

**NGO Committee on Sustainable Development-NY**  
**UN Ocean Conference: Side Event-Meeting June 7, 2017; 3PM-4:30PM**  
**Conference Room 12, UN Headquarters in New York, NY**

**Small Island Developing States: Taking the Lead for Sustainable Ocean Communities**



**H.E. Ms. Penelope Beckles, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Permanent Mission of Trinidad and Tobago to the United Nations.** Ambassador Beckles has been a practicing attorney since 1988, she has held a number of ministerial portfolios in Trinidad and Tobago, including Minister for Public Utilities and the Environment, from 2003 to 2007, and Minister for Culture and Tourism from 2002 to 2003. From 2001 to 2002, she was concurrently Minister for Social Development, Minister for Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs and Minister for Health. Having first entered Parliament in 1995 as an Opposition Senator, she served as Leader of Opposition Business in Trinidad and Tobago's Senate from 2010 to 2013 and its first female Deputy Speaker of the Parliament from 2007 to 2010. A past student of St Joseph's Convent, San Fernando, Ambassador Beckles attended the University of the West Indies, at both the St. Augustine, Trinidad and Cave Hill, Barbados, campuses where she graduated with honours. She then graduated from the Hugh Wooding Law School. As a resident of her local hometown of Arima, Ambassador Beckles is deeply involved

in a number of community and national organizations, including the Arima Foundation for the Advancement of Women and Children and the Rape Crisis Centre of Trinidad and Tobago, where she served as President. Ambassador Beckles is also a member of the UNICEF Board in Trinidad, as well as the Commonwealth Institute for Women in Leadership. On 22 August 2016, she presented her credentials to then UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon as the Permanent Representative of Trinidad and Tobago to the United Nations. Special interests include issue relating to women and children, health, and the environment. Born on 12 September 1961, she is married and has four step-children.



**H.E. Mr. Odo Tevi, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Vanuatu to the United Nations.** Since May 2014, Ambassador Tevi became Vanuatu's Permanent Representative/Ambassador to the United Nations, New York in May 2014. Apart from this role, Ambassador Tevi also assumed other international roles at the UN. He is currently the Chairman of UN Disarmament Commission, was the Chairman of the Special Committee on UN Charter and Strengthening of the Role of the Organization and also was Chairman of the Asia Pacific Group, Vice-President for the UN Pledging Conference for Development Activities and Chairman of the joint Vanuatu and UN Consultative Forum on ICPD and National Sustainable Development Plan. He was extensively involved in the negotiation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the UN's Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR). From 2013-2014, Odo became an international consultant and did assignments for the World Bank, Asian Development Bank,

European Union and the Melanesian Spearhead Group. For the latter he investigated whether the four countries (Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu) should adopt a common currency. From 2003 to 2013, Odo was the Governor of the Reserve Bank of Vanuatu. During this period, he was also Vanuatu's Alternate Governor to the International Monetary Fund. His major achievement as Governor of the central bank during his 10 year stint was that Vanuatu was able to achieve monetary and financial stability and this was translated into record high economic growth. This was achieved despite the challenges imposed by the 2008 global financial crisis. Before becoming Governor, Odo was Head of the Macroeconomic Policy Division at the Vanuatu Ministry of Finance and Economic Management. Odo has a Bachelor of Economics degree from the University of Papua New Guinea. He then obtained a Masters of Arts (Development Economics) from the University of Sussex, UK. He has a graduate diploma from the Australian Institute of Company Directors and also an Advanced Diploma in Monitoring and Evaluation from New York University. He did his executive training at Harvard University Kennedy School of Government and also at Columbia University Business School. Odo and his wife Sharon have three young children and are residing in New York. Odo is an avid reader and loves music.



**Mr. Isaac Reshad, Managing Director of Global Access Partner, LLC (GAP).** Mr. Reshad is a versatile and tactical entrepreneur with over 20 years of international venture experience. He brings a proven track record of leadership, international project management, trade financing, global sales and marketing, international joint venture, cross-cultural communication and venture capital experience to each engagement. Mr. Reshad began his career as a small business consultant, specializing in international sourcing, production and import/export operations. His projects concentrated in emerging markets and countries with United States free trade opportunities. These projects focused on the infrastructure, real estate, and textile industries. Currently, Mr. Reshad as the Managing Director of Global Access Partner, LLC (GAP), which assists companies identify and monetize global business opportunities. GAP integrates the private sector, government agencies, and key stakeholders to secure and manage deals. The company specializes in Global Business Development, Project

Acquisition and Management, Infrastructure/PPP, Government Relations, Impact Investing, and Strategic and Capital Raise Consulting. Gap plans to invest in Small Island Developing States in several sectors such as, but not limited to sustainable infrastructure, Climate Change industry and innovation, renewable energy and agriculture. Prior to GAP, Mr. Reshad Co-founded and Managed Sybaris Consulting Group LLC (Sybaris), which strategized with clients to identify opportunities for investment in post-conflict emerging markets and frontier markets. Sybaris provides full-cycle advisory services ranging from business development planning for project structure, leading negotiations with funding sources, evaluating local partners, and designing a sustainable and secure path for infrastructure projects. Mr. Reshad deployed his political and financial expertise to secure funding through his expansive network of equity, grant, loan, and risk insurance providers. Sybaris focused geographically in Central and Southern Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. He also serves on the boards of numerous professional and charitable organizations, while developing partnerships to support the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.



**Mr. Christopher Spezzano – Founder and President of the Form & Matter Foundation.** At nineteen Mr. Spezzano began doing international aid work and helped with AIDS outreach and teaching children how to read at a Liberian refugee settlement. He then taught a variety of subjects in rural villages in a number of developing countries, supported conservation efforts and biological research in the Amazon Rainforest, taught in Riker’s Island prison, and volunteered with a number of charities and organizations dedicated to planetary wellbeing. He has been to the front lines and seen a wide spectrum of humanity’s problems and also the opacity of the global aid system. At the start of his international aid work, it became obvious that there was a big disparity between the efficacy and accountability of the planet’s aid organizations. The Form & Matter Network is an extension of his heart and mind. After graduating with a degree in political science and sociology from Columbia University in the City of New York, he was able to fully devote himself to building the Form & Matter Network and a technology-

powered charitable foundation with the ability to transform the international aid process.



**Mr. Asi Meskin, Co-Founder & General Manager for North America of Bowhead Technology.** Mr. Meskin has vast experience in business development for tech across continents, creating corporate deals facilitating investments and forming global strategic partnerships, with over 15 years of experience. He has executed, managed and negotiated global corporate deals with the likes of Warner Brothers, First National Bank, Pango, TBWA, Lancet, Disney and many more. He works in Israel, China and the US. As the Co-Founder of Bowhead Technology, he is dedicated to solve children’s wellness issues via IOT technologies, gamification and interactive content. Their first product, Gululu, is a three-in-one product that combines a design bottle, a healthy tracking device, and an educational game. Gululu helps children stay hydrated by caring for a virtual pet. As kids drink more water from Gululu, their virtual pet grows and makes friends, and the kids develop a healthy habit. Gululu partners with Generosity on a mission to hydrate the world!

For every Gululu bottle sold - we will provide clean drinking water for life to one child in a developing country.



**Ms. Emilie McGlone, Director of Peace Boat US, New York Office.** Ms. McGlone has been working with Peace Boat since 2004 and currently is the United Nations liaison and Director of the New York-based office of Peace Boat US, a non-profit organization working to promote peace, sustainable development and respect for the environment through educational programs organized onboard the Peace Boat, a chartered passenger ship that travels the world on peace voyages. Peace Boat holds Special Consultative Status with the Social and Economic Council of the United Nations and works in partnership with UN representatives, Nobel Peace Laureates and community leaders from around the world to create opportunities for international cooperation focused on environmental sustainability, cultural awareness and peace education. Emilie works to foster youth education and develops specific programs to learn about important global issues onboard the Peace Boat. Founded in 1983 and nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2008, Peace

Boat has sailed on over 93 global voyages, carrying more than 60,000 people to more than 100 countries. Peace Boat has recently launched a new initiative to build an Ecoship to sail in 2020, showcasing green technology and design, while inspiring positive change to radically reduce our carbon footprint. Peace Boat is a committed campaigner for the Sustainable Development Goals, sailing with the Global Goals Logo on the hull of the ship. Peace Boat’s Ecoship Project will build the world’s most sustainable passenger ship. A flagship for the SDGs, Ecoship seeks to address ocean acidification with reduced carbon emissions and significantly reduce marine pollution. It was presented as the first voluntary commitment from civil society to the Ocean Conference preparatory meeting in February. For more information about the Peace Boat, please visit [www.peaceboat.org](http://www.peaceboat.org)



**Mr. Marc Jourdan, UN Programs & Outreach Manager, Global Foundation for Democracy and Development.** A qualified lawyer with an LLM in Environmental Law, Mr. Jourdan contributes to inter-governmental meetings and conferences, participates in multi-stakeholder discussions on matter related to climate policy and the UN’s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and continuously seeks to showcase the important role that NGOs like the Global Foundation for Democracy and Development can play in supporting sustainable development across the globe. Prior to joining GFDD in 2013, he worked as a policy advisor on climate change issues for the international nonprofit The Climate Group as well as the Permanent Mission of the Maldives to the United Nations. Previously, he worked as a corporate lawyer for 4 years in the United Kingdom. Mr. Jourdan has an LLB in Law and French from the University of Surrey and an LLM in Environmental Law from the School of Oriental and African Studies in London.

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