



A L L I A N C E O F S M A L L I S L A N D S T A T E S

Statement on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)

Fourth Intergovernmental Conference on an internationally legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction.

18th March, 2022

Madame President,

The Members of the Alliance of Small Island States wish to join the Group of 77 and China and others in expressing our utmost appreciation to you, Madame President, for your able stewardship of this, our fourth session.

It is clear that we needed to come together, even with the given restrictions, to focus again on the critical objectives of this IGC process and establish a robust and enduring agreement for the BBNJ. For this, we are grateful to you Madame President and the Secretariat, for your efforts in making arrangements to allow us to proceed in person and also to welcome civil society in the second week.

This session has been a turning point for the inter-governmental conference. We have actively engaged with each other on various textual proposals and pivot to the final stages of this process.

AOSIS believes that there is considerable work to be done inter-sessionally, and we look forward to engaging with other delegations as we continue to build bridges.

To help us on the way, AOSIS supports the call for the early release of a revised text that best captures progress from this session and points us to possible landing zones. No doubt, the level of difficulty across issues is not equal, but all the same, every effort should be expended to make progress on all of the elements of the package we agreed upon.

AOSIS accepts that the onus is upon all of us to look for solutions together for even the most seemingly intractable issues. I can assure you Madame President that our Members are committed to undertaking the heavy lifting so that we can adopt a BBNJ Agreement .

For our members, this endeavour will require that we draw on all our available expertise to increase our effective participation in this very important process.

AOSIS cannot overemphasize how essential that participation is and how critical the support through the Voluntary Trust Fund has been and continues to be in this regard. We hope that our appeals for further contributions to the Trust Fund will be positively received.



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At the same time, we also hope that upcoming meeting will better accommodate the participation and contribution of observers and civil society, which are invaluable to the process.

Madame President,

AOSIS is grateful to all delegations for their constructive engagement and for the solidarity demonstrated throughout the IGC for the special case of small island developing states. We look forward to our next earliest engagement so that together we can finalize a robust and enduring agreement for the BBNJ. Thank you.