

SIDS Joint Statement by

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**Item 3: Interactive Dialogue with Special Rapporteur on Water and
Sanitation**

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Thank you, Mr. President.

I take the floor on behalf of a Group of Small Island Developing States, the full list of which will be available on the HRC Extranet. We would like to thank the Special Rapporteur for the comprehensive report presented under this agenda item and for the presentation today.

Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are among the most water-scarce countries in the world, with seven in ten SIDS facing risks of water shortage, including nine in ten low-lying SIDS. Access to clean water and adequate sanitation is an inalienable human right, indivisible and essential for preserving dignity, ensuring health, and advancing sustainable development for all. Our people primarily rely on groundwater and rainwater harvesting systems, rendering them exceptionally susceptible to the adverse impacts of climate change. The groundwater resources in these regions face significant threats, including pollution, depletion, and the intrusion of saltwater.

By extension, water scarcity poses significant constraints on the economic development of SIDS. Although SIDS are custodians of large expanses of oceans,

freshwater availability is limited. The limited availability directly affects the feasibility of establishing water-intensive industries that might otherwise align with the unique contexts of SIDS, including sectors such as fish processing, beverage production, textile manufacturing, and smelting and refining of metals. While SIDS are advancing access to water and sanitation, we are still facing issues of service quality, infrastructure upkeep, and water quality management. These challenges are closely tied to managing water resources and preserving aquatic habitats. In this regard, we would like to seek the Special Rapporteur's expertise on best practices for SIDS to conserve aquatic habitats, and the sustainable provision of water and sanitation.

Thank you.