



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

AOSIS Calls For Ambitious New Action Plan At SIDS4

The Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) is urging UN Member States to stand with SIDS and create an ambitious 10-year programme to spur sustainable development.

New York, 25th January, 2024

United Nations stakeholders note it is more critical than ever before for the international community to devise a strong action plan for small island developing states (SIDS) when leaders converge this May at the ***Fourth International Conference on SIDS (SIDS4)***. A major milestone in preparations for the SIDS4 is underway, as UN Member States are currently participating in the first Preparatory Committee Meeting for SIDS4.

The Preparatory Committee is meeting from 22 to 26 January 2024 to engage in negotiations on a new ten-year programme of action for SIDS, to be adopted during ***SIDS4*** in Antigua and Barbuda from 27 to 30 May 2024.

These vulnerable countries continue to face significant challenges to their sustainable development, worsened by impacts from climate change and issues such as food-price volatility, and external financial shocks.

Building on the *SAMOA Pathway*, the new programme of action will set out a comprehensive development agenda for SIDS over the next ten years. Drawing on the outcomes of regional and interregional preparatory meetings, it will define SIDS' development priorities and the support required from the international community to make the SIDS-led, SIDS-focused agenda achievable.

In recognition of their unique vulnerabilities to external shocks and stressors, the international community designated SIDS a special case for environment and development, but after thirty years of this recognition and targeted action the situation remains unchanged.

Co-chairs of the Preparatory Committee, H.E. Caroline Schwalger, Permanent Representative of New Zealand to the United Nations, and H.E. Dr. Ali Naseer Mohamed, Permanent Representative of the Maldives to the United Nations, reminded Member States of the gravity of the work ahead of them and reiterated their commitment to steward negotiations toward an ambitious, action-oriented outcome.

Chair of AOSIS, H.E. Fatumanava-o-Upolu III Pa'olelei Luteru of Samoa, stated:

“AOSIS advocates for a new and more responsive UN for SIDS. This will be essential to deliver a robust 10-year outcome. SIDS’ survivability of the people, natural environments, and overall sustainable development is under threat. The development challenges we are facing are far outpacing our ability to respond. We are seemingly going from one event to another, without the time or ability to recover and regrow. We are running out of time and running out of space to maneuver.

We sit here with you today with a single request: decide that the development of SIDS and our resilient prosperity provides a collective good, and let us act on that decision throughout the preparatory process for the Fourth Conference and the decade of action to come.”

Strong political commitment to the aspiration of SIDS was evident in the 42 statements from UN Member States and 22 statements from UN entities and other stakeholders. They highlighted the need for urgent action to address the impacts of climate change – which are existential for many SIDS – to build resilience, reform the international financial architecture to enable SIDS to access sufficient and sustainable finance, and alleviate the impact of external shocks.

Speaking on behalf of the European Union, Stavros Lambrinidis, Head of the European Union Delegation to the United Nations said the EU will “engage constructively in the negotiations on the SIDS4 outcome document” and that the EU is “committed to achieving strong, concrete results for the SIDS for the next ten years.”

Speaking on behalf of Canada, Australia and New Zealand (CANZ), H.E. James Larsen, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Australia to the United Nations said “CANZ extends our unwavering support for the upcoming process to agree a new programme of action that delivers meaningful outcomes for SIDS.”

Negotiations on the outcome document will continue ahead of the Second Preparatory Committee meeting on 1 to 5 April 2024.

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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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