

**TIMING: 21 Feb 2017**

**VENUE: MELIA Ballroom C**

**Bahamas Symposium on Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable  
Development and the Samoa Pathway in Small Island Developing States  
(SIDS)**

- I am honoured to be speaking to you today on behalf of the EU and its Member States at this important symposium.
- The EU and its Member States are proud of our **longstanding tradition of partnership with the SIDS**. We have long supported your efforts to address the specific vulnerabilities and challenges you face. We have been, and remain, a leading donor and key trading partner for SIDS. Since 2007 the EU alone provided more than EUR 4 billion to SIDS in development and humanitarian aid through bilateral, regional and thematic programmes – on top of the cooperation between EU Member States and SIDS. We have also provided support via our research programmes and sustainable fisheries agreements.
- And I'm here today to assure you that we will continue supporting your efforts. A particular focus of our cooperation in general and in particular with the SIDS will be **Climate Change**. We highly appreciate the good collaboration that we have had in the negotiations of the Paris Agreement and in its follow up.
- I think can all be very proud that the threshold was achieved so quickly and that the Paris **Agreement entered into force on 4 November 2016**. With this early ratification, the first meeting of the parties to the agreement (CMA1) can already be convened in Marrakesh. We are thankful to the countries - especially yours, who took the lead - that moved swiftly to ratify the Paris Agreement. EU's rapid ratification on 5 October 2016 was unprecedented and we are also proud to have enabled the entry into force.

- The Paris Agreement provides the framework for our NDCs, a long term direction and an enhanced global regime to govern our collective action. Now is time to implement policies and projects in order to achieve the objectives set out in our **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)**.
- I am proud to report that the European Commission has put forward new **legislative proposals this summer**. The complete package implementing our 2030 framework and our at least 40% reduction target is on the table and being negotiated. By the end of the year the European Commission will present **further proposals for energy efficiency, new electricity market design and a renewable energy policy framework for 2030**.
- Alongside action to reduce emissions, we are taking action to make Europe more resilient to the impacts of climate change. The **EU Adaptation Strategy, adopted in 2013**, contributes to a more climate-resilient Europe, by promoting better informed decision making and action especially in key vulnerable sectors. We are starting an **evaluation** of the Strategy and working towards its review in 2018.
- Of course, we also remain fully committed to supporting our partner countries in implementing their NDC, and in keeping with the solidarity commitments made in Paris and before. The EU has provided and will keep providing substantial **climate funding to support climate action in partner countries** and we are committed to **make 20% of entire EU development cooperation 'climate-relevant' for the period 2014-2020**. In 2015 the climate finance contribution of the EU and its Member States amounted to 17.6 billion EUR, a significant increase compared to 2014, particularly in adaptation spending.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

- The EU and SIDS share a common commitment to action that sees us eradicate poverty from the face of the earth by 2030 and deliver sustainable development through an integrated, balanced and rights-based approach, which addresses the three dimensions of sustainable

development and promotes peaceful societies, human rights and democratic, responsive and accountable institutions.

- This Conference gives us a valuable opportunity to set out how the specific needs, vulnerabilities and aspirations of SIDS could be taken into account in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.
- The EU is advancing fast in defining its response to the 2030 Agenda. On 22 November, the Commission presented a package of **three related Communications** to implement the 2030 Agenda within Europe and in the world. The Communication proposing a new **European Consensus on Development** was adopted together with the Communication “**Next Steps for a Sustainable European Future**”, which addresses the overall implementation of the SDGs through internal and external EU policies, and the Communication on a **renewed partnership with African, Caribbean and Pacific countries**, which translates the proposed vision in the Consensus for our relations with these partners.
- These proposals are now discussed broadly among Memberstates, with the European Parliament and the wider public. The aim is to reach this year final versions of all of them for the whole of the EU.
- The European Consensus on Development is particularly well on track and we are optimistic to be able to adopt it already before the High Level Political Forum in July. The Consensus will shape our development cooperation within the framework of the 2030 Agenda for the years to come. The EU will continue to address issues crucial for SIDS. I have already talked extensively about climate change, but I would like to mention also **risk management and vulnerability**, the commitment to protect **healthy and productive oceans and seas** and to preserve **biodiversity**. Millions of people depend on biodiversity for their livelihoods. In many island nations, just to give one example, coral reefs are an essential source of social, economic and environmental benefits. Last but not least, enhancing **agricultural productivity** in a sustainable manner and better nutrition will remain crucial in combating **food and nutrition insecurity**.

- So we have many challenges ahead of us. The stakes are as high as ever. But at the same time our commitment to help the SIDS overcome their specific challenges is as strong as ever. Together we have what it takes to deliver lasting solutions that will work for you and for our entire planet. This Conference will help us in this. On behalf of the EU and its Member States I wish it every success.

**(890 words)**