Statement by Helen Beck, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Solomon Islands to the United Nations at UNGA Second Committee on Agenda Item 19 - Sustainable Development, New York, November 5 2013

Mr. Chairman, Thank you for giving me the floor, let me congratulate you and members of your Bureau and assure you of our support. My delegation aligns this statement with the statements issued by Fiji on behalf of the G77 and China, Nauru on behalf of AOSIS, Papua New Guinea on behalf of PSIDS and Benin on behalf of LDCs. I would like to make additional remarks in my national capacity. My delegation thanks the Secretary General for the reports provided on this agenda item and thank the panelists who have introduced the reports yesterday.

Mr. Chairman,

Solomon Islands welcomes our Secretary General's report (referenced A/68/316) on the implementation of the MSI for the further implementation BPOA. In the context of sustainable development, SIDS remain a special case noting their unique challenges, small size, remoteness, narrow economy and vulnerability to climate change.

Solomon Islands also welcome the Third International Conference on SIDS to be held in Samoa, the Conference is timely as the world has changed since the Barbados program of Action (BPOA) on sustainable development of SIDS was adopted 19 years ago. Today the frequency and intensity of natural disasters have increased especially the slow on set events such as sea level rise and growing concentration of ocean acidification. Carbon dioxide concentration in the ocean has reached dangerous levels of 400parts per million (ppm). Carol reefs stops growing at 500ppm. Livelihood of our people is now under threat unless something is done globally to stabilize current path of genocide and destruction caused by climate change.

Climate change is a threat multiplier for SIDS and LDCs and needs a global solution. We call on those who are not embracing multilaterism to be part of the global solution to the climate crisis. The low commitment level and the lack of political will today is threatening our survival and will define our future.

Mr. Chairman,

SIDS as stated in the secretary General's report show uneven achievement of the MDG due to unfavorable enabling environment and governance in the Pacific. My delegation would like to add the lack of focus by the UN system on the drivers of the economy. UNDAF US$293 million dollar programme for the Pacific, all five priority areas identified are all on social, human rights and governance sectors and only one literally on eradication of poverty and economic inclusive growth.
It is for this reason, we would like to see focus on investment in the drivers of the economy identified by the BPOA on, renewable energy, productive sectors including agriculture, tourism beside infrastructure development and a people centered approach directed at the rural areas.

Bilaterally some of our partners have begun focusing on these sectors, in particular Australia, New Zealand, the EU and ADB. My delegation is positive these infrastructure developments will unlock and mainstream our informal sector into the national economy. This is heartening to see and hope the multilateral programs will follow suit.

Mr. Chairman,

Multilaterally much of the approach taken on SIDS in particular on the implementation of the MSI is from a regional perspective. For this reason for my country with more than a half a million population we are covered in the regional programs and only mentioned once in the 19 page report.

The forthcoming third international conference on sustainable development of SIDS will allow us to break with business as usual approach and must ensure our country specific and national circumstances is taken into consideration going forward on to the post 2015 development agenda. This should enable SIDS to eradicate poverty, and build resilience to further enhanced implementation of the BPOA and MSI towards an evidenced based outcome in Samoa in 2014.

Mr. Chairman,

Access and transfer of appropriate technology for sustainable development of SIDS and LDC is critical and we look forward to the swift establishment and operationalisation of a technology bank for LDCs. Six of the SIDS is classified as LDCs; five of them are from the Pacific including my own. In looking at the Post 2015 Development Agenda, addressing the overarching goals of sustainable development and poverty eradication, we associated ourselves with three of the BPOA priorities namely, ocean, sustainable energy and climate change. These sectors have been identified by SIDS in our 2013 inter-regional outcome document.

On ocean, we would like to see healthy oceans as one of the targets, two, realize the benefits of marine resources and three, healthy fish stocks. These are not exhaustive but we hope will shape ocean and sea SDG.

On sustainable energy, 1.3 billion people continue to have no access to electricity. Solomon Islands is developing a energy policy to have 50% renewable energy by 2020. This can be achieved with focused international partnership with public and private sector participation. To reduce green house gas (GHG) emissions it is critical more needs to be done on renewable energy.

Mr. Chairman,

In closing, SIDS seeks a new spirit of partnership that will transform the international economic system, one that allows SIDS to fully integrate and participate in the global economy. Pacific SIDS in this regard, provides 60% of the world's tuna, with more investment in domestic economies, these countries could get more value for their resources to eradicate poverty, and build resilience for a sustainable future. Thank you Mr. Chairman