



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MS. JANICE MILLER, DIRECTOR, ECONOMIC AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT, MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND FOREIGN TRADE OF JAMAICA, AT SIDS DAY: THEMATIC CLUSTER FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION CYCLE 2010-2011 -- REVIEW SESSION, DURING THE 18TH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (New York, 10 May 2010)

Mr. Chairman,

1. I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. We thank the Secretary-General for the comprehensive reports E/CN.17/2010/9 and E/CN.17/2010/14 which have provided a good basis for our discussions here today.

2. The Commission on Sustainable Development serves as the primary intergovernmental body responsible for the implementation of and follow-up to the commitments related to Small Island Developing States (SIDS), including those contained in the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy, the blueprint that provides the framework for the sustainable development of SIDS.

3. The G77 therefore attaches great importance to the work of the Commission and is pleased to have this opportunity to highlight issues of critical concern to SIDS in the thematic cluster under consideration i.e. transport, waste management, chemicals, mining and sustainable consumption and production patterns.

Mr. Chairman,

4. SIDS' capacity to address their development objectives in the current thematic cluster, must be viewed against the backdrop of the myriad, multidimensional challenges being confronted in various fronts which have essentially depleted their already limited capacities to pursue their overall development agenda.

5. Climate change is by far, the gravest threat to the territorial existence of these countries described in the Secretary-General's report as among the world's "hotspots" in terms of sustainable development. Coastal erosion, coral bleaching, rising temperatures and sea-level rise all pose serious threat to the health and ultimate survival of SIDS. To further compound our situation, the global financial and economic crisis has severely affected all sectors of their fragile economies which are largely tourism- and commodity-dependent.

6. While these challenges have undoubtedly affected all developing countries in various forms, the impacts are amplified in SIDS given their small size and vulnerability to external shocks and natural disasters.

Mr. Chairman,

7. Let me briefly highlight a few issues relating to the thematic cluster:

8. Transport: With poorly developed road networks and lack of road networks as well as low transport volumes and geographical remoteness in the case of most SIDS, the cost of transportation among has proved exorbitant, thus constraining the provision of reliable and efficient

air, land and maritime transport services.

9. Waste management and chemicals: While significant progress has been recorded in many SIDS in relation to waste management, several SIDS are facing major challenges in this regard. These challenges must be addressed as a matter of urgency as this has major implications for the health and sustenance of marine areas, health, food supplies and tourism. Similarly, the trans-boundary movement of hazardous wastes and chemicals also affect the marine ecosystems of SIDS given that their economic and environmental sustainability and livelihoods are intrinsically linked with the sea.

10. Mining: Mining is an important sector in very few SIDS, making significant contributions to employment generation, rural development and livelihoods. Developing this sector is not without its drawbacks: environmental degradation, soil erosion, pollution, displacement of communities and biodiversity loss are but a few. These of course have wide implications for their economies given their small size.

11. Sustainable consumption and production: Although the carbon footprints of SIDS are fairly small in keeping with their small size, sustainable consumption and production remains an issue of growing importance in most of these countries notably in relation to renewable energy/energy diversification, climate change adaptation, ecosystem services and waste management/recycling.

12. In relation to some of the issues under the thematic cluster, in particular, transport and waste management/chemicals, the lack of financing is identified as a critical need for SIDS. Given the special and unique challenges, their heightened vulnerabilities and severely limited capacities, the national efforts of SIDS must be complemented by the international community. The developed partners must not pay lip service to their commitments to SIDS, particularly at this critical juncture.

13. It is our hope that the High-level review of the MSI will inspire a renewed sense of urgency to fulfill longstanding commitments to assist SIDS.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.