

# **Opening Remarks for the High-level Meeting on Financing for Development for Small Island Developing States**

Special Event at the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development

30 June 2025  
12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.  
Side-event Room 1  
FIBES

**Distinguished Heads of State and Government,  
Fellow Ministers,  
Heads of International and Regional Organizations,  
Colleagues and Friends,**

It is my honour to open this High-Level Meeting on Financing for Development of Small Island Developing States, convened as part of the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development here in the beautiful city of Sevilla.

On behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), I extend my sincere thanks to our co-convenors—the Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (OHRLLS), the United Kingdom, the OECD, and UN DESA, for their partnership and commitment to advancing the development priorities of Small Island Developing States.

Excellencies,

SIDS are often called the canaries in the coal mine because we are among the first to feel the tremors of an outdated international financial architecture. And the truth is: the current architecture is not designed to serve SIDS. It is not responsive to special and unique circumstances that we face.

Despite our small size, SIDS manage nearly 20% of the world's ocean. We protect biodiversity and critical ecosystems and contribute significantly to global sustainability. Yet we remain locked out of the very financial

resources needed to fulfill this responsibility, whether it is climate or ocean finance, concessional financing, or access to preferential borrowing terms.

At the Fourth International Conference on SIDS, the international community adopted the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS (ABAS) as our forward-looking blueprint for our resilient prosperity.

And this is why we welcome the Compromiso de Sevilla, which represents a renewed commitment to reform and inclusivity in global financing.

The Compromiso de Sevilla speaks to the need to reform international financial institutions, to enhance access to concessional financing, and to improve representation for vulnerable countries like ours. It recognizes the importance of tools such as the Multidimensional Vulnerability Index, the urgent need to scale up climate and ocean finance, address the debt sustainability of SIDS and the operationalization of mechanisms like the SIDS Debt Sustainability Support Service.

And yet, much of what the ABAS and the Compromiso de Sevilla asks for has already been asked before, many times. What we need now is *implementation*. What we need now is *commitment*. What we need now is *partnership*.

Today's meeting is an opportunity to change that.

We gather today not just to repeat our calls, but to forge real solutions that turn pledges into progress. Let us have a frank and honest discussion that gives way to reform so that the international financial architecture reflects the world we live in, reflecting all voices.

I encourage all delegations to seize this opportunity.

Let us move forward with urgency, with unity, and with the unwavering conviction that Small Island Developing States do not stand alone.

Thank you.