



# TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

PERMANENT MISSION OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO TO THE UNITED NATIONS  
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## STATEMENT

by

**Dr. the Honourable Roodal Moonilal  
Minister of Housing and the Environment  
of the  
Republic of Trinidad and Tobago**

at the

**High-level Meeting on the Implementation  
of the Mauritius Strategy for Further  
Implementation of the Programme of  
Action for Sustainable Development of  
Small Island Developing States  
on  
Reducing vulnerabilities and strengthening  
resilience of Small Island Developing States (SIDS)**

**65<sup>th</sup> session of the  
United Nations General Assembly**



**United Nations Headquarters  
New York  
September 24, 2010**

Thank you Co-chairman,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

There can be no denial of the vulnerability of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) directly resulting from their intrinsic and inherent characteristics such as their small size, limited human resources, limited technical and technological capacity and perhaps most critically, limited financial capacity. The basis of the well being of SIDs stems from their natural resources: biodiversity, marine resources and high cultural diversity.

The substantial progress made by SIDS in implementing the Mauritius Strategy (MSI) can be arguably attributed to their very rich natural resources and their attempts to develop these resources sustainably.

However, exogenous threats to their sustainable development, including climate change, extreme weather events such as hurricanes and droughts, and the state of global economic and financial markets, severely impinge on productive capacity. These threats interrupt economic activity and create sometimes irreversible changes in the natural resources on which their survival is based. It therefore becomes increasingly clear that scaled-up assistance is needed from the international community to enable SIDS to maintain their identity and continue to contribute to the well being of the global community.

Co-chair, the vulnerability of SIDS is already widely known and should continue to be acknowledged. In this regard, Trinidad and Tobago would like to outline some key areas where, in our view, greater assistance is required from the international community to enable SIDS to continue to build their resilience and reduce their vulnerability. Briefly, SIDS require assistance with:

- Enhancing the human resource and institutional capacity for accurate weather forecasting and early warnings of impending adverse weather;
- Strengthening civil protection type mechanisms through capacity development for early warning systems, information dissemination, institutional coordination for disaster management and response;
- Building skills through training for government, private sector and civil society in emergency and disaster response;
- Building capacity and technology transfer and know-how to enable adequate preparatory measures and responses to phenomenon that adversely affect SIDs including coping with exogenous shocks arising from adverse economic circumstances at regional and international levels;

- Providing finance including through insurance, for addressing loss of income due to sudden onset type effects such as from hurricanes and extreme weather events;
- Diversifying economies that are dependent on narrow sectors for economic mainstay;
- Providing the necessary resources and capacity building in order to integrate resilience in all sectors of national development.

Trinidad and Tobago has strived to address the issues for fulfillment of the objectives of the MSI. However, the inherent vulnerability of our country must be factored into its development planning. There is an incumbent responsibility on the part of the international community to assist in more than token ways to increasing resilience to these vulnerabilities; to honour commitments that have been made; and to provide financial resources that are over and above the level now provided for Official Developmental Assistance (ODA).

Co-chair, this is not merely a request for assistance, but a reminder to the international community of its responsibility to SIDS. Anything less, co-chair, would result in the significant depletion and impoverishment of the world's resources as a result of the loss of island systems. It is certain that these systems will become less viable if the international community fails to respond in an adequate manner. This is a set of circumstances that I am sure the global community would wish to avoid. I therefore call for the provision of adequate resources, including technical, technological and financial to enable SIDS to continue to develop sustainably. This, in the end, will redound to the benefit of all mankind.

I thank you.