



ALLIANCE OF SMALL ISLAND STATES

## **COP Presidency Event: ‘Action and Solidarity - the Critical Decade’**

Statement by the Honourable Gaston Browne, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda and Chair of the Alliance of Small Island States

November 1, 2021

Excellencies and colleagues

It is through gritted teeth I say that it is a pleasure to be with you here today.

We are here to deliver on commitments made but we are closing out 2021 with ambition that puts us on a pathway to overshooting the 1.5 goal.

Ambition is our litmus test.

There are some of us in this room who think they are very close to being 1.5-compatible. But when they fail to accept to contribute their fair share of climate finance, it puts them further away from being 1.5 compatible.

When developed countries renege on their finance commitments it has knock-on effects on climate action. We then get demonised for having to adopt outdated technology, that are dumped in our vulnerable countries, as a result of inadequate and inaccessible climate finance to implement our NDCs.

Reports indicate that we will not meet the 100 billion USD goal until 2023, meanwhile the G20 supports the fossil fuel industry at rates of over 600 billion USD a year – *including through excessive subsidies*.

We clearly have the money and the technology to make this transition.

The economic impacts of climate disasters on SIDS surpasses our GDP, and if you need a reminder of this fact, the tropical cyclones that destroyed, Bahamas, Dominica, Fiji and my home country, Barbuda, should serve as enough evidence.

Hurricane do not bypass vulnerable SIDS that are defined as high income. GDP per capita cannot be applied to climate finance and concessional financing must be available to all SIDS in order to build our resilience to climate change.

If sea level rise does not get us first, we will surely drown in debt.

As part of any new climate finance goal AOSIS is pushing for a concrete financing sub-target for loss and damage. Trust has been eroded and islands can no longer afford to be naïve. If we continue to see lack of ambition on mitigation and on climate finance; loss and damage must have real teeth to force restitution. Overshooting 1.5 degrees exponentially increases the risks, and price tags of climate change impacts. You cannot continue to have it both ways.

Finally, the scale of adaptation finance must reflect the mitigation pathway that we are on. Adaptation finance needs to be entirely grant-based, drastically increased, accessible, and have parity with that of mitigation.

While we know this COP is not an end point, I would like to remind you all that “*a critical decade*” does not mean action in 2028 or 2029. We need to see structural changes now. Our people are suffering.

Thank you.

