

**STATEMENT BY HON. STEPHEN KALONZO MUSYOKA, EGH,
MP, MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL
RESOURCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA, DURING THE
INTERNATIONAL MEETING ON THE SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES,
PORT LOUIS, MAURITIUS, 10TH - 14TH JANUARY 2005**

**Mr. President,
Distinguished Heads of State and Governments,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

First and foremost, let me, on behalf of the Government and People of Kenya, express our sincere condolences to all countries that were affected by the recent tidal wave — Tsunami, that caused massive death, destruction of property and untold suffering to millions of people. We share the grief and wish quick recovery to those affected by this traumatic experience.

May I also take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the Government and the Peoples of Mauritius for the warm hospitality and brotherly welcome that has been extended to me and the entire Kenyan delegation since its arrival in this beautiful Island.

Kenya is happy to have been invited to participate at this international meeting that has been convened to undertake a full and comprehensive review of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, as called for in the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

Mr. **President,**

I am convinced that under your able chairmanship, this meeting will provide renewed commitment and offer practical and pragmatic actions for further **implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS**. I further believe that the meeting will provide a workable and realistic way forward through mobilization of resources including assistance for capacity building and transfer of environmentally sound technologies.

Taking cognizance of deliberations and commitments made in the Barbados Plan of Action, I wish to note with concern the mixed and varied levels of achievements attained across the SIDS over the last ten years. Some of the SIDS have made commendable progress in development, a number still lag behind. Just like in some other developing countries, majority of small Island Developing Countries have continued to be engulfed in extreme poverty, conflicts, adverse climatic changes, prevalence of diseases including HIV/AIDS,

environmental degradation and decline in economic performances, thus negatively impacting on the welfare of their populations. To change these negative trends requires urgent, swift and decisive measures by the SIDS themselves and the international community.

Mr. President,

Talking of conflicts, Kenya was privileged to host the Sudan peace process and recently witnessed the signing of the landmark peace accord between the Sudanese Government and the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Army/Movement. The signing of the peace accord has set the stage to end the over twenty years of civil war that has caused loss of innocent lives, destruction of property and environmental degradation, thus paving way to lasting peace and national reconstruction. Similarly, I wish to inform this meeting that after over fourteen years of instability and lack of Government in Somalia, we have been able to facilitate the formation of a Government of national unity in Somalia. I therefore wish to take this opportunity to thank the international community for their moral, financial and logistical support in these endeavours.

Lack of adequate resources has been one of the major impediments to the realization of sufficient progress in the implementation of the Barbados Plan of Action. Some of the reasons for lack of adequate resources may be attributed to the limited domestic resource base in

the small Island Developing Countries and the overall net decline in a range of international resource flows to the SIDS. Whereas international resource flows are to a large extent determined by the shifting interests by the development partners and the political mood in the developing countries, these do not warrant ignoring the vulnerable and most deserving small island states given the mutual and collective responsibility to one another.

Mr. President,

Challenges facing the SIDS include the following:-

- Climate change and its adverse consequences (sea level rise beach erosion and coastal change; loss of biodiversity, etc);
- Impacts of natural disasters (volcanoes and earthquake activity; tropical cyclones, hurricanes and storms etc);
- High cost of energy which has been a major obstacle to the economic and social development; and
- Lack of adequate financial resources to implement sustainable development initiatives.
- Lack of effective early warning systems and disaster preparedness programmes

In the wake of the Tsunamis, Kenya was lucky to have received early warning of the impending disaster from the Seychelles authorities

which enabled us to warn our people along the Kenyan coastline in time. In spite of the timely warning we, nevertheless, lost some lives and property. As such, we support the idea of setting up an Indian Ocean early warning centre in the region.

The interplay of adverse factors is clearly underlined in Agenda 21 and the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. These continue to constrain the achievements in sustainable development. The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation reiterated the need for continued attention to be given to priority areas identified by these States as they are crucial to their sustainable development process.

Delegations from these States, among others, have stated their priority areas and requested to be supported in their efforts towards poverty eradication; further implementation of sustainable fisheries management; development of programmes on marine and coastal biodiversity and freshwater; assistance in dealing with climate change and the impacts of natural disasters.

Mr. President,

These issues are not new and the review of the Barbados Programme of Action has recognized the priorities highlighted above. There is a pressing need to renew the partnership commitments undertaken by

the international community and SIDS in the Programme of Action. There is also the need to support their development strategies so as to ensure the protection of their fragile environments.

Finally Mr. President, I urge the international community to rise to the occasion and provide resources and assistance that will help the SIDS to implement commitments agreed upon in Johannesburg and to build their capacities that can adequately address the challenges facing them.

THANK YOU.