

## AOSIS CLIMATE TEAM NEWSLETTER – FEBRUARY, 2024

- **Message from the Chair of AOSIS**

H.E. Fatumanava-o-Upolu III Dr Pa'olelei Luteru

Talofa reader,

We are advancing resolutely into 2024, and as we look forward to a new year of challenges and pivotal opportunities, we would be remiss if we did not spend some time reflecting on the critical events which defined the culmination of 2023.

As we begin to get a clearer perspective on the momentous outcome of COP28 in Dubai last December, I would firstly like to thank our dedicated team of negotiators representing the small island developing states. You went above and beyond, working tireless and carrying the hopes of your countrymen on your backs. Certainly, decades of sacrifice and diligence culminated as the curtain opened on COP28 with the loss and damage fund centre stage, having finally been operationalised after over 30 years of SIDS' advocacy.

We went into COP28 making it clear that this cannot be the COP that kills 1.5. The fact that we achieved decision text which fundamentally keeps 1.5°C alive is testament to your inspiring commitment to our cause.

Indeed, there are varied emotions with regard to the final decision. We take heart in the historic text which signals for the first time that countries will “transition away” from fossil fuels. This is a critical gateway from which we will certainly forge a more ambitious path, towards phasing out fossil fuels once and for all.

At the COP28 Closing Plenary, we spoke of the “litany of loopholes” in the Global Stocktake text. Overall, we acknowledged that the text provides a strong direction for course correction in some areas, while in others we would have hoped for more transformational language on mitigation. We noted that it is not enough to make reference to the science – we cannot continue to make agreements which ignore what the science is telling us to do.

It is imperative that while we participate in international forums to work towards the global good, we continue to hold our partners to account for their actions which disproportionately affect our vulnerable communities. We now set our sights firmly on the work that must be done this year to prepare for a COP29 that moves the dial forward more than ever before to address climate change.

Of course, the international climate change discussions are just part of what will comprise a seminal year for SIDS.

The entire AOSIS Chair team is engrossed in preparations for the Fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS4), which will take place this May in Antigua and Barbuda. The theme of SIDS4 is Charting the Course Toward Resilient Prosperity, and without a doubt climate change is inextricably linked to SIDS' ability to capitalise on opportunities for their sustainable development.

In the coming months, we will be working with our partners including the government of Antigua and Barbuda, UNDESA, and UN-OHRLS, and others to ensure the new 10-year action plan we create at SIDS4 will redound to the benefit of all our countries.

We look forward to your support as we map a strong way forward for SIDS.

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