



Statement by
H.E. Mr. Danny Faure
Vice President of the Republic of Seychelles
at the
Opening Plenary of the High-Level Review Meeting of the 65th Session
of the General Assembly on the Implementation of the Mauritius
Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action
for the Sustainable Development of Small Island States

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Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Seychelles associates itself with the statements by Grenada on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States and Yemen on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and with the statements on behalf of the Caribbean and Pacific SIDS.

The five-year review of the Mauritius Strategy of Implementation comes at a time when, as I said in my speech at the MDG Summit, many small island developing states are wondering how they are going to build further on what they have achieved without getting mired down in unsustainable debt.

This is why AIMS calls on the international community to conduct a thorough assessment of the progress made, lessons learned and constraints encountered in implementing the MSI, and to agree on what needs to be done to further address the vulnerabilities of SIDS.

We in the meantime continue to argue that the inherent vulnerabilities and priority concerns of AIMS and other SIDS, such as those related to small size and isolation which cannot be changed, have to be factored into multilateral development agenda and work programmes.

There is also a need for the special circumstances of SIDS to be considered in the international governance review processes, including in the context of the planned United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012.

AIMS therefore welcomes the initiative of the Indian Ocean Commission and the United Nations Division on Economic and Social Affairs to work out a monitoring and evaluation mechanism which could be extended to cover all SIDS.

Our islands also call for a review of the UN system's support to SIDS, accompanied by the integration of SIDS issues in the work programs of all UN agencies.

The GDP or GNI per capita criteria which currently governs the international aid delivery system disqualifies most SIDS from accessing concessionary financing. AIMS argues that this is misleading and does not reflect the multifaceted challenges associated with our economic, social and environmental vulnerabilities.

On climate change, funding for adaptation remains a challenge, giving rise to the idea of an AIMS regional implementation program on climate change and development that could learn from the experiences of the Caribbean and Pacific SIDS.

The programme could primarily focus on the establishment of an AIMS regional centre of excellence for climate change and development, and the implementation of pilot adaptation and low carbon development programs at national and local levels.

At this stage, Mr. President, Seychelles would like to echo the call by the Chair of AOSIS for the global temperature increase to be kept well below 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, and for greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere to be kept well below 350 parts per million of CO₂-equivalent.

I must warn everyone in this hall, Mr. President, that the small island developing states will *never* tire of repeating this. How can we, when the AOSIS mantra of *1.5 to Stay Alive* means exactly what it says.

A special challenge for us in AIMS that is not faced by the Caribbean or Pacific islands is that we do not have a regional organization to bring us together so that we can defend and promote our interests as a group. The AIMS island developing states are situated as far afield as the Atlantic Ocean off West Africa, the Western Indian Ocean off East Africa, the Eastern Indian Ocean and South Asia.

Our islands thus feel the need for an intra-regional mechanism to support us in our countries' respective national pursuit of sustainable development, and to facilitate the development of regional programmes, initiatives and partnerships.

Mr. President, allow me to end with an appeal for the international community to fulfill its commitments to the MSI. On Wednesday at the end of the MDG Summit we heard world leaders from Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao to American President Barack Obama call on developed countries to fulfill their commitments in good faith and to put an end to hollow promises that are not kept.

The small island developing states ask that the international community do the same for the Mauritius Strategy of Implementation.

I thank you.