

Expert Group Meeting on International Year of SIDS  
5-6 December

**Initial outcomes**

*Global Launch:* Proposed to be in the morning of Monday, **24 February 2014**, the first day of the first prepcom for the Third International Conference on SIDS to be held in the UN General Assembly Hall, New York – to be webcasted world-wide.

*Logo & Tagline:* DPI-developed logo for the International Year with the following tagline – **International Year of Small Island Developing States – 2014: A Global Celebration**

Draft topline messages

- 1. The International Year of Small Island Developing States aims to connect the people of the small islands with the people everywhere - to celebrate the contributions of small islanders while highlighting the challenges and vulnerabilities they are confronting.**
- 2. Islanders have shown leadership in addressing pressing global issues through innovation, ingenuity and use of traditional knowledge.**
- 3. Islanders have enriched the world through their culture, diversity and heritage.**
- 4. Islanders are at the forefront of efforts to protect the world's oceans and their vast biodiversity.**
- 5. The challenges facing the islands are challenges for the world. Islands are determined to work with partners to address urgent challenges such as climate change, to benefit countries all over the world.**

Immediate follow-up actions:

- Key messages discussed at the EGM to be refined, streamlined and circulated for final feedback from the participants.
- The key messages will then form part of the letter to be co-signed by the UN SG and AOSIS Chair to be sent out to all heads of member States and the UN system, inviting all stakeholders to join in the celebration of the International Year and to take action.
- Such letter to be drafted and reviewed through appropriate channels.
- Request for a meeting between the planning committee for the International Year and the AOSIS Bureau, with Ambassador Jumeau to be also present to facilitate.

**Summary of Discussions**

Significance of the International Year

- The International Year of SIDS, the first Year dedicated to a group of countries, is an opportunity to:

- Celebrate the accomplishments, culture, food, innovation and potential of SIDS
- Call attention to the fact that SIDS are important, viable partners for investment
- Remind the international community that they need support to advance their sustainable development.
- Messages should resonate with all and should be broad enough so that countries and other stakeholders can adapt them to their strengths and priority areas.
- Importance of using the International Year to build the momentum for the International Year and vice versa.
- Positive messaging is important, not a rehashing of SIDS vulnerability and challenges and not a spotlight on partners' shortfalls and failures. Some overarching themes include:
  - What works in the SIDS works everywhere.
  - The time is now for action on behalf of SIDS' sustainable development.
  - SIDS have a story to tell and their experience is relevant to all.
  - SIDS have much to offer the world.
- The Year should be owned by the SIDS countries themselves—this should not be seen as a UN-led effort.

#### Lessons Learned from Other International Years

- Social media and user-generated content will be critical to the success of the Year.
- Launching dedicated website is important, as is making logo and other key products available
- Stakeholders around the world will make the Year their own—the roll-out will be organic
- Resource mobilization should continue throughout the year—often a result as well as a catalyst of momentum.

#### Role of stakeholders/communication tools

- While the ownership of the Year should reside with SIDS themselves, the Secretariat should serve as a clearinghouse for information and conduit of communication, sharing experiences, etc. The Secretariat should share templates for activities, messaging, logo, guidelines for actions and branded products (flyers, posters).
- The SG and AOSIS Chair should kick off the year, with a co-signed letter to all Member States, UN system partners, and civil society as soon as possible and ahead of the official launch. This letter would include some basic guidance and tools and invite national ownership and encourage broader engagement of all stakeholders.

- The UN system and civil society are critical partners. The youth, schools, churches will be among implementation partners.
- SIDS and non-SIDS are both audiences and promoters of International Year messages, though the emphasis will be slightly different. The theme of the SIDS Conference on partnerships should also resonate with the International Year,
- A group of proactive and engaged countries should be identified as potential champions of the Year.
- New York, with the UN presence and the strong SIDS diaspora, can serve as a hub of Year activities, while opportunities to promote the Year should piggyback on identified relevant global or SIDS-related conferences, events, meetings and international days around the world.

#### Role of Culture in the International Year

- SIDS culture, arts, heritage (tangible and intangible) offer opportunity to tell the positive, triumphant story of SIDS
- Many existing cultural events and entities that can feature International Year (carnivals, Pacific Heritage Hub, etc)
- Ministries of culture can be champions within SIDS (and non-SIDS) governments.

#### Strategy for the International Year

The agreed objectives for the International Year are:

- i) Build momentum towards the SIDS Conference;
- ii) Mobilize international interest and support for sustainable development in SIDS countries;
- iii) Highlight the achievement and resilience of SIDS in overcoming their unique development challenges;
- iv) Celebrate the rich cultural heritage of SIDS and the contributions the SIDS collectively can bring to the global community.

It has been agreed that the inter-agency planning committee (UNESCO, DPI, OHRLLS, UNDP and UNEP with DESA/SIDS Unit as the convener) continue to oversee the planning, branding of communication message and tools at the global level, in consultation with AOSIS. Invitation and call for action at all levels by all stakeholders, should be sent out jointly by the UN and AOSIS at the highest level. At the regional level, CARICOM, PIFS and IOC could play facilitating roles in their respective regions.

#### Resource Mobilization

Potential funding partners will be more likely to support specific and well-defined projects for the International Year. Products such as curricula, posters, brochures, publications as well as events could attract donors' attention. The SIDS Unit will work with other UN agencies and civil society organizations to match project proposals with possible donor entities.

Annex 1

**EGM on the International Year of Small Island Developing States, 5-6 December 2013**

**List of Participants** (participating in their individual capacities)

<b>MEMBER STATES</b>				
	<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Organization/Ministry</b>	<b>Contact</b>
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