



# **Republic of the Marshall Islands**

STATEMENT BY H.E. PRESIDENT KESSAI H. NOTE

TO THE INTERNATIONAL MEETING ON THE TENTH YEAR  
REVIEW OF THE BPOA, REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS

13 JANUARY 2005

(CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY)

Mr. President,  
Mr. Secretary General,  
Excellencies and Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen

It is my great honor to address the International Meeting on behalf of the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

Mr. President,

Let me begin by thanking the people and government of Mauritius for the warm hospitality extended to me and my delegation.

I extend my sincere congratulations to you, on your election as the President to the International Meeting. I am confident that under your able leadership, we will have a productive and successful meeting. Please, be assured, my delegation will continue to give our full support.

Mr. President,

On behalf of the people and government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, I wish to express our condolences to the victims and families who suffered severely as a result of the recent catastrophic tsunami in the Indian Ocean. Our hearts and prayers go out to them.

Mr. President,

I recall the first International Meeting in Bridgetown, Barbados in 1994, which adopted the Plan of Action for SIDS on sustainable development. The BPOA was the first international effort to show how Agenda 21 could be translated into action; and it remains today as the blue print of our sustainable development priorities. The BPOA among other instruments means that there is international acceptance and recognition of the 'special case of small islands'. It is entirely imperative then that continued work is dedicated to a group of front-line vulnerable countries — the Small Island Developing States.

The International Meeting here marks about 10 years since then — a decade of national focus on sustainable development and building relations and partnerships with the international community for this crucial cause. I commend the good work and dedication given over the course of 10 years to ensure the Ten Year Review of the BPOA takes place. This displays the political will and great commitment of our small islands and the international community towards sustainable development.

It also demonstrates the political direction provided by Agenda 21 and the BPOA for the sustainable development of SIDS, and their subsequent reviews, which have been used as the benchmark for measuring progress and achievements thus far.

This review also highlights the significance of other issues very central to the heart of sustainable development not only to my Country, but also, to all Small Island Developing States. This would be the anniversary of the entry into force of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the

upcoming entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol in February this year. The Marshall Islands reiterates its' call to those States who have not ratified the Kyoto Protocol to do so without further delay and take further steps to fully implement the UNFCCC and the Protocol. Without such global actions to mitigate climate change and arrest sea level rise, our national efforts at sustainable development will be rendered meaningless, and my people will become environmental refugees.

Mr. President,

My Country continues to take actions on work towards achieving our own sustainable development at the national level guided by the principles of the BPOA. However, over the past decade, we have faced many challenges that have seriously hindered the implementation of the BPOA. For example, our vulnerabilities to climate change have greatly increased while our ability to cope has not kept pace. Capacity building continues to be an important crosscutting issue. And as forwarded to the CSD12, new and emerging issues constrain our efforts to implement the BPOA and will continue to do so, if not effectively addressed.

Thus the full implementation of the BPOA requires the strengthening of the partnership between SIDS and the international community and the fulfillment of the commitments made by the international community to assist SIDS with their national efforts towards sustainable development.

In this regard, we are here now to finalize the work on the draft Strategy for the further implementation of the Plan of Action and include those crosscutting issues of crucial importance to us. Therefore, since we are now at an opportune time, we hope these issues will be given adequate attention in the outcome document.

Mr. President,

I understand that the draft strategy is close to being finalized. We understand also crucial issues for SIDS such as climate change needed serious resolutions and am confident that this International Meeting will find consensus to assist SIDS in this review.

Therefore, let me reiterate our hope that the discussions here will produce the necessary impetus required to achieve the sustainable development of SIDS and continue to seek the understanding and support of our international partners in ensuring that this meeting effectively addresses those issues that have constrained implementation. The final document needs to be action oriented and lead to concrete implementable results. With this said, the Marshall Islands stands ready to take the next steps that will be laid out in the outcome documents as part of our work to achieve our sustainable development.

Finally, Mr. President,

Let me express my deep appreciation to the international community for their contributions to assist in making the Mauritius International Meeting possible.

Thank you very much.