



**PERMANENT MISSION OF JAMAICA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

STATEMENT BY

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AT THE

2024 HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

*“Small Island Developing States: Implementing the outcome
of the Fourth SIDS Conference”*

NEW YORK

ON

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Excellencies, Delegates,

The recently adopted Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States (ABAS) recognizes that, and I quote:

“...vulnerability does not mean that SIDS exhibit weakness or lack potential for development. Rather, it means recognizing that they are disproportionately impacted in terms of physical destruction and non-economic and economic losses to a far greater scale than elsewhere.”

The Caribbean region’s experience with Hurricane Beryl, the earliest Category 5 system observed in the Atlantic on record, is a prime example of this disproportionate impact and how compounding and cascading disasters have kept our countries in a vicious and unrelenting cycle of disaster, debt and stymied development. In Jamaica’s case, we have experienced the impact of over 20 hydrometeorological events in the last 20 years amounting approximating 1% of GDP per annum. In the aftermath of Hurricane Beryl, preliminary estimates of loss and damage to our transportation infrastructure, agriculture sector and social assets have already surpassed US\$84.0 million with implications for food security, productivity, poverty, livelihoods and the achievement of national and international development goals such as the SDGs.

Excellencies, as we explore various modalities to deliver enhanced support to SIDS in the implementation of the ABAS, we must acknowledge that we are in UNPRECEDENTED TIMES which call for URGENT ACTION. Over the last three decades, successive Programmes of Action have identified priority areas and specific actions necessary for addressing the issues of environmental disasters and climate change. Despite our best efforts we have been unable to realise sustained and effective resilience in the face of persistent development challenges.

Chair, we therefore use this forum to support the call for “the adequate provision and mobilization of all means of implementation” as articulated in the ABAS. The UN development system and other relevant actors can support the implementation of the new POA through:

- Building economic resilience of SIDS, including increasing the effectiveness of development finance and supporting sustainable management of debt
- providing concessionary financing options for risk prevention, reduction and transfer
- Scaling-up climate action and support, including climate finance, in line with existing commitments and obligations
- building capacity for improved data collection and statistical analysis, to support evidence-based decision making;

Critically, we strongly encourage The UN system to support the establishment of a responsive monitoring and evaluation framework for the ABAS which reinforces accountability from all partners in delivering on sustainable development for SIDS.