

**PROGRAMME FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MAURITIUS STRATEGY FOR  
SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES OF THE EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA-  
INDIAN OCEAN REGION**

**Ceremony of signature of the Contribution Agreement with the United Nations  
Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)**

*05 December 2011, 18:00 hrs, La Pirogue Hotel, Flic en Flac*

The Honourable Mr. Jean Paul Adam, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Seychelles and President of the Council of Ministers of the Indian Ocean Commission,

Dr. The Honourable Arvin Boolell, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade of the Republic of Mauritius,

His Excellency, Mr. Callixte d'Offay, Secretary General of the Indian Ocean Commission,

Ms. Leyla Tegmo-Reddy, UN Resident Coordinator,

Ms. Hiroko Morita-Lou, Head of the SIDS Unit, at the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very pleased to be here with you today for the signing ceremony of the Contribution Agreement with the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs. This Agreement marks another milestone in the solid partnership between the European Union, the United Nations and the Indian Ocean Commission towards sustainable development of small island developing states (also called SIDS).

It is an honour for me to sign with Ms. Morita-Lou, Head of the SIDS Unit at the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Contribution Agreement to design and make operational a Monitoring & Evaluation system thus following up on the implementation of the Strategy for Small Island Developing States adopted in Mauritius by 129 countries in 2005.

Worth recalling is that the Mauritius Strategy identified twenty priority areas for SIDS development ranging from environment, climate change and disaster preparedness to transport and energy.

The EU grant, which amounts to EUR 470 000, (approximately 19 million Mauritian Rupees), is one component of the overall programme of EUR 10 million titled "Programme for the Implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for Small Island Developing States of the Eastern and Southern Africa-Indian Ocean region". Apart from the M&E system, activities of this programme will focus on establishing best practices in mitigating vulnerabilities of SIDS in key areas such as coral reef, disaster insurance scheme, sustainable development, climate change as well as developing mechanisms to attract investment in the region.

This programme is managed by the Indian Ocean Commission with which the European Union already has a longstanding and very fruitful cooperation. With this programme, the EU reaffirms its strong commitment to the efforts of the Small Island Developing States of the Eastern and Southern Africa-Indian Ocean region to build resilience and achieve sustainable development. It also aims at supporting the IOC in

carrying out its mandate to coordinate the work of the network of SIDS of the Africa, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Sea regions<sup>1</sup>.

As I said, the design and implementation of a Monitoring and Evaluation system to track progress in implementing the Mauritius Strategy for SIDS is one component of the overall programme. The SIDS Unit of UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs has a mandate to coordinate and monitor work related to the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for all the SIDS of the world, and is therefore the logical partner of the EU and IOC for the design and implementation of an M&E system. A major advantage is that such a system will be integrated into the overall UN system for SIDS worldwide. The M&E system will be central for tracking progress made and assessing the impact of policy measures.

The EU grant will reinforce the EU-UN-IOC partnership and enable us to continue joining forces for the sustainable development of the SIDS of the region. It will also further strengthen EU commitment to aid effectiveness.

The EU grant will pave the way for SIDS of the ESA-IO region towards the Rio + 20 Conference for sustainable development in 2012. It will build on lessons learned from the Caribbean and the Pacific regions as well as programmes implemented under the Global Climate Change Alliance, financed by the European Union, from which Mauritius and Seychelles have already benefitted. The programme will offer a valuable contribution to the two themes of the Rio + 20 Conference: (i) "a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty

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<sup>1</sup> AIMS: Cape Verde, Comoros, Guinea-Bissau, Maldives, Mauritius, São Tome and Príncipe, Seychelles and Singapore.

eradication" and (ii) "institutional framework for sustainable development".

The EU is a staunch supporter of sustainable development in all its partner countries, and is committed to accompany them to achieve the Millennium Development Goals targets by 2015.

In particular, the EU supports small islands states in addressing challenges posed by small internal markets, vulnerability to natural disasters and vulnerability to external shocks. Climate Change is one of the most pressing challenges facing SIDS worldwide. The EU delivered EUR 2.34 billion of "fast start" funding for Climate Change in 2010 and, despite the difficult economic situation and tight budgetary constraints, the EU has mobilised the same amount this year. The EU also remains a firm advocate for stronger commitments in global Climate Change discussions, as well as for progress towards a greener economy as a real opportunity to promote sustainable development and poverty eradication.

Let me conclude by commending the strong commitment and leadership of the countries of the Indian Ocean region with which the European Union enjoys very dynamic and excellent relations.

Thank you for your kind attention.