



Statement by

H.E. Dr. Vince Henderson

**Permanent Representative
of the Commonwealth of Dominica to the United Nations**

on the occasion of the

**Summit for the Adoption of the Post-2015 Development Agenda
70th Session of the United Nations General Assembly**

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- Esteemed Heads of State and Government
- Distinguished Heads of Delegations
- Mr. Secretary General
- Mr. President
- Ladies and Gentlemen:

The developmental challenges faced by developing countries and especially Small Island Developing States (SIDS) find their roots in historical global inequities that persist today. The lopsided governance of international institutions and the failure of industrialized countries to take on their responsibilities for climate change continue to be a major obstacle to our development.

Therefore, in order for us to achieve our lofty Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), we must commit to reengineer the governance of our multilateral institutions and recognize common but differentiated responsibilities to create equity, fairness, justice, peace and security for all our people.

This must begin with the industrialized countries accepting and shouldering their responsibilities for placing our planet in peril. Climate change is a real and present, not a future danger to the continued existence to those of us who call islands our homes. Therefore, it is pointless for us to discuss SDGs in a future that may not exist for many small and low lying coastal states.

The Government of Dominica therefore calls on all Member States to make commitments to reduce and to reverse the activities that contribute to climate change at the next Conference of the Parties (COP) in Paris in December.

A little over 4 weeks ago, on August 27, the people of Dominica were reminded of the reality of climate change when over a 16-hour period, 18 inches of rain from Tropical Storm Erika left 13 confirmed dead, while 17 people are still missing. Erika also wreaked havoc to our infrastructure to the tune of almost half a billion U.S. dollars. In less than 24 hours, Erika wiped out 82% of our country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

This means that funds that were allocated to remove more of our people from poverty and to continue on a development path to allow our country to meet its SDGs will now have to be redirected towards rebuilding and creating greater resilience to protect our people and island from other devastating hydro-meteorological events being brought about by climate change.

The Government and people of Dominica express our gratitude to all countries and organizations that came to our aid during our time of need.

We are gratified to see several of our priority issues reflected in the Post-2015 Development Agenda: the need to build resilience, conserve and sustainably use oceans and seas, food security, water and sanitation, affordable, reliable and sustainable energy, crime, climate change, and sustainable consumption and production.

Dominica is committed to seeing this agenda fully realized, and therefore will continue to actively do its part within its limited scope; But we also recognize that the means of implementation are critical to the realization of the SDGs as part of the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

The Addis Ababa Agenda for Action provides a mechanism for enabling developing countries to meet the SDGs. One area that must be addressed expeditiously is the situation faced by middle-income SIDS like Dominica. In order for those of us in SIDS to take full advantage of such developmental financing, we must be recognized and treated as a special category by multilateral partners and organizations.

The measure of per capita income distorts the true situation in most SIDS. The vulnerability to climate change events as well as the level of indebtedness of middle income SIDS must also be considered for qualifying for Official Development Assistance (ODA) and concessionary financing. Dominica therefore reiterates the call in clause 62 of the Addis Accord that calls for “the need to devise methodologies to better account for the complex and diverse realities of middle-income countries”.

The Government of Dominica is convinced that the SDGs are achievable. However, a strong commitment to protecting our planet within the framework that is fair and equitable is critical. This must be buttressed by durable and genuine partnerships with mutual respect between and among states. Development partners, especially intergovernmental agencies and financial institutions must become more responsive to the needs of SIDS.

Their interventions, therefore, must reflect the aspirations of the people and informed by genuine participation and local ownership. The traditional North-South relationship must be reset to embrace collaboration and cooperation rather than prescription and dictation. This new paradigm should be enhanced by South-