Third session of the SIDS DOCK Assembly

United Nations

New York, NY 10017

23 September 2017

NOTE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

ON SIDS DOCK PRESENCE IN NEW YORK

DIPLOMATIC LIAISON OFFICE TO THE UNITED NATIONS

1. Within the context of the SIDS DOCK Secretariat Staffing and Operational Budget for the period 2016 to 2021, the Secretary-General proposed the establishment of a SIDS DOCK presence. In this regard, this Note serves as support for the creation of a diplomatic liaison presence in New York.

**I. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE**

1. New York has always served as the main hub for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) interaction, as it provides a unique opportunity for the possibility, if needed, of daily access to the majority of SIDS countries through their respective Permanent Missions to the United Nations in one location. During the startup, interim and early phases of SIDS DOCK, New York played a critical role in facilitating the smooth and speedy establishment of the Organization. In addition, it also provides the most ideal location to convene Executive Council Meetings and Assemblies.
2. SIDS DOCK’s journey begun in 2009, when Members of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) or SIDS countries began the process of establishing the organisation through a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). On 1 September 2014, twenty (20) of these States signed the Statute Establishing the SIDS DOCK, during the Ceremony for the Opening of Signature of the Statute Establishing the SIDS DOCK, held on the margins of the United Nations Third International Meeting on Small Island Developing States, in Apia, Samoa, in September 2014.
3. The SIDS DOCK Statute came into force on 27 September 2015, and members convened an official launch ceremony of the SIDS DOCK on 30 September 2015, on the margins of the General Debate of the 70th session of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly, in New York, to celebrate the legal entry into force of the SIDS DOCK Treaty, recognising the establishment of the historic intergovernmental organisation vested with the full powers of the United Nations.
4. In December 2015, on the margins of the UNFCCC COP 21, in Paris, France, the First Session of the SIDS DOCK Assembly was held, where members were elected to serve as President, Vice Presidents, and on the Executive Council. In June 2016, the First Meeting of the SIDS DOCK Executive Council was held in New York, where the SIDS DOCK Registration Certificate from the UN Secretary-General, received on 3 June 2016, was tabled at the meeting.
5. Belize is the SIDS DOCK Host County, and the Belize-based Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Climate Change Centre (CCCCC/5Cs) is the designated Interim SIDS DOCK Secretariat.
6. The establishment of SIDS DOCK marked the very first inter-governmentally recognized SIDS Organization not only for renewable energy but in totality, as the other entity specializing on SIDS matters, Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) is an informal negotiating entity with no official legal standing.
7. In accordance with the objectives of SIDS DOCK, as set out in Article II Sections 1 through 6 of its Statute, SIDS DOCK is intended to provide SIDS, inter alia, with technological, financial and capacity development, which are extremely important to SIDS. It has been proven, that a collective approach to development is more beneficial, thus the reason for establishing SIDS DOCK as a hub for renewable energy matters for SIDS.
8. SIDS DOCK intends to operate strategically in an effort to have a global SIDS voice in renewable energy. This must be done efficiently and effectively in order to minimize costs, and maximize tangible deliverables on the ground in its member states. Recognizing that strategically positioning SIDS DOCK’s presence in locations where there is a large concentration of renewable energy organizations and entities, and where there is either a low or high SIDS presence would be invaluable to the Organization. Thus the proposals to having a SIDS DOCK presence in Vienna and New York, respectively, are critical.
9. This proposal will be in support of having a SIDS DOCK presence in New York.

**II. BENEFITS FOR SIDS DOCK**

**A. Increased collaboration with international organisations and entities in New** **York**

1. Even more than ever, in the current context of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, the United Nations Headquarters is now a major hub for discussions and negotiations on the sustainable development goals of which Goal 7: Affordable and clean energy, speaks specifically to the mandates of SIDS DOCK. However, noting that the Goals are interlinked and indivisible makes it more prudent for SIDS DOCK to have a presence in New York in order to be able to participate in the numerous intergovernmental processes and discussions securing a place for SIDS at the table, while keeping abreast of the issues. Additionally, New York offers a unique concentration of organizations, agencies, and global government representation, which would allow for even a small SIDS DOCK presence there to have multiple impacts on its capacity for continuous and increased involvement in renewable energy practice and policy discussions.
2. Entities such as the Secretary-General’s SE4ALL, IRENA, and other associated entities are expected to become important partners for SIDS DOCK, and the collaborative work stemming from these initiatives will be invaluable to the Organization and its membership. To date, a substantial portion of SE4ALL activities have taken place in New York and it is likely that this will continue to be the case. In addition, certain key partners such as the UN, the World Bank, the UNDP, and UNOHRLLS are based in New York and Washington, D.C. so SIDS DOCK’s presence in New York will ensure that there is meaningful, timely, and informed participation in this initiative and others in the US. This participation is becoming more pertinent as SE4ALL continues to evolve and as SIDS DOCK’s role as a renewable energy hub for SIDS crystalizes.

**B. Potential for more interaction with SIDS DOCK membership and wider SIDS**

**membership in New York**

1. SIDS DOCK presently has 16 members\* and 20 signatories, with the anticipation of having all 38 SIDS countries becoming members of the SIDS DOCK. Currently only 6 SIDS countries, namely Bahamas, Barbados, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Guyana and Jamaica, have an Embassy and/or Consulate in the host country of the SIDS DOCK Headquarters, Belize. However, all other SIDS Countries have representation in New York[[1]](#footnote-1) with the exception of Cook Islands and Niue. An active SIDS DOCK presence in New York would therefore facilitate interaction with these countries and, through them, their capitals, enabling a collaboration, which may otherwise be difficult and unmanageable because of geographic distance or time zone differences.

**C. Increased awareness of SIDS DOCK’s activities and interest in UN membership**

1. SIDS DOCK presence in New York would help stimulate interest in renewable energy and in activities that would facilitate the creation of a favourable environment for increased uptake of renewable energy, especially in SIDS. More countries would have the opportunity to learn about SIDS DOCK and its programme of work, activities, and the benefits of membership and/or partnership. In addition, the Organization would benefit from a broader overview of the global context in which it operates, enabling it to adjust its activities to maximize their impacts and remaining relevant.

**D. Increased collaboration with US entities and other entities based in the United**

**States**

1. SIDS DOCK’s presence in New York would increase access to United States institutions, organizations, and other relevant stakeholders in renewable energy, such as Clinton Climate Initiative, Bloomberg New Energy Finance, and the World Resources Institute, to name a few. While some of these corporations are already ongoing and regular, proximity will make it both simpler and more cost-effective for the Organization to maintain these relationships. A New York presence would also facilitate constructive relationships in North America.

**III. FUNCTIONS OF THE DIRECTOR OF DIPLOMATIC LIAISON**

1. Coordinate andorganize all logical arrangements for the convening of Assembly sessions and Executive Council meetings, including liaising with the relevant United Nations departments to ensure accessibility to the facility for all participants, including observers and guests, when applicable, room bookings and equipment facilities, and participation of relevant officials from the UN Secretariat.
2. Provide administrative and advisory assistance to the Permanent Mission of the President of the SIDS DOCK Assembly and Executive Council, respectively, on matters relating to the Organization.
3. Liaise with Heads of Missions and other Representatives of Permanent Missions of SIDS DOCK members, including organizing workshops and furnishing information
4. Liaise with Heads of Missions and other Representatives of Permanent Missions of SIDS member states regarding membership to SIDS DOCK.
5. Liaise with non-SIDS member states of the United Nations promoting SIDS DOCK, its programme of work and its activities, with the hope of fostering partnerships and securing financial and resource mobilization for the Organization.
6. Liaise with the various divisions and entities of the United Nations, specialized agencies and other related organizations in an effort to raise awareness of SIDS DOCK and its activities to enhance cooperation and partnerships for the Organization.
7. Pursue the status of Permanent Observer to the General Assembly for the SIDS DOCK and accreditation as an Inter-Governmental Organization to bodies such as ECOSOC.
8. Act as senior diplomatic advisor to the SIDS DOCK Secretary-General and Secretariat, including on protocol and assembly and meeting affairs

**IV. STAFFING AND PREMISES**

1. Based on the assessment of current needs, it is proposed that the presence in New York consist of one professional staff member at the P5/D1 level, with intern support.
2. In order to use resources efficiently, SIDS DOCK would research sharing office space with other Permanent Missions and/or intergovernmental organisations that have Permanent Observer status at the UN and a small presence in New York. In this way, many of the common facilities would be shared, thus ensuring lower cost to the Organization.
3. Administratively, a New York presence would be supported centrally by SIDS DOCK Secretariat at the Caribbean Community Climate Change Center (CCCCC) at Headquarters in Belize.
4. INDICATIVE BUDGET

The indicative budget is in keeping with the SIDS DOCK Work Programme (2017-2021), and is based on the assumption of office accommodation for up to two persons – Director Diplomatic Liaison and intern. The hosting of the SIDS DOCK Diplomatic Liaison Office is still being worked out. It would be appreciated if the office costs and utilities (water, electricity, telephone and Internet) could be covered by the hosting entity. The resources for staffing would be mobilized by SIDS DOCK in partnership with other international partners.

Indicative Budget: SIDS DOCK New York Diplomatic Liaison in USD

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Item | Year 1 (USD) | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 |
| Director Diplomatic Liaison | 104,000 |  |  |  |  |
| Health Insurance Benefits | 32,000 |  |  |  |  |
| Office Equipment (computer, laptop, printer, photocopy machine) | 9,000 |  |  |  |  |
| Office Stationery & Supplies | 6,000 |  |  |  |  |
| Postage, Courier, Mail | 1,500 |  |  |  |  |
| Assemblies, Meetings, Conferences, Workshops | 90,000 |  |  |  |  |

1. Thirty-six SIDS countries with Permanent Missions to the United Nations: Antigua and Barbuda\*, Bahamas\*, Barbados\*, Belize\*, Cabo Verde, Comoros, Cuba, Dominica\*, Dominican Republic, Fiji, Grenada\*, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica\*, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Mauritius\*, Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Saint Kitts and Nevis\*, Saint Lucia\*, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines\*, Samoa\*, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles\*, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Suriname, Timor Leste, Tonga\*, Trinidad and Tobago, Tuvalu\*, and Vanuatu. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)