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Remarks by
Ms. Rabab Fatima,

Under-Secretary-General &
High Representative for the Least Developed
Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries &
Small Island Developing States

at the

Briefing on SIDS4 Conference for SIDS
Ambassadors in Geneva

6 December 2023

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Excellencies,

Distinguished Colleagues,

At the outset, I wish to join USG Li in expressing our sincere
thanks for the opportunity to address you today, as we are
preparing for the upcoming SIDS4 Conference.

I have just returned from COP28, where the SIDS agenda took
center stage.

SIDS are disproportionally impacted by the adverse effects of
climate change. The urgency of the challenges these nations
face is clear.

The escalating frequency and intensity of climate related
disasters continues to disrupt the lives and livelihoods of
people living in islands and coastal communities.

Climate change-driven disasters have negatively affected debt
to GDP ratios and stalled sustainable development.

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Over the past half -century, the weather, climate, and water
related hazards have resulted in $153 billion losses for SIDS.

Adding to this

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First, at COP28, my Office co-organized an event with AOSIS on
Loss and Damage where discussions focused on means to
address the critical financing needs of SIDS.

We also joined forces with partners such as the International
Trade Centre (ITC), and the International Organization for
Migration (IOM), to highlight critical issues such as trade
facilitation and climate induced migration for vulnerable
countries including SIDS.

Second, we led a dialogue with the private sector through the
SIDS Global Business Network Forum.

Preceding the Conference in 2024, the SIDS-GBN Forum will
aim to get increased support from the private sector for the
sustainable development of SIDS.

We have also scheduled a series of preparatory webinars for
the SIDS-GBN Forum, to explore strategies in support of the
new SIDS Programme of Action.
new

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Third, my Office is currently working towards producing a
report on digital transformation, in close collaboration with
other UN agencies.

We will carry out country-specific case studies for Kiribati, Sao
Tome and Principe, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines,
representing the three SIDS regions.

The studies will produce knowledge products

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It also contains policy recommendations for the new
Programme of Action.

Our sincere thanks to partners from the International Trade
Centre (ITC) including UNCTAD and several SIDS Missions in
Geneva for their contributions in this report.

 Fifth, the SIDS National Focal Points network led by my Office
represents another key initiative.

We are finalizing the SIDS NFP Engagement Strategy which will
facilitate the network in localization of the new Programme of
Action.

It will guide the NFPs in carrying out their main functions in
support of the new Programme of Action.

 Finally, as a member of the Advisory Panel to the Secretary-General's Early Warning For All initiative, I will continue to
work with my UN counterparts to ensure the most vulnerable
nations remain a priority.
Excellencies,

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We are about 6 weeks away from the first intergovernmental
Preparatory Committee meeting in New York. Scheduled for 22
– 26 January 2024.

My office, together with USG Li and his team are ready to
provide you with all the necessary support.