



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

At SIDS4, the UN Secretary-General says: “It’s Time for Climate Justice for SIDS”

UN chief António Guterres joins the AOSIS Chair in call for climate and financial justice for vulnerable small island developing nations, at historic international summit for islands.

Antigua and Barbuda, SIDS4, 27th May, 2024

“SIDS are a test case for climate justice and financial justice,” declared United Nations Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, at the Opening Ceremony of the Fourth International Conference on SIDS (SIDS4) on Monday 27th May in Antigua and Barbuda. “With the 1.5-degree limit in temperature rise already fast approaching, we cannot accept the disappearance of any country or culture under the rising waves.”

“The new Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States outlines steps to achieve resilient prosperity in partnership with the international community. I urge SIDS governments to back up these words with bold investments and sustained engagement across all sectors of sustainable development. But SIDS cannot do this alone. The international community has a duty to support Small Island Developing States – led by the countries that have greatest responsibility and capacity to deal with the challenges they face.”

The UN Chief was joined by leaders and high-level officials from around the world, as discussions commenced on the new action plan to support SIDS in achieving their sustainable development goals, which the UN says islands are lagging woefully behind on. The plan, the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS (ABAS), outlines the international community’s commitment to supporting the sustainable development aspirations of SIDS.

As the representative body of 39 SIDS members in international sustainable development and climate change negotiations, AOSIS is playing a pivotal role in SIDS4. The Honorable Fiamē Naomi Mata’afa, Prime Minister of Samoa and the Chair of AOSIS, called for the international community to keep the special circumstances of small islands at the fore of plans for sustainable development.

“In 1994 we set off on a noble path, agreeing that small islands and low-lying coastal developing states deserved special treatment,” she said. “We formed partnerships and enabled action. But it has not been enough. Often, we were too slow to act.”

“The next ten years are critical for SIDS. We are advocating for a world where economic growth and well-being ought to be sustained and our economies are robust, diversified, adaptable and able to withstand shocks, ensuring social equity, and promoting environmental sustainability.”

She urged the international community to *“recollect what occasions a category of countries as a special case for development; reaffirm that action costs little but inaction can cost much; and recommit to grand ideas where countries, small or large, rich or poor are all deserving.”*

SIDS 4 continues in Antigua and Barbuda until Thursday 30th May, 2024.

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The Honourable Fiamē Naomi Mata'afa, Prime Minister of Samoa and the Chair of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) at the Opening Ceremony for the Fourth International Conference on SIDS 27 May 2024. St. John's, Antigua and Barbuda



United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres at the Opening Plenary of the Fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS4)



AOSIS Chair, Prime Minister the Honourable Fiamē Naomi Mata'afa of Samoa, with President of the United Nations General Assembly, Dennis Francis, of Trinidad and Tobago

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