Remarks by Under-Secretary-General Gyan Chandra Acharya at the Dinner in Honour of His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco

Bouley Restaurant
New York
24 September, 2013

Your Serene Highness, Prince Albert II

Your Excellencies Heads of State and Government,

Your Excellencies Ministers,

Your Excellencies Ambassadors,

Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

May I, at the outset, express my sincerest gratitude to our host tonight Ambassador Isabelle Picco, of the Permanent Mission of the Principality of Monaco to the United Nations for the invitation extended to me and my colleagues from UN-OHRLLS. I thank you also for the opportunity to make some remarks.

Under my office’s advocacy mandate for SIDS we have highlighted oceans as one of our advocacy platforms from which we organize events with appropriate partners, both within and outside of the UN system to advocate in favour of the SIDS cause.

The choice by us to focus on oceans and its related issues was an easy one to make. Oceans issues is a natural fit for SIDS. The ‘special case’ for SIDS in terms of their environment and development was first recognized by the international community in 1992s Agenda 21 under the Chapter on Oceans.

Since then, oceans and coastal issues have been featured in the 1994’s Barbados Programme of Action for the sustainable development of SIDS and its Mauritius Strategy for Implementation adopted in 2005.

In the preparations for the 2014 Third International Conference on SIDS to be convened in Samoa next September, it is again evident that oceans issues will once again be prominent.

Monaco has been a strong champion for oceans and sustainable development and in this regard, your Serene Highness Prince Albert II’s deep personal interest on issues concerning oceans and sustainable development in general is well known and respected.

May I take the opportunity to offer my appreciation on the work of your Highness’ Foundation and its focus on biodiversity, water and climate change. These are priority issues for SIDS. The mandate of my office also covers LDCs (of which 10 are SIDS) and as such the focus of the Foundation on the Least Developed Countries is
fully appreciated. That the Foundation now has over 230 projects in 40 different countries, since its establishment in 2006, is already a commendable accomplishment.

Again, the foresight wishes of the late Prince Rainner III for the setting up of the Monaco Scientific Center to Carry out oceanographic research and support governmental and international organizations responsible for the protection and conservation of marine life is yet another example of the leadership role that the Principality has had on oceans issues.

It is therefore not a surprise to learn of Monaco’s intention to support SIDS through concrete grass roots projects to support SIDS communities conserve and manage their natural resources. This is something that I would think SIDS would very much welcome. My office looks forward to supporting Monaco in its endeavour to support SIDS including in identifying the appropriate modalities for implementation of the project.

As for my office’s own work, we intend to focus, with the support of SIDS and partners, on convening a SIDS private sector partnership forum in the Samoa as well during or around the time of next year’s conference.

While intention is to establish and strengthen partnerships among SIDS private sectors and between SIDS private sectors and some of the key global players, we are also mindful that for many SIDS the private sector may be too small to meaningfully engage. As such there will be a focus on livelihoods. The advantages that regional integration can bring as well as on connectivity would also be key factors.

We launched this idea in Barbados during the inter-regional SIDS meeting last month and it has gained momentum and support since. Some of the key sectors we are looking to promote SIDS private sector partnerships in are directly related to the oceans and its resources. These are: tourism; oceans resources/fisheries; transportation/ICT/connectivity.

My office would welcome support from SIDS as well as partners. Indeed, Monaco’s support would be welcomed as well in this initiative as well.

May I take this opportunity to wish you all successful and fruitful deliberations during this 68th General Assembly high level week.

I thank you.