

Shea Gopaul remarks as delivered at HLPF Session: [Coming together to help Small Island Developing States to get on a path to realise the SDGs - Friday, 9 July, 9:00 am - 11:00 am](#)

Thank you, Mr. Moderator.

Dear Excellencies and fellow participants, my name is Shea Gopaul and I am the Special Representative to the UN for the the international Organisation of Employers, and I am speaking to you today on behalf of the Business and Industry Major Group of which I am Co-Chair.

As we heard from previous speakers, small Island Developing States are in a crisis. However, the private sector is here as a partner, to assist, to bring innovation, technology – jobs, jobs, and more jobs.

Local restrictions have deprived SIDS of one of the biggest generators to revenue – tourism and this has set many into a true crisis mode. Social protection systems have been weak for some time and yet despite this vulnerability, SIDS have shown incredible resilience and innovation is key.

From a private sector perspective – and I will now speak on behalf of the International Organisation of Employers (IOE), which represents some 150 national employers federations throughout the world. We are trying to work together to make a difference. But it is really important that we need an inclusive multilateralism-which needs to include UN, ILO, World Bank, donors, foundations, but also business organizations that represent the voice of business and not only multinationals, but also small, medium-sized companies, which are the backbone of most economies.

I would like to just raise an example that we, IOE, and UN DCO have embarked on a project to bring UN Resident Coordinators together with employer federations, and to our surprise many of them have never met.

And now we're bringing them to the table to include them in the planning and also the implementation of projects, Cooperation Frameworks, UN Common Country Assessments on the ground.

But what does business need? We need clear statistics, data, clear roles and responsibilities – in order to assist in all countries. The employers, the private sector, are here to assist, but please bring us to the table so that we can all ensure that we make an equitable recovery from this crisis. Thank you.