



Statement

by

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and

**United Nations Under-Secretary-General and
High Representative**

at the

**Concluding Session of the International Meeting
to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action
for the Sustainable Development of
Small Island Developing States**

**Port Louis, Mauritius
14 January 2005**

President of the International Meeting, Prime Minister Bérenger,
His Excellency President of the General Assembly,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

Mr. President, I thank you for your very kind words. We have now come to the end of the International Meeting for the review of the Barbados Programme of Action for the sustainable development of Small Island Developing States.

We are privileged by the presence of United Nations General Assembly President His Excellency Mr. Jean Ping.

It was indeed a long journey that we undertook over the course of more than a year to reach Mauritius, to reach this point. From the Pacific to the Indian Ocean, from the Atlantic to the Caribbean --- Small Island Developing States, along with the rest of the international community, meticulously prepared for this International Meeting.

The results are before you --- The Mauritius Declaration and the Mauritius Strategy.

This International Meeting did indeed have a unique difference in that it already focused on issues of implementation of the Mauritius Strategy agreed to at this Meeting.

With the outcome documents now in our hands, we have to look forward --- towards the road to implementation. How we will accomplish this process is in the hands of all stakeholders --- the donor community, the multilateral financial institutions, civil society, private sector, regional organizations and, of course, the SIDS themselves.

In his address to the Alliance of Small Island States Summit on 12 January, the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan highlighted the role of the regional intergovernmental bodies, identifying the Caribbean Community, the Pacific Islands Forum and the Indian Ocean Commission in that regard. In the process of implementation, the UN system organizations would, of course, have the most critical role to play.

I believe we should begin with the outlining of a Roadmap for the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy. Such a Roadmap would serve as an overarching guideline. In the coming months, till the end of this year, there are several intergovernmental processes that would provide an opportunity to the AOSIS Members and SIDS to highlight the Mauritius Strategy. It is crucial that those intergovernmental processes take fully into account the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy. I have seven in mind to share with you.

1. The first is of course, next week, the Kobe World Conference on Disaster Reduction, as the President suggested.

2. Then the opportunity comes in February, through a possible resumed session of the UN General Assembly, to get the Mauritius Strategy endorsed by the General Assembly so that the document becomes internalized within the UN system and among the Member States. We believe that such internalization will provide us with an opportunity to involve the UN Resident Coordinators at the country level in the process of implementation of the Strategy.
3. Number three is the Commission on Sustainable Development, the body which has been recognized in the Strategy as the review body for its implementation. It is very important to set the upcoming session the way this review should be undertaken.
4. Fourth is the annual session of the UNDP executive board. I believe that an essential element of the implementation of the Strategy should be done at the country level. UNDP being the largest technical assistance provider should be involved in the process of mainstreaming the Mauritius Strategy in its work.
5. Then comes the South Summit in June this year in Qatar. We believe that as the Mauritius Strategy focuses on South-South and SIDS-SIDS cooperation' this will be a wonderful opportunity for the Strategy to be internalized within the Group of 77 and China.
6. Number six is the Millennium Summit Review to be held in September this year, as the President himself has mentioned. As the Millennium Declaration contains a self-standing paragraph on the concerns of SIDS, it is very important that the Review also takes into account the Mauritius Strategy.
7. Lastly, the World Trade Organization Ministerial Meeting in Hong Kong in December will be crucial to move ahead on the trade issues incorporated in the Mauritius Strategy.

In addition, I reiterate my continuing call for a dynamic system of monitoring. Monitoring should not conclude with simple stocktaking, but should be a process by which implementation loopholes, failures or slackness can be identified and corrective measures taken.

Mr. President,

you have characterized our outcome as “a resounding success” and I join you wholeheartedly in that.

You have rightly recognized the contribution of the participating delegations to this success.

I would pay rich tribute to the Chairman of the Main Committee, Ambassador Don MacKay of New Zealand for having guided the work of the Committee with such resounding success and in good time. Thank you Ambassador MacKay, both for your work here in Mauritius and as the facilitator of the informal consultations in New York.

Allow me Mr. President, at this point, to express my thanks to all those who were involved in preparing and conducting this International Meeting.

My deepest thanks go to you Mr. Prime Minister, Mr. President, and your government for the excellent arrangements made for this UN International Meeting and for the warm and most generous hospitality extended to all of us in this beautiful island nation of Mauritius. We will go back with fond memories of our stay here. On behalf of the United Nations and on my own behalf, let me express a very special word of deep appreciation to Minister Rajesh Bhagwan for all his support.

I would also like to thank the hundreds of people who provided various services for the efficient conduct of our meetings under the committed leadership of Suresh Seeballuck, Chairman of the National Organizing Committee. Seilendra Gokhool, the Managing Director of the State Investment Corporation and his team ensured that we had no problems at the conference centre. The facilities were well maintained throughout. The caterers provided great food and beverages. Transport was efficient. The hotels made our stay highly pleasant. Our very warm thanks go to all the young volunteers who have been working throughout the Conference Centre.

The United Nations played a critical role in preparing and conducting this International Meeting beginning with the first Planning Mission in January 2004 to this point of time. I recognize the efforts made by the departments and offices of the UN Secretariat for assisting the Mauritius authorities in the planning and layout of this conference centre and to make other arrangements during a period that extended over twelve months.

For such a major United Nations conference, the demands on the Host Country are always burdensome. A special word of thanks goes to Ambassador Koonjul, representing the Host Country, for all his collaboration and support and understanding, as we prepared for the conference. Our hosts, as you would have noticed throughout the conference, went out of their way to do and provide things beyond our expectations. I express our sincere thanks to one and all. You were simply wonderful!

I would like to specially thank Aase Smedler, UN Resident Coordinator and her staff for their help and assistance with regard to the United Nations system representation at this meeting. I would like to thank the UNDP in Mauritius for the management of the Free Port Conference Centre events and functions.

The UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs led by my good friend and colleague Under-Secretary-General Jose Antonio Ocampo, has been of great support. His team, in particular JoAnne DiSano, Manuel Dengo, who is the Executive Secretary of the International Meeting, Diane Quarless all played key roles in the success of the International Meeting. I thank them for their support throughout the process.

From the UN's Department of General Assembly and Conference Management, I thank Nikhil Seth, Secretary of the International Meeting, Vivian Lewis who played such an instrumental role during the planning process and here at the conference, and Jane Pittson who was involved in the preparations right from the first UN mission to Mauritius, and all the DGACM staff.

The team from DPI was most effectively led by Marie Heuzé and I thank her for being the spokesman of the International Meeting. Her team, along with François Coutu, was truly wonderful.

As you know, throughout the International Meeting, security was foolproof with Lt. Alphonso Jasper and his team, working closely with their Mauritian counterparts. The local police worked hand-in-hand with the UN. I thank them for carrying out their responsibilities flawlessly.

I thank UN Protocol led by Chief of Protocol, Aminata Djermakoye, and the Associate Chief of Protocol, Paulose Peter, for their support.

The UN Travel & Transportation Service, managed here at the International Meeting by Gary Trahan and Charmaine Sutherland, did a wonderful job despite the many late nights and early mornings during which they had to work to get us around in Mauritius from all parts of the world.

[The Office of Legal Affairs, represented by Ms. Daphna Shraga and her colleague, supported us with their advice.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my own team from the UN Office of the High Representative for Least Developed, Landlocked and Small Island Developing countries (UN OHRLLS) who provided me and the rest of the United Nations with constant guidance and assistance. My colleague, Om Pradhan, as the UN Coordinator for the International Meeting, and acting on my behalf, led and conducted the UN's planning missions and the negotiations relating to the Host Country agreement, most successfully. I thank him for his valuable contributions to the process.]

Finally, may I thank you Prime Minister Bérenger for the most effective and productive manner in which you conducted the work of the International Meeting as the President. Your leadership and guidance went a long way in helping to achieve this great success.

Thank you!
