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**SUBREGIONAL PREPARATIONS FOR THE
2004 INTERNATIONAL MEETING THAT WILL UNDERTAKE A
FULL AND COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
THE SIDS POA TO ENSURE THE MOST EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION
OF CARIBBEAN SIDS**

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Antecedents to SIDS + 10

In Part XV (*Implementation Monitoring and Review*), of the Programme of Action of Small Island Developing States (SIDS POA), which was adopted at the United Nations Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (UNGCSIDS), 26 April- 6 May 1994, in its paragraph 117, it is provided that the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) should, *inter alia*:

Carry out an initial review of the progress achieved and steps taken to implement the Programme of Action, to be undertaken by the Commission on Sustainable Development in 1996 in accordance with its Multi-Year Thematic Programme of Work. Furthermore, in 1997, when the Commission will carry out the overall review of Agenda 21 with a view to preparing for the 1997 special session of the General Assembly, the Commission should recommend specific modalities for the full review of the Programme of Action in 1999. That full review would include the question of the convening of a second global conference in accordance with chapter 17, Section G of Agenda 21.

At the twenty-second special session which convened on 27-28 September 1999 to undertake a “review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States”, it was recommended, *inter alia*, that:

“Although periodic reviews of certain aspects of the Programme of Action are envisaged within the context of the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development, a full and comprehensive review of these decisions and the implementation of the Programme of Action would be useful and required in 2004.”

In the *Plan of Implementation* adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), which convened in Johannesburg, South Africa, over the period, 26 August-4 September 2002, the relevant recommendation was as follows:

“Undertake a full and comprehensive review of the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States in 2004, in accordance with the provisions set forth in General Assembly resolution S-22/2, and in this context requests the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session to consider convening an international meeting for the sustainable development of small island developing States.”

In its resolution, A/RES/57/262 (*Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States*), the General Assembly, *inter alia*:

Further decides to convene an international meeting in 2004, which will include a high-level segment, to undertake a full and comprehensive review of the implementation of the Programme of Action, as called for in the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, and welcomes the offer of the Government of Mauritius to host the international meeting;

Date of the international meeting

Indications are that the international meeting will convene in August- September 2004.

Objectives of the international meeting

According to General Assembly resolution A/RES/57/262, quoted above, the objectives of the meeting are:

- To seek a renewed political commitment by all countries; and
- Identification of practical and pragmatic actions for the further implementation of the POA, *inter alia*, through the mobilization of resources and assistance for small island developing States.

The international preparatory process

The resolution adopted by the General Assembly envisages:

- Regional preparatory meetings of SIDS in the African, Caribbean and Pacific regions. The regional preparatory meetings will be held in August 2003;¹
- An interregional preparatory meeting for all SIDS, to undertake the review of the POA at the national, subregional and regional levels and to identify and develop input for the review that is specific to SIDS while maximizing coherence and complementarity with respect to other preparatory work;
- SIDS will be requested by the Department for Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) to prepare national assessments of the implementation of the SIDS POA, on the basis of specified guidelines. It is envisaged that the national assessments will be carried out through national consultations and with the participation of all national stakeholders.

¹ Source: Correspondence from DESA, dated 20 March, 2003

- The CSD will act as the Preparatory Committee for SIDS + 10 and shall undertake the comprehensive review of the Programme of Action and consider and finalize the plan for its implementation.
- An *Inter-Agency Task Force Meeting on the 10-Year Review of the Barbados Programme of Action* is scheduled to convene during the second week of CSD-11

Towards a Caribbean subregional preparatory process

- With regional preparatory meetings scheduled to convene in August, 2003, the subregion has some four months to effectively prepare for SIDS + 10;
- The March 2003 Joint Meeting of Caribbean SIDS and the IACG might be regarded as the first formal step in the process. Other steps would include CSD-11 which convenes, 28 April – 9 May 2003, as well as the Interregional meeting of SIDS whose dates are yet to be determined;
- The final phase of the subregional process will be the convening of the Second Caribbean Ministerial Meeting on the implementation of the SIDS POA along the lines of its 1997 predecessor. This meeting will provide overall political direction to the participation of Caribbean SIDS in the wider preparatory process leading to SIDS + 10. In order for the subregion to ensure its effective participation in this wider preparatory process, this meeting should convene by July 2003;
- The determination of a definitive date for the Second Caribbean Ministerial Meeting is therefore a matter of considerable urgency;
- In the interim, comprehensive national and subregional reviews of the implementation experience of Caribbean SIDS with the SIDS POA and related international decisions should be compiled. Such reviews will inform all aspects of Caribbean participation;
- Questionnaires already circulated to member countries and agencies were conceived and designed with those reviews in mind;
- The national and subregional reviews should highlight, inter alia, achievements, constraints and the actions needed at all levels, for effective and sustained implementation of the POA, including the need on the part of the international community to honour the commitments made at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED);
- DESA and the Global Environment Fund (GEF), among other agencies, have been requested by the General Assembly to put in place modalities at the international level that will facilitate the regional, as well as the international meeting;

- The Caribbean Model remains the mechanism of choice for the subregional preparatory process and also for effective participation in the proposed interregional preparatory meeting;
- Within the subregion, recourse might be had to the allocation of topics or of subject areas to given delegations. The issue might simply be one of effectively orchestrating the subregion's participation in the relevant meetings to maximum effect;
- Modalities need to be put in place/reactivated for interregional coordination, including coordination with the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS).

Suggested strategic inputs into the Interregional Meeting and SIDS + 10

Consideration might be given to the incorporation of the following strategic elements into the subregional position paper for presentation to the interregional meeting and to SIDS + 10:

- The identification of priority areas of concern to Caribbean SIDS;
- The challenges encountered in the implementation process and the recommendation of measures to overcome these;
- The identification of new and emerging issues;
- The need to establish benchmarks and other means of measuring progress in the implementation of the SIDS POA;
- The urgency of developing indicators of sustainable development;
- The urgency of the provision of assistance towards the development of sustainable development strategies and in the integration of the economic, social and environmental components of action towards sustainable development;
- The urgent need to finalize economic, social and environmental vulnerability indices and also a composite vulnerability index and to have these operationalised and entrenched as tools to be utilized by the international donor agencies and by the international community in general, in the development of cooperation with SIDS;
- The urgency of the honouring the commitments made by the international community at UNCED².

² Significantly, resolution A/C.2/57/L.64, states inter alia: Emphasizing the continuing need for the financing of projects that were presented ...at the meeting of representatives of donor countries and small island developing States, held in New York from 24-26 February 1999, as well as the partnership initiatives presented by small island developing States and their organizations during the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

Participation of associate members of CDCC

In resolution A/C.2/57/L.64, the General Assembly, *inter alia*:

Also calls for the participation of associate members of regional commissions in the comprehensive review...and in the preparatory process thereof in the same capacity as observer that held for their participation in the 1994 Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and in the 1999 special session of the General Assembly to review the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.

The Joint Meeting is invited to consider the foregoing and to formulate recommendations with respect to:

1. The process to be followed for overall subregional preparations for SIDS + 10;
2. The content of the submissions to be presented by the Caribbean subregion to the proposed inter-regional meeting and to SIDS + 10.