



Permanent Mission of Samoa to the United Nations

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ALLIANCE OF SMALL ISLANDS STATES - SAMOA'S VISION FOR THE PERIOD 2023 AND 2024

Prime Minister Browne

Excellencies and distinguished colleagues,

Let me begin by offering Samoa's best wishes to each and everyone present here today for a highly successful and rewarding 2023. It will be a full and demanding year for all of us.

I take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation and commendation to Prime Minister Browne, Ambassador Webson and their teams for their leadership, commitment and dedication during Antigua and Barbuda's Presidency of AOSIS. It will be a difficult task to follow, but I can assure you that Samoa will put its best foot forward to work with all the membership in an inclusive and transparent manner, so that we can together take our organization to the next level.

Samoa acknowledges with appreciation Pacific SIDS for the confidence placed in us to lead for the coming two years.

As you are all aware, the main focus of AOSIS's work to date, has been on climate change and sustainable development issues including negotiations and processes. Within these two broad priority headings, a cluster of issues have over the recent past, received attention in varying degrees. These include food security, energy, ocean's health, and more ambition on finance to support the achievement of agreed targets under the SDGs, the Paris Agreement and the SAMOA Pathway.

As a strong voice for the vulnerable, AOSIS's mandate is more than amplifying marginalized voices. It is also about advocating for the Alliance's interests on the global stage and to secure global commitments and agreement, within its mandate.

For the coming two years, Samoa as Chair of AOSIS looks forward to continuing strengthening and building on the excellent work of previous Chairs, Belize and more recently Antigua and Barbuda.

For 2023, we will continue the work to advance our collective interests in climate change especially with respect to climate financing and the achievement of the 50/50 split

between mitigation and adaptation. We will continue to keep the Loss and Damage flame burning and inject urgency into our efforts aimed at concluding BBNJ negotiations. The former was first brought to the attention of the UN in 1991 which set a train of events leading to the WIM and the establishment of the Santiago Network.

In line with the approval of the Paris Rulebook, we will play our part in pushing for pledges and commitments made during international conferences to be honored and for their timely and effective implementation on the ground. This will be one of our top priorities.

Sustainable development is a key strategic priority. Economic recovery is an enormous challenge and responsibility. To this end, the importance and effective implementation of the Multidimensional Vulnerability Index (MVI) cannot be over-emphasized. AOSIS has been at the forefront of this strategic process, and we must now over the coming 12 months complete what remains to be done. The MVI is a tool to assist SIDS in addressing the economic recovery challenge, especially in relation to access to concessional financing, debt regime sustainability and ODA eligibility and effectiveness. AOSIS's continued and strong advocacy is essential to the MVI being implemented by partner countries, international financial institutions and multilateral development banks.

With less than 2 years remaining to achieve the goals of the SAMOA Pathway, we must take stock and focus on lessons learnt that could be injected into preparations and direction for the 4th International Conference of SIDS in 2024. We must now engage in facilitating the seamless transition through ensuring that our preparations are completed in a timely manner especially the UN processes and requirements, working through the 2nd Committee.

Food security and clean and renewable energy deserves our full attention. The latter is a key driver for the achievement of the SDGs as well as reducing global gas emissions.

Ocean is the lifeblood for most of our countries. But whilst its sustainable use provides a core pathway towards our future development and livelihoods, like the climate emergency, we must also urgently address the associated risks. The health, governance and sustainable management of our ocean are key challenges. We must therefore advance work on the ocean-climate nexus. Plastic pollution negotiations are a priority and our active and forceful participation in the work of the recently established intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop an internationally legally binding instrument on this key issue will be actively supported and advocated.

We need to agree on what constitute the Blue Economy, given its critical importance to the economies of SIDS. We will also keep a close watch on developments with the Global Biodiversity Framework as agreed during COP15 in Montreal.

AOSIS's engagement in sea-level rise and maritime zones discussions will be elevated and guided by applicable principles and norms of international law and relevant international frameworks and standards.

As well, AOSIS will stay engaged with covid vaccination measures and seek common strategic global actions on post covid economic recovery.

Excellencies,

Whilst we shall continue to advocate and influence policy formulation and adoption, more emphasize will now be directed towards how we, as a group, can assist push for urgent and effective implementation of actions on the ground. In this vein, we will work more closely with like-minded groups within the UN and global systems such as the G77 + China, the Organization of Africa, Caribbean and Pacific States, our major development partners and UN entities. On the latter, we shall explore how we can utilize the Regional Co-ordinator's system to assist and provide guidance on project formulation, implementation, and other relevant issues.

Through the Steering Committee on Partnerships for SIDS, AOSIS will work towards enhancing and strengthening its existing coverage of activities and seek to secure new partnerships but also to explore public-private sector partnerships where feasible and practical, in leveraging opportunities in key sectors such as tourism, fisheries, connectivity, and health. To this end, having at least two meetings a year of the Committee will assist in giving direction and receiving information on progress made, or lack thereof, and steps necessary to remedy the situation.

Our work with partners on Partnerships awards and Fellowships will continue and expanded where feasible.

We also need to stay involved in emerging global issues such as the SDGs Summit, Declaration on Future Generations, Youth Summit, and the Summit for the Future.

AOSIS's advocacy role is a strategic necessity and is the threat that binds our work. Whilst the Chair's role is clear, it goes without saying that the active engagement of all members at the highest political level is critical to achieving our desired objectives.

Finally, the work begun already by the out-going Chair and his team in institutionalizing AOSIS will continue to receive serious and informed consideration.

Excellencies and colleagues,

We know what the challenges are - let's get down to work. I thank you.