



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

A New Era of Island Leadership: Samoa is AOSIS Chair

The influential negotiating bloc of small island developing States will now be headed by a Pacific country, commemorated during official handover from outgoing Chair, Antigua and Barbuda

31st January, 2023

At a special Plenary meeting on Monday 30th January, 2023 featuring the official handover ceremony, the reigns of leadership of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) were handed over by the Caribbean island of Antigua and Barbuda, to the Pacific Island of Samoa. This culminates four years of AOSIS Chairmanship within the Caribbean region, with Belize serving prior to Antigua. The regional rotation of Chairmanship ensures fully inclusive representation among all Caribbean, Pacific, African, Indian Ocean and South China Seas members.

AOSIS plays an integral role in international climate and sustainable development negotiations, and has been central to the advancement of small island developing States' priorities. Significantly, AOSIS has been a key figure in the milestone achievement of a loss and damage fund establishment at the recent COP27 in November, 2023.

As new Chair, Samoa Prime Minister the Honourable Fiamē Naomi Mata'afa vowed to continue the excellent work of the previous Chairs, particularly by amplifying marginalized voices and advocating for the Alliance's interests on the global stage and to secure global commitments and agreement. [She outlined the Chair's new vision](#), which will focus on Climate Change, Sustainable Development, and the Ocean, including issues such as 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.

"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," Prime Minister Fiamē said. "We will continue to keep the Loss and Damage flame burning and inject urgency into our efforts aimed at concluding BBNJ negotiations."

“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. 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 has been at the forefront of this strategic process, and we must now over the coming 12 months complete what remains to be done.”

“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.” Prime Minister Fiamē highlighted the ocean-climate nexus, plastic pollution negotiations, the Blue Economy, and the Global Biodiversity Framework as key issues.

In his congratulatory address, Prime Minister the Honourable Gaston Browne of Antigua and Barbuda noted he was placing the Chairmanship in most capable hands, and that his country looked forward to working with the new AOSIS Chair in preparation for the 4th UN International Conference for SIDS in 2024.

Representing the Prime Minister, Ambassador Fatumanava-o-Upolu III Dr. Pa'olelei Luteru emphasized that the AOSIS Chair would accelerate advocacy for concrete outcomes to ensure not just the survival, but the prosperity of small island developing States.

[*FULL STATEMENT HERE](#)

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About AOSIS:

Since 1990, AOSIS has represented the interests of the 39 small island and low-lying coastal developing states in international climate change, sustainable development negotiations and processes. As a voice for the vulnerable, its mandate is more than amplifying marginalised voices as it also advocates for these countries' interests. In terms of size, AOSIS closely resembles the countries it represents on the global stage, but often punches far above its weight, negotiating historic global commitments to cut greenhouse gas emissions, among other achievements.

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