

4TH INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE ON
**Small Island
Developing States**
27-30 MAY, 2024
ST. JOHN'S, ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

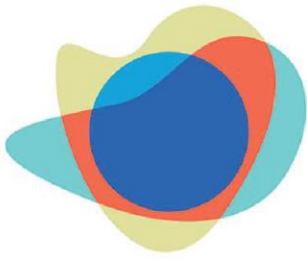
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SIDS Children and Youth Action Summit, to be held in Antigua, launched in Barbados.



Bridgetown, Barbados, 11 May 2024 – A first-of-its-kind summit placing young people at the forefront of discussions on the challenges facing Small Island Developing States (SIDS) was officially launched on Monday. The SIDS Children and Youth Action Summit will bring together 60 young delegates to drive “meaningful change” on a range of issues threatening the future of SIDS.

The Secretariat of the United Nations 4th International SIDS Conference
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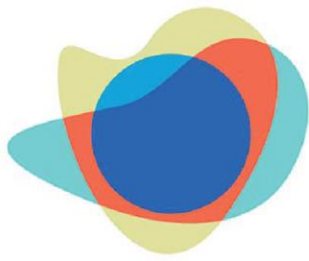
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The event, facilitated by the Government of Antigua and Barbuda, the Ashley Lashley Foundation and UNICEF began the countdown to the groundbreaking Summit which will take place from 24-26 May ahead of the 4th International Conference on SIDS in Antigua and Barbuda.



Key partner Rep, Ashley Lashley and Pieter Bult

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Prime Minister Wants to “Activate” Youth Engagement

Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda Gaston Browne described the summit as “a pivotal gathering amplifying the voices of children and youth.” Addressing young people directly, he added, “We expect active engagement, innovative ideas, and bold initiatives. Your voices matter and will shape the outcomes.”

Representative for the Eastern Caribbean Area, Pieter Bult noted that the summit’s theme: “Small Islands, Big Dreams: Youth for SIDS Resilience,” zeroes in on the specific challenges faced by SIDS, including climate change, limited resources, and economic vulnerability. He also stressed the critical role youth must play in addressing these issues.

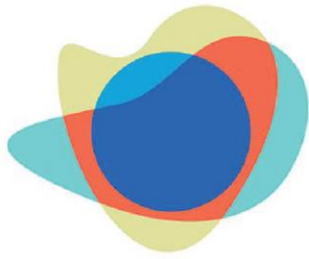
“This summit is a beacon of hope, a platform for collaboration. Children and youth are not waiting for tomorrow to lead; they are leading now,” said the UNICEF Representative.

Youth to Craft Call to Action

Ashley Lashley, Executive Director of The Ashley Lashley Foundation, revealed that children and youth at the summit will engage in discussions on climate action, education, sustainable development, and their rights. She added that a key outcome will be a “Call to Action” presented to world leaders at the upcoming SIDS4 conference and a 10-year commitment to action.

“We will implement youth-led projects and establish the first-ever SIDS Youth Action Body to monitor progress and hold leaders accountable,” the advocate disclosed.

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Monday's launch featured a video showcasing youth from the SIDS regions: the Caribbean, Pacific and Atlantic Ocean and South China Sea. They demanded action on climate change, biodiversity protection, and access to education and clean water. A poem by student Atiba Thompson-Sealy aptly titled: "Save the World" further emphasized the perspectives of young people on the issues.

Key partners also present at the launch included the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

"We are pleased to support empowering adolescents and youth in SIDS," said UNFPA Director and Representative for the Caribbean, Elizabeth Talbert.

Chief of the Social Sector Division at the CDB, Dr Martin Baptiste agreed, saying that the bank was keen to support initiatives that create space for young people to share ideas and solutions.

"Realizing resilient prosperity requires children and youth to be valued partners," he said.

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