



*As of 19 September 2024 (Checked against delivery)*

**GROUP OF 77 & CHINA  
G E N E V A**

**Statement of the Group of 77 and China**

**Delivered by H.E. Mr. SUON Prasith, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of  
Cambodia and President of the Group of 77 and China  
at the 71st Session of Trade and Development Board  
16 - 27 September 2024 | Room XIX, Palais des Nations**

**Item 10 – UNCTAD’s Strategy for Small Island Developing States**

**Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, and Colleagues,**

- On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I would like to express our full support for **UNCTAD’s Strategy for Small Island Developing States (SIDS)**. UNCTAD has become the first organization to develop a comprehensive strategy specifically aimed at addressing the systemic and persistent development challenges that the SIDS face. This strategy, if fully implemented, offers a crucial framework to advance the Antigua and Barbuda Action Plan for SIDS (ABAS) and must be supported with adequate resources. It is imperative that donors and development partners pledge increased extra-budgetary resources to ensure the operationalization and effective implementation of this vital strategy.
- The G77 and China stands firmly behind the UNCTAD SIDS Strategy and call for its timely implementation. A key strength of the strategy lies in its data-driven and evidence-based approach aimed at fostering SIDS-specific productive capacities and supporting structural economic transformation. We believe it is critical to harness the comparative advantages of SIDS and focus on addressing the key binding constraints to their development. This should be prioritized in both domestic policies and in partnerships that enhance development cooperation in favor of SIDS.
- Despite progress in their development, SIDS remain vulnerable to systemic risks, such as low economy-wide productive capacities, climate change, and frequent natural disasters. Their reliance on imports, limited access to loans, and vulnerability to debt and external shocks further complicate their development pathways.
- It is worth noted that the SAMOA Pathway continues to guide the UN system’s support for SIDS, while the Bridgetown Covenant and the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS (ABAS) provide a roadmap to address their persistent challenges in trade, investment, and development.

- The UNCTAD SIDS Strategy (2023) is built on UNCTAD’s longstanding support and engagement with SIDS through its three-pillar approach: policy research and analysis, technical cooperation, and capacity-building. The strategy is designed to unlock the potential of SIDS and mitigate the challenges they face by addressing their systemic vulnerabilities and harnessing their comparative advantages in a sustainable manner.
- The priorities of the UNCTAD SIDS Strategy include the following:
  - Support to building SIDS’ economy-wide productive capacities, with a focus on key sectors of production and export potential;
  - Enhancing connectivity, reducing transport costs, and promoting sustainable and resilient transport;
  - Managing and expanding the Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA);
  - Facilitating digital transformation;
  - Supporting investment;
  - Facilitating the ocean economy’s sustainable development and trade;
  - Supporting private sector development;
  - Supporting the mobilisation of external financial resources;
  - Using South-South Cooperation to enhance development strategies and economic integration; and
  - Implementing trade facilitation reforms.
- To address the unique challenges of SIDS, the UNCTAD is preparing to implement a Development Account project aimed at strengthening greener productive capacities in Caribbean SIDS. This collaborative project will work with UNDESA, ECLAC, and the RC system, beginning in March 2025, and will focus on building statistical capacity, identifying challenges in productive capacities, and designing programs to foster these capacities in a sustainable manner.
- Finally, we welcome the establishment of the **UNCTAD’s SIDS Trust Fund**, which has already received contributions from Portugal. However, to fully support the implementation of this strategy and effectively address the challenges of SIDS, increased extra-budgetary contributions are essential.
- In conclusion, the G77 and China reiterate our commitment to supporting the UNCTAD SIDS Strategy and call on all development partners to join us in ensuring its successful and impactful implementation. Together, we can make a meaningful difference in the future of Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

Thank you.

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