

**Statement delivered by
Dr. Roland Antonius
representative of the Netherlands Antilles
on occasion of the
International Meeting to review Implementation of the Programme of
Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Islands Developing
States
Mauritius, January 14, 2005**

Mr. President
Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan
Other Excellencies
Ladies and gentlemen

First of all, on behalf of the government of the Netherlands Antilles and on behalf of the representative of the ~~island~~ of Aruba, allow me to express our deepest sympathy with the peoples who so much have suffered from the recent tsunami catastrophe.

Secondly, I would like to thank the government and people of the beautiful island of Mauritius for their most gracious hospitality and for their tremendous efforts made to successfully organize this important SIDS meeting in Mauritius.

Mr. President, in the Netherlands Antilles we are engaged in a continuous process of implementation of relevant recommendations laid down in the Barbados Plan of Action and other relevant documents of action forwarded by the international community for the realization of sustainable development.

It is our conviction that with the active support of the international community and their respective institutions, the development of small island states will be properly attended to.

Mr. President,

It is time that the world profoundly realizes that we all live on one and the same planet, for which we all are equally responsible. The world is intrinsically interrelated, both naturally and socially. Consequently, there is no room for fragmentation and compartmentalization of efforts. It is to our credit if we would hermetically close ranks for the effective protection and defense of our global habitat against both natural and manmade threats.

In this light it is paramount that we as inhabitants of this planet keep meeting and discussing like we have been doing during these days within the framework of SIDS. It is out of these continuous exchanges of thoughts, experiences and commitment that a new world culture of relating to each other, of global togetherness, will be forged.

Mr. President,

The sustainable development of small islands developing states not only serves the well-being of its members, but it also is a condition sine qua non for the sustainability of the world as a whole.

I thank you.