizes that transport and communications issues have diverged since the adoption of the BPOA and considers these issues sepa-

ately. It discusses the situation of SIDS with regard to telecommunications liberalization, improvement of international and domestic transport facilities and services, information and communication technologies (ICT) access and participation in regional transportation arrangements. SIDS call on their development partners to provide financial and technical support for the management of airports and ports in SIDS, including in meeting security requirements.

International and regional organizations are requested to support improved land and sea transport policies for SIDS. Additionally, the international community, in particular the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), UNESCO, and other organizations, are directed to help bridge the digital divide, provide access to ICT, assist with skills development, and maintain access to low-technology communication solutions. There is also a call for SIDS to further liberalize their telecommunications sectors, which will require appropriate and adequate national communications regulatory frameworks.

**SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY:** This section recognizes the crucial role science and technology play in sustainable development and the support still needed by some SIDS in this area. SIDS recognize the need to strengthen and further develop SIDS-SIDS cooperation and call on DESA to complete the operationalization of the SIDS Roster of Experts. SIDS also request that SIDSnet be adequately funded. SIDS call on the international community to increase support for regional organizations to promote science and technology in SIDS to reduce environmental risk and achieve sustainable development; and call on the UN Commission on Science and Technology for Development to support research, and UNESCO and other UN agencies to support the implementation of the above activities.

**GRADUATION OF SIDS LDCS:** This section expresses deep concern over issues regarding the graduation of LDC SIDS from LDC status and the premature graduation of other SIDS from access to concessionary resources from institutions. SIDS agree that graduation from LDC status should not be contemplated unless sustainable socioeconomic progress is appropriately demonstrated and that the policy and process for a smooth transition has been accepted. It underlines that all discussions on future graduations should be held in abeyance.

**TRADE: GLOBALIZATION AND TRADE LIBERALIZATION:** This section outlines the difficulties SIDS face due to their size, persistent structural disadvantages and vulnerabilities and calls for full and effective participation by SIDS in the WTO negotiations. SIDS request, *inter alia*:

- simplification and acceleration of SIDS accession procedures to the WTO;
- adoption of WTO procedures allowing SIDS smooth transitions from LDC status;
- adoption by the WTO and other international organizations of an integrated framework of technical assistance and cooperation for trade development in SIDS;
- completion of the WTO's Work Programme on Small Economies to address the concerns of SIDS;
- recognition by the WTO of non-reciprocal preferences for SIDS;
- establishment of special long-term financial mechanisms to



facilitate the adjustment of SIDS to the post-Uruguay Round trading environment;

- recognition by the WTO to maintain subsidy measures by SIDS; and
- greater attention to the environmental dimensions of trade and continued examination of the trade implications of MEAs.

**SUSTAINABLE CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:** This section recognizes that SIDS need support for capacity development in relation to policy and strategy formulation and implementation. In this regard, SIDS call on development partners, the UN system, in particular UNDP and UNEP to build: capacity to monitor the state of environment; core competencies to assist stakeholders in delivering sustainable development programmes; and the skills base and techniques for use in decision making. SIDS also call on the international community to provide technological, institutional, physical and financial resources and to support SIDS in establishing national capacity development coordination mechanisms and centers of excellence for training and applied research. Regarding access to education for sustainable development, SIDS note the need to promote: comprehensive universal education, with a major emphasis on reducing illiteracy; and technical and vocational education.

**SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION:** This section notes the JPOI's call for the development of a 10-year framework on sustainable consumption and production, particularly the need to make progress in support of regional and national initiatives. In this regard, SIDS call for, *inter alia*: international cooperation to assist in the development of appropriate mechanisms to address the challenges associated with the design and implementation of regional and national strategies.

**NATIONAL ENABLING ENVIRONMENTS:** This section recommends that the international community support SIDS' efforts to strengthen their enabling environments, including:

- formulating and implementing national sustainable development strategies by 2005;
- developing appropriate national targets and indicators for sustainable development to meet global and regional requirements;
- improving legislative, administrative and institutional structures;
- creating and empowering sustainable development task forces;
- involving youth in sustainable island living;
- developing integrated planning systems; and
- processing and rationalizing legislation that affects sustainable development at the national level.

**HEALTH:** This section addresses the need to strengthen SIDS-SIDS cooperation and the creation of new programmes on communicable and non-communicable diseases that have a significant impact on the health of SIDS communities. SIDS recommend that the international community support the control of diseases in such ways as:

- ensuring SIDS needs are addressed in existing and new programmes on HIV/AIDS, malaria, dengue and non-communicable diseases;
- enhancing access to effective pharmaceutical drugs at affordable prices;

- promoting active implementation of effective prevention programmes in areas such as immunization, mental health and environmental health;
- developing and implementing effective surveillance initiatives at the national and regional level;
- facilitating early information sharing on outbreaks;
- preparing countries to respond rapidly and effectively to outbreaks and strengthening of response capacity and identification of resources; and
- developing and implementing modern, flexible national public health legislation.

**KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND INFORMATION FOR DECISION MAKING:** This section recognizes the opportunities afforded by ICT for SIDS to overcome limitations of isolation and remoteness. SIDS call on the international community to support them to improve knowledge management and information through a series of actions, including:

- identifying and addressing gaps in data and characterization of information;
- developing databases, vulnerability indexes, Geographic Information Systems and other information systems;
- establishing national and regional information database centers;
- expanding existing partnerships in this area;
- establishing a financial mechanism to implement the World Summit on the Information Society Digital Solidarity Agenda in SIDS;
- addressing issues of cyber-security in SIDS;
- helping SIDS to establish land-use databases;
- introducing capacity-building exercises at interested SIDS regional tertiary level institutions; and
- considering supporting the establishment of a task force to elaborate a resilience index.

**CULTURE:** This section recognizes the importance of the cultural identity of people in advancing sustainable development and the need to develop cultural industries and initiatives. SIDS call on the international community to:

- assist SIDS to develop and implement national cultural policies and legal frameworks;
- assist SIDS to protect their cultural heritage;
- assist SIDS to improve institutional capacity for marketing of cultural products and protect intellectual property; and
- make funding available to small and medium enterprises.

**IMPLEMENTATION:** This section identifies several actions, among others, as critical for the further implementation of the BPOA:

- collaborating between SIDS tertiary institutions for capacity building and education, and standards setting for sustainable development in SIDS;
- securing special status for SIDS as a group in international institutions and agreements, attaining different treatments by multilateral institutions;
- enhancing generation and dissemination of information to support implementation of sustainable development, including through increased international support for a restructured SIDSnet;
- raising public awareness of sustainable development and facil-



itating the participation of civil society in all sustainable development initiatives at the national level;

- requesting relevant UN agencies and intergovernmental organizations to assist in the review of project proposals tabled by SIDS at the 1999 SIDS-Donor Meeting, and securing means of financing viable projects;
- developing SIDS-SIDS cooperation to explore insurance and reinsurance options for risk management and disaster recovery;
- supporting SIDS capacity and institutional building for mobilization of resources for sustainable development; and
- assisting SIDS in developing policies and capacity to ensure that foreign investment is in line with sustainable development.

**ACCESS TO FINANCIAL RESOURCES:** This section recognizes that SIDS need assistance to fulfill their international obligations and that:

- SIDS' access to international capital markets should be facilitated;
- developed countries must honor their ODA commitment to contribute 0.7% of their GNP to ODA;
- substantial increases in ODA are needed if SIDS are to achieve their internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs;
- specialized trust funds must be established regarding, *inter alia*, energy investment and capacity development;
- special SIDS-specific debt reduction criteria must be established by multilateral financial institutions; and
- innovative financing mechanisms such as debt swaps, the Clean Development Mechanism, and micro-financing must be used.

**MONITORING AND EVALUATION:** This section states that monitoring and evaluation infrastructure must be built into sustainable development strategies and carried out against national targets. In this regard, SIDS propose the following means for achieving these ends: enhanced international coordination related to SIDS through the UN, donor support, and reduced reporting burdens on SIDS; monitoring and periodic reporting on indicators on SIDS; strengthening of regional SIDS institutions for monitoring and coordination; and periodic gender analysis on and gender impact assessments of the BPOA and its implementation.

### A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE INTER-REGIONAL MEETING

The unique and special case of SIDS has been a prominent feature of the international sustainable development agenda for over 10 years. While the Barbados Programme of Action (BPOA) is recognized as the blueprint for sustainable development in SIDS, its implementation has not been as successful as many had hoped and many new issues have emerged that affect the development prospects of SIDS. In fact, the regional preparatory meetings, held in advance of the Inter-regional Meeting, confirmed that over the last 10 years the vulnerability of SIDS across the three pillars of sustainable development has increased, and that international support, particularly finance and the need for special and preferential trade treatment, has not met expectations.

The Bahamas meeting provided opportunities for: a “frank” and “open” exchange of views among SIDS; consideration of the recommendations emanating from the regional preparatory meetings; and the adoption of a common AOSIS position, which includes the Nassau Declaration and the AOSIS Strategy Paper. The outcomes will provide the basis for negotiations in New York and Mauritius.

As participants left the Bahamas and began contemplating the next round of negotiations, the question in the minds of many delegates and observers was unanimous: has the Bahamas meeting produced an outcome that can achieve international consensus and renew the political commitment for the further implementation of the BPOA?

This analysis looks at the achievements of the first phase of the negotiations on the further implementation of the BPOA and identifies the main issues that are likely to dominate the Mauritius agenda.

### FORGING CONSENSUS, FACILITATING IMPLEMENTATION

Providing a rare opportunity for SIDS from all regions to meet, discuss and exchange views on issues of common concern, the Bahamas was an important occasion for exchanging information, strengthening ties, and building consensus among SIDS. This effort to “get everyone on the same page” was facilitated by the use of panel discussions focusing on new and emerging issues, implementing national strategies for sustainable development, enhancing competitiveness, cultural diversity, science and technology, and building resilience. Although some observers found that the panel discussions focused too much on presentations and too little on interactive discussions, diminishing the engagement of ministers, others noted that the panels provided a sound basis for discussions in the lead-up to the International Meeting. By mid-week, however, it became apparent that further high-level engagement was necessary, and an informal ministerial consultation was held to allow ministers and heads of delegation to have frank exchange of views to be applied in the drafting of the meeting’s outcome documents.

One innovation of the Bahamas meeting was the joint initiative by UNDP and the Smithsonian Institution to provide a daily programme of capacity-building workshops focusing on practical implementation issues, such as, creating effective partnerships, project implementation, microfinance, and capacity building to meet the MDGs. The benefits of the workshops, unlike the Plenary discussions, were described by several participants as addressing the “remedies” needed by many SIDS by facilitating the learning process of implementation on-the-ground.

### SMALL ISLANDS: BIG ISSUES

Delegates were unanimous in the view that the International Meeting in Mauritius presents a historic opportunity for SIDS and the international community to meet, discuss, and agree on the future of SIDS. Within this context, the Bahamas meeting succeeded in consolidating the view that Mauritius must produce a set of focused and action-orientated outcomes that address new and emerging challenges, and that the results should be based on a clear set of priorities that can and will be implemented. In addition delegates recognized the need to inspire international action and generate more political will in support of SIDS.



There was agreement that a focus on implementation and realistic and practical priority setting were the keys to the new strategy. Despite “rumblings” that the BPOA has not been as successful as many had once hoped, delegates agreed to continue to focus on the BPOA, as well as various new and emerging issues.

While reaching agreement on environmental priorities identified in the BPOA was described by some delegates in the drafting group as a “straightforward” task, discussions on economic and social development-related issues requiring specific actions understandably occupied the majority of the drafting group’s attention. Among the issues discussed were those related to good governance, security, trade and investment, health, an enabling environment at the national and regional levels, sustainable capacity building, financial resources, partnerships, information for decision making, education for sustainable development, and information and communications technology. In addition to these issues, the Secretary-General of the International Meeting identified four key issues that will dominate his lobbying efforts in moving the SIDS concerns to the forefront of the international development agenda: addressing the impact of HIV/AIDS; how best to use information and communications technology to SIDS’ advantage; trade preferences and market access; and the impact of the “post-September 11” security threat on SIDS.

During the negotiations on the AOSIS Strategy, issues concerning trade and globalization dominated the agenda. A key issue for AOSIS is the need for special and preferential treatment under the WTO. Previous attempts by AOSIS to lobby for such treatment, during the WSSD in particular, have not been met with favorable responses by the international community and other developing countries. Discussions in the Bahamas provided SIDS with an opportunity to state their case to the international community and to the WTO. SIDS believe that without differentiated treatment, their ability to access the benefits of globalization and be fully integrated into the global economy will be limited and their marginalization and vulnerability will be exacerbated. The AOSIS Strategy therefore identifies a series of actions for the international community and the multilateral trade regime to consider, which could result in meaningful measures to assist SIDS.

Another issue likely to dominate the New York meetings and other informal consultations that are likely to be held in the run-up to Mauritius will be those regarding institutional mechanisms at the global level, including follow-up within the UN system. First, while not part of the official agenda, Mauritius is likely to conclude with a strengthened AOSIS, including the adoption of an institutional charter, which, it is hoped will consolidate the role of AOSIS as the leading advocate for the special case of SIDS in the international community.

The second issue, and one on which several delegates expressed strong views, is the need to increase the capacity and financial stability of the SIDS Unit, currently based in DESA. For many delegations, an important outcome for SIDS will be the restructuring of the Unit to respond to the challenges of implementing the Mauritius outcomes, with some delegates already observing that a strong and organized Secretariat is a crucial element in facilitating the further implementation of the BPOA. However, the issue of coordination with other UN bodies, in particular the Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked

Developing Countries and SIDS, received minimal attention in Bahamas but is likely to generate further debate, particularly as LDC SIDS, draw more attention to the controversial issue of their graduation and transition from LDC status, in particular the application of the economic and environmental vulnerability indices used to determine LDC status.

### **MANY ISLANDS: ONE VOICE**

While these issues were addressed in the open, the other dynamic that surfaced mostly in closed-door discussions and corridor talks related to the differentiated nature of SIDS. Among the broader SIDS grouping, there is no homogeneous position on what criteria constitute SIDS. For example, States listed as SIDS range from States like Singapore that have benefited from trade liberalization, to States devastated by natural disasters such as Niue, to those that are territories, such as Guam and the Netherlands Antilles, and other States, such as Cyprus and Malta, which are in the process of joining the European Union.

Given the wide range of characteristics that make up the definition of SIDS, it was not a surprise that at certain times during the meeting, some SIDS were overheard “mumbling” in the corridors that it may be time to begin reviewing the specific criteria that allow countries to be classified as SIDS, and therefore benefit from the special case of SIDS in the eyes of the international community. However, in order to maintain SIDS unity and solidarity – clearly the most significant result of the Bahamas – some countries suggested that such issues should be left for consideration until after Mauritius, and that must not get in the way of AOSIS’s international bargaining strategy with other developing and donor countries.

While the Inter-regional Meeting was primarily for AOSIS member States, several donor countries were present as observers. The presence of these countries “drove home” the message that a key criterion for the successful outcome of the Mauritius meeting will be the solidification of the partnership between SIDS and the international donor community, which includes the delivery of adequate and timely financial resources for the implementation of the Mauritius outcomes. As one participant observed, it would be of little use to have a document if the support of the international community is not fully and enthusiastically behind it. In this regard, CSD-12 Chair Borge Brende’s opening statement highlighted the important role of the CSD as a platform for SIDS and the international community to address the special circumstances of sustainable development in SIDS.

Despite the differing characteristics that make up SIDS and the numerous obstacles they still have to face in achieving sustainable development, the meeting provided the platform for the three SIDS regions to forge a common consensus and display their unity and solidarity to each other’s concerns. In the words of the Secretary-General of the International Meeting, the Bahamas meeting demonstrated that “small islands” have “big potential.”

The meeting saw significant progress by completing the AOSIS Strategy, however, the negotiations on the Mauritius outcomes are far from complete. An underlying apprehension of many delegates in the Bahamas was the concern of sending an inconclusive AOSIS Strategy to New York for consideration by the G-77/China. While SIDS make up a significant component of the G-77/China, the rela-



tionship between SIDS and some members of the G-77/China cannot always be described as a "happy family," as is frequently witnessed during climate change negotiations.

While the AOSIS Strategy focuses clearly on what can be implemented and is not just a well-intentioned paper, the consultations to be held in New York are likely to see a difficult exchange of views that will test the unity of SIDS and the resolve and leadership of AOSIS to determine the next steps in the challenging path towards sustainable development at the national and regional levels, and the advancement of the special case of small island developing states within the international community.

## THINGS TO LOOK FOR BEFORE CSD-12

**PACIFIC ISLANDS REGIONAL OCEAN FORUM:** This forum will take place from 2-6 February 2004, in Suva, Fiji, and will bring together stakeholders from ocean-related sectors in the region to discuss and develop a Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Framework for Integrated Strategic Action. For more information, contact: Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Forum; tel: +679-337-9278; fax: +679-337-0146; e-mail: [oceanforum@spc.int](mailto:oceanforum@spc.int); Internet: <http://www.spc.int/piocean/forum/oceanforum.htm>

**SEVENTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY (CBD COP-7):** CBD COP-7 will meet from 9-20 February 2004, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. For more information, contact: CBD Secretariat; tel: +1-514-288-2220; fax: +1-514-288-6588; e-mail: [secretariat@biodiv.org](mailto:secretariat@biodiv.org); Internet: <http://www.biodiv.org/>

**2004 OCEAN RESEARCH CONFERENCE:** This conference, cosponsored by American Society of Limnology and Oceanography and the Oceanography Society, will be held from 15-20 February 2004, in Honolulu, Hawaii, US. For more information, contact: Denise Breitburg; tel: +1-410-586-9711; fax: +1-410-586-9705; e-mail: [secretary@aslo.org](mailto:secretary@aslo.org); Internet: <http://www.aslo.org/forms/orc2004suggestions.html>

**FOURTH GLOBAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE ENERGY (GFSE-4):** GFSE-4 will be held from 18-20 February 2004, in Vienna, Austria, under the theme "Energy for Sustainable Development: Reconsidering the Role of Subsidies." For more information, contact: Irene Freudenschuss-Reichl; tel: +1-212-963-6890; fax: +1-212-963-7904; e-mail: [freudenschuss-reichl@un.org](mailto:freudenschuss-reichl@un.org); Internet: <http://www.gfse.at/>

**FIRST MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF PARTIES SERVING AS THE MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE CARTAGENA PROTOCOL ON BIOSAFETY:** The first meeting of the Conference of Parties serving as the meeting of Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety will be held from 23-27 February 2004, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. For more information, contact: CBD Secretariat; tel: +1-514-288-2220; fax: +1-514-288-6588; e-mail: [secretariat@biodiv.org](mailto:secretariat@biodiv.org); Internet: <http://www.biodiv.org/>

**MEETING OF THE WORLD TOURISM ORGANIZATION COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM:** This meeting will take place from 1-3 March 2004, in Chiang Mai, Thailand. For more information, contact:

World Tourism Organization; tel: +34-91-567-8100; fax: +34-91-571-3733; e-mail: [omt@world-tourism.org](mailto:omt@world-tourism.org); Internet: [http://www.world-tourism.org/frameset/frame\\_sustainable.html](http://www.world-tourism.org/frameset/frame_sustainable.html)

**INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON PARTNERSHIPS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:** This event will be held from 4-6 March 2004, at FAO Headquarters in Rome, Italy. Organized by the Italian Ministry for the Environment and Territory in cooperation with the UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), this meeting will seek to enhance the contribution of partnerships towards the implementation of sustainable development goals and objectives. The Forum's outcome will be presented to CSD-12. For more information, contact: Gloria Visconti, Ministry for the Environment and Territory; tel: +39-06-5722-8121; fax: +39-06-5722-8180; e-mail:

[Visconti.Gloria@minambiente.it](mailto:Visconti.Gloria@minambiente.it); Internet: [http://www.minambiente.it/Sito/settori\\_azione/pia/docs/forum\\_sd\\_eng.pdf](http://www.minambiente.it/Sito/settori_azione/pia/docs/forum_sd_eng.pdf)

**WHITE WATER TO BLUE WATER PARTNERSHIP MEETING:** This meeting will be held from 21-27 March 2004, in Miami, Florida, US. Organized by the US National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), this meeting will bring together delegates from each of the 28 Wider Caribbean Region countries to address integrated watershed management, marine ecosystem-based management, sustainable tourism, and environmentally sound marine transportation. For more information, contact: NOAA, Office of International Affairs; tel: +1-202-482-6076; fax: +1-202-482-6000; e-mail: [ww2bw@noaa.gov](mailto:ww2bw@noaa.gov); Internet: <http://www.international.noaa.gov/ww2bw/meetings.html>

**EIGHTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE UNEP GOVERNING COUNCIL/FIFTH GLOBAL MINISTERIAL ENVIRONMENT FORUM:** This meeting will take place from 29-31 March 2004, in Jeju, Republic of Korea. For more information, contact: Beverly Miller, Secretary for the UNEP Governing Council; tel: +254-2-623431; fax: +254-2-623929; e-mail: [beverly.miller@unep.org](mailto:beverly.miller@unep.org); Internet: <http://www.unep.org>

**CSD ACTING AS THE PREPCOM FOR THE INTERNATIONAL MEETING TO REVIEW THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BPOA FOR THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF SIDS:** This preparatory meeting for the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the BPOA for the Sustainable Development of SIDS will be held from 14-16 April 2004, in New York, US. For more information, contact:

Diane Quarless, UN Division on Sustainable Development, UN SIDS Unit; tel: +1-212-963-4135; fax: +1-917-367-3391; e-mail: [Mauritius2004@sidsnet.org](mailto:Mauritius2004@sidsnet.org); Internet: <http://www.sidsnet.org>

**TWELFTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:** CSD-12 will meet from 19-30 April 2004, in New York. This will be a "Review Year" to evaluate progress made in implementing sustainable development goals and identifying obstacles and constraints on the thematic clusters of water, sanitation and human settlements. For more information, contact: UN Division for Sustainable Development; tel: +1-212-963-2803; fax: +1-212-963-4260; e-mail: [dspd@un.org](mailto:dspd@un.org); Internet: <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd12/csd12.htm>