

Statement by Ambassador Bhagwant S. Bishnoi
Deputy Permanent Representative on Small Islands Developing States at the
Preparatory Committee for the Third International Conference at the United
Nations on February 24-26, 2014

Distinguished Co-Chairs,

At the outset, allow me extend our warmest congratulations to you on your election for leading this important process. You can count on our fullest cooperation in the discharge of your responsibilities in the months ahead.

Co-Chairs,

India believes that special efforts are required to address the unique developmental challenges of the Small Island Developing States which are posed due to their special circumstances.

India is deeply sensitive to the challenges faced by the SIDS and shares their concerns regarding the threat posed by climate change to their survival.

Just as the promotion of sustainable development is a collective responsibility, reducing the vulnerability of SIDS and strengthening their resilience to emerging challenges including climate change is also an urgent issue that should be a common concern of the international community.

To this end, we are happy that the Third International Conference on SIDS is being organized in Apia, Samoa in September 2014.

The international community must seize the opportunity of the Third International Conference on SIDS for galvanizing the necessary political will and for redoubling the efforts to enhance international support to SIDS.

We are happy that the series of preparatory conferences held last year in Seychelles, Fiji and Barbados have helped assess the priorities, needs and emerging issues of importance to the SIDS and thus will lay the ground for an ambitious and comprehensive outcome of the Third International Conference on SIDS next year.

We were also happy to have joined others this morning in launching the International Year of SIDS-2014. We hope that this excellent initiative will be helpful for raising awareness about the special challenges faced by the SIDS and to promote ambitious and concrete actions, including through international, regional and sub-regional cooperation, for assisting the SIDS in their efforts to achieve sustainable development.

In the spirit of solidarity that guides South-South cooperation, India has for long partnered the development efforts of the SIDS by sharing its experience and expertise, as well as intellectual, financial and technological resources. We are keen to continue and further strengthen this partnership.

The contribution of Government of India of US\$ 250,000 for the organization of the SIDS Conference and its preparatory meetings is in line with the historical and time-tested bonds of fraternity that India shares with all SIDS and a mark of our continued commitment to assist with their sustainable development.

As our brothers and sisters from the SIDS come together with the international community in Samoa to craft a new chapter in strengthened international cooperation to address their special challenges, they will find in India a ready partner and a firm supporter to their cause.

India looks forward to working closely with all our SIDS partners in making the Third International Conference on SIDS a great success.

Thank you.

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