

MEETING SUMMARY

- the effects of COVID-19 have exacerbated the existing vulnerabilities present in SIDS; the need for global economic restructuring that would allow SIDS to emerge cleaner, greener, and more resilient from the crisis; and
- policies that not only help with the recovery from COVID-19 but also allow for the continued achievement of the SDGs, 2030 Agenda, and the SAMOA Pathway.

Session 1: Global and Regional Response to COVID-19

6. This session was chaired by Ms. Heidi Schroeder, Director, OHRLLS. This session provided background on:

- the initiatives in response to the COVID-19 pandemic at the global and regional level; the successes and the challenges of these initiatives and how they could be integrated into SDGs and SAMOA Pathway implementation
- the emerging priorities of the SIDS in the AIS region and how they are being addressed; and
- how international and regional platforms can support these priorities along with the implications of the MCO and Regional reviews.

Ms. Azeema Adam, Chief, Programme Management, IOC, gave a presentation on the emerging priorities in response to COVID-19 and how they can be supported by international platforms. Ms. Ana Graça, Resident Coordinator, Cabo Verde, also gave a presentation on regional efforts that can address the emerging priority areas. After presentations, a respondent Mr. Bartholomew Armah, Chief, Economic Affairs, Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), spoke on the impact that COVID-19 has had on Africa. Following the presentations, two interventions were made by Mr. Raj Mohabeer (IOC) and Mr. Rakesh Bhuckory (NFP Mauritius).

7. The meeting stressed that COVID-19 will deal a severe economic blow to the countries of the region. Positive growth trends prior to the pandemic will be reversed as economies are expected to contract as part of a global downturn. It was noted that t

14. The meeting also stressed the importance of the acquisition of personal protective equipment (PPE) and medical supplies. The meeting noted the concern that SIDS in the AIS region cannot compete for access to these materials like larger countries. It was recommended that SIDS collectively acquire PPE so that their orders are substantive and as equally as compelling as those orders placed by larger countries.
15. The meeting highlighted the emerging priorities of the region in the context of COVID 19. These include: data collection and innovation, financing for recovery, social protections and food security, economic diversification, support for vulnerable groups, regional integration, and the improvement of human and institutional capital.

Session 2: Country Experiences in Response to COVID-19 and Responses from SIDS NFPs and Interventions from (other) UN System - Interactive Discussion

16. This session was chaired by Mr. Sébastien Vauzelle, Economist, UN RCO, Cabo Verde. This session allowed countries to:
 - share some of their country experiences, best practices, and lessons learned in response to COVID 19, including from the national, regional, and international perspectives;
 - speak to the challenges and opportunities related to enhanced coordination in the region;
 - highlight the challenges and opportunities going forward, including in the context of the Multi-Country Office and Regional Reviews; and
 - anticipate the implications for the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway and the SDGs along with the lessons learned from Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs).
 National experience presentations were given by Ms. Fatouma Abdallah (Comoros), Ms. Elisabeth Agathine (Seychelles), and Ms. Saadiah (Maldives).

17. Presentations highlighted the early preparations and actions taken by SIDS in the AIS region that were put in place to prevent the spread of the virus to their respective islands and reduce the level of domestic transmission. It was noted that countries closed borders and limited the level of economic activity within domestic economies by closing non-essential services. Social gathering rules were also put in place that limited the size of

27. The meeting highlighted that SIDS need greater access to funding and debt relief. Lack of

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Virtual Meeting of National Focal Points (NFPs) of Small Island
Developing States (SIDS)

Tuesday, 04 August 2020 8:00am – 10:00am (NY Time)

"Enhancing coherence - A focus on the COVID-19 response"

- What are the COVID-19 response initiatives at the global and regional level? What have been some of the successes and challenges? How has the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway and the SDGs factored into these initiatives?
- What are the emerging priorities for small island developing States in the AIS in the context of the COVID-19 response? How are these priorities being addressed?
- How can international and regional platforms support these priorities, including as it relates to enhanced coordination in the region? What are the implications for the Multi-Country Office and Regional Reviews?

