



**Statement on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) on
Agenda items 18: Sustainable development
Second Committee
9 October 2023, UNHQ**

Mr. Chair,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States. We align ourselves with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Cuba on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Mr. Chair,

In 1992 at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), the international community declared SIDS as a special case for sustainable development, fast forward to today, some three decades and three programmes of Action for SIDS later. SIDS still remain a special case for sustainable development and to a greater extent in a more precarious state due to the inaction of the same international community, as it fails to effectively address and act on fundamental issues, such as climate change, growing debt and insufficient access to financing, and the inadequate management and conservation of our oceans.

Next year the international community will gather with SIDS in Antigua and Barbuda to chart a ten-year programme of action for SIDS. SIDS has over the past three months met at the regional and interregional levels and have begun to chart a course that will pave the path towards resilient prosperity.

AOSIS strongly believe that our challenges require new, innovative and bold approaches for economic, social and environmental transformation. The adoption and full implementation of the next Programme of Action that SIDS envision for ourselves is paramount for that resilient prosperity.

Mr. chair,

The multiple global crises and external shocks of the past few years have decimated the foundations of our SIDS economies and societies and threaten the livelihoods of our peoples. These multiple and overlapping challenges exacerbate our inherent vulnerabilities and compromise our ability to achieve our sustainable development objectives. These challenges originate outside our borders but its effects are deeply felt in our countries.

The recently concluded high level meetings on the margins of the General Debate of the General Assembly have all shown a bleak reality and a not too promising future unless we course-correct. AOSIS continues to believe that it is critically important that the Second Committee in its work drive an agenda that is consistent with, and delivers on the ambitious sustainable development agenda that we set out for ourselves in 2015.

Mr. Chair,

The wraths of climate change is now being felt by all, even though its overall impacts on our individual countries may differ. This should be enough for us all to take urgent actions to avoid overshooting 1.5 degree goal. . In this regard, COP28 must deliver concrete outcomes that can help to shift us away from business as usual and truly establish a new basis for international cooperation on climate action. This includes the full operationalisation of the Loss and Damage fund and funding arrangements in a manner that supports the plight of those particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. There also needs to be a drastic shift away from fossil fuels, enabled through just transitions towards renewable energy. The global stocktake on SDG 7 taking place next year is a useful opportunity to assess where we are, and set the course forward.

The effects of climate change have also exemplified the need to urgently address the gaps in disaster risk reduction, that were revealed in the findings of the Midterm Review of the Sendai Framework. We hope that these findings can be taken forward through the work of the committee this year.

We must realize that there is an inter-relationship between how we treat our environment and our natural resources, and its direct impact on our countries and societies. Therefore, we must manage, use, conserve and protect them accordingly. It is therefore important that we take these factors into consideration as we discuss and address the sub-items of this agenda item, as well as their interrelatedness across the other agenda items of this Committee.

Mr. Chair,

AOSIS firmly believes that together as a global community we can make the changes required to put us all on a path to achieving the overarching objectives of the 2030 Agenda of eradicating poverty and leaving no one behind. So we look forward as always to putting our well-intended words into the resolutions that would guide our actions and policies.

I thank you.