



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

SIDS4 Can Safeguard Hopes for Islands' Sustainability

As world leaders converge for the Fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States, vulnerable islands say urgent, enhanced international cooperation is key to rescuing faltering sustainable development goals for SIDS.

New York, 23rd May, 2024

Islands are in grave danger of falling further behind on sustainable development goals as they grapple with a myriad of challenges, a crisis which will be at the core of the Fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States, SIDS4, commencing on Monday 27th May in Antigua and Barbuda. The United Nations and world leaders have declared SIDS4 will be the most pivotal summit of this decade for small island developing states (SIDS) as they unite to formalize a new action plan for achievement of sustainable development goals for SIDS. The Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), which represents 39 SIDS from the Caribbean, Pacific, Atlantic, India and South China Seas regions will be at the fore of discussions and are calling for increased global support to advance necessary progress.

The special circumstances of SIDS for sustainable development have long been affirmed, including their small size and therefore small economies, locations remote from international markets, vulnerability to external shocks, and fragile land and marine ecosystems. According to the United Nations, SIDS' sustainable development is in peril due to threats from the climate crisis, international conflicts, gloomy global economic outlook, lingering COVID-19 effects, and a severe debt crisis. The total public debt for SIDS stands at approximately US\$82 billion.

"We are veering dangerously off-path of our 2030 SDG goals, and our world is not living up to the promise that we shall leave no one behind," said Ambassador Fatumanava Dr. Pa'olelei Luteru, Chair of AOSIS. "SIDS4 will be crucial as we will focus the international community's attention on effectively addressing the urgent needs of SIDS. SIDS cannot be left to drown in crises not of their own making – this would have catastrophic consequences for the entire world."

AOSIS is playing a key role in the SIDS4 conference, with its Chair of Samoa having convened the last SIDS conference and launched the previous SIDS development action plan, the SAMOA Pathway.

The AOSIS Chair will be participating prominently in the conference's key sessions such as the SIDS Children and Youth Action Summit, Addressing Loss and Damage in Small Island Developing States, the AOSIS – DAC Partnership Launch, the UNSG High Level Meeting on Mobilization of resources for small island developing states (SIDS), Using the new UN MVI to identify and fill in vulnerability financing gaps in SIDS, and the interactive dialogue on Enhancing Critical Forms of Financing and Aid Effectiveness through Collaborative Partnerships.

AOSIS will also be taking part in side-events focusing on issues such as Realizing the Right to Development and the Right to a Clean, Healthy and Sustainable Environment for Small Island Developing States in the face of the Challenges of Climate Change, Fostering Climate Adaptation and Resilience in Small Islands, SIDS leadership on a global just transition from fossil fuels, and more.

"We cannot leave this summit without having made good of every opportunity to chart a progressive, prosperous new way forward for our islands – islands which are so integral to maintaining the critical ecosystems our world depends on," stated Ambassador Luteru. "SIDS4 must move us boldly forward to a new era of international cooperation and inter regional advancement".

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AOSIS Chair, Ambassador Fatumanava Dr. Pa'olelei Luteru

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.

Media Contact:

media@aosis.org