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DECLARATION OF BARBADOS

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We the States participating in the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,

Having met in Bridgetown, Barbados from 25 April to 6 May 1994,

Reaffirming the principles and commitments to sustainable development embodied in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, [1/](#) Agenda 21 [2/](#) and the Non-legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests, [3/](#) which were adopted by the nations of the world at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development on 14 June 1992, as well as in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change [4/](#) and the Convention on Biological Diversity, [5/](#)

Recognizing that the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States translates Agenda 21 into specific policies, actions and measures to be taken at the national, regional and international levels to enable small island developing States to achieve sustainable development,

Part One

Affirm that:

I

1. The survival of small island developing States is firmly rooted in their human resources and cultural heritage, which are their most significant assets; those assets are under severe stress and all efforts must be taken to ensure the central position of people in the process of sustainable development.
2. Sustainable development programmes must seek to enhance the quality of life of peoples, including their health, well-being and safety.
3. Full attention should be given to gender equity and to the important role and contribution of women, as well as to the needs of women and other major groups, including children, youth and indigenous people.

II

Small island developing States have sovereign rights over their own natural resources. Their biodiversity is among the most threatened in the world and their ecosystems provide ecological corridors linking major areas of biodiversity around the world. They bear responsibility for a significant portion of the world's oceans and seas and their resources. The efforts of small island developing States to conserve, protect and restore their ecosystems deserve international cooperation and partnership.

III

1. Small island developing States are particularly vulnerable to natural as well as environmental disasters and have a limited capacity to respond to and recover from such disasters.
2. While small island developing States are among those that contribute least to global climate change and sealevel rise, they are among those that would suffer most from the adverse effects of such phenomena and could in some cases become uninhabitable. Therefore, they are among those particularly vulnerable States that need assistance under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, including adaptation measures and mitigation efforts.
3. Small island developing States share with all nations a critical interest in the protection of coastal zones and oceans against the effects of land-based sources of pollution.
4. Limited freshwater resources, increasing amounts of waste and hazardous substances, and limited facilities for waste disposal combine to make pollution prevention, waste management and the transboundary movement of hazardous materials critical issues for small island developing States.

IV

Small island developing States are limited in size, have vulnerable economies and are dependent both upon narrow resource bases and on international trade, without the means of influencing the terms of that trade.

V

To enhance their national capacities and self-reliance, small island developing States, with the assistance and support of the international community, should

actively promote human resources development programmes including education, training and skills development. Their institutional and administrative capacity to implement the programme of action must be strengthened at all levels by supportive partnerships and cooperation, including technical assistance, the further development of legislation and mechanisms for information sharing.

VI

There is an urgent need in small island developing States to address the constraints to sustainable development, including scarce land resources, which lead to difficult land and agriculture use decisions; limited fresh water; education and training needs; health and human settlement requirements; inordinate pressures on coastal and marine environment and resources; and limited means available to exploit natural resources on a sustainable basis.

VII

1. The special role of non-governmental organizations and the importance of a partnership between Governments, intergovernmental organizations and agencies, non-governmental organizations and other major groups in implementing Agenda 21 and the programme of action at the national, subregional, regional and international levels should be recognized.
2. That partnership should include efforts to increase public awareness of the outcomes and follow-up of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States through all available means of communication.

Part Two

Declare that:

I

Based on the principle of the right to development, small island developing States should, in accordance with their own priorities, endeavour to achieve the goals of sustainable development by, inter alia, formulating and implementing policies, strategies and programmes that take into account development, health and environmental goals, strengthening national institutions, and mobilizing all available resources, all of which are aimed at improving the quality of life.

II

Through regional and subregional cooperation, small island developing States and the international community should encourage strong functional cooperation in the promotion of sustainable development by sharing information and technology, strengthening institutions and building capacity.

III

1. The international community should cooperate with small island developing States in the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States by providing effective means, including adequate, predictable new and additional financial resources in accordance with chapter 33 of Agenda 21; facilitating the transfer of environmentally sound technology, including on concessional and preferential terms as mutually agreed, taking into account the need to protect intellectual property rights as well as the special needs of developing countries; and promoting fair, equitable and non-discriminatory trading arrangements and a supportive international economic system.
2. The international community has a responsibility to facilitate the efforts of small island developing States to minimize the stress on their fragile ecosystems, including through cooperative action and partnership.
3. To achieve sustainable development and a higher quality of life for all people, including people of small island developing States, all States should reduce and eliminate unsustainable patterns of production and consumption, and should promote appropriate demographic policies.
4. The international community should build new and equitable partnerships for the sustainable development of small island developing States through the implementation of the Programme of Action and should send a powerful message to the world's peoples on the possibilities of joint action undertaken with a sense of common purpose and partnership.

Notes

1/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, vol. I, Resolutions Adopted by the Conference (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex I.

2/ Ibid., annex II.

3/ Ibid., annex III.

4/ A/AC.237/18 (Part II)/Add.1, annex I.

5/ See United Nations Environment Programme, Convention on Biological Diversity (Environmental Law and Institutions Programme Activity Centre), June 1992.