



## **ALLIANCE OF SMALL ISLAND STATES (AOSIS) DECLARATION ON CLIMATE CHANGE 2009**

*We, the Member States of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), meeting in New York this 21st day of September,*

*Gravely concerned* that climate change poses the most serious threat to our survival and viability, and, that it undermines our efforts to achieve sustainable development goals and threatens our very existence;

*Alarmed* that emerging scientific evidence shows that the effects of human-induced climate change are worse than previously projected and that the impacts of climate change which we are already experiencing including sea level rise, more frequent and extreme weather events, ocean acidification, coral bleaching, coastal erosion, and changing precipitation patterns, will further intensify;

*Greatly disturbed* that despite the mitigation commitments made by Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its Kyoto Protocol, especially those of the developed countries, global emissions continue to increase, leading to rapidly accelerating impacts, accompanied by costs and burdens that are beyond the ability of many, but, especially the small island developing states (SIDS) and other particularly vulnerable countries, to control;

*Profoundly disappointed* by the lack of apparent ambition within the international climate change negotiations to protect SIDS and other particularly vulnerable countries, their peoples, culture, land and ecosystems from the impacts of climate change and our further concern at the slow pace of these negotiations;

1. *Now therefore*, we, call upon the international community, with the developed countries taking the lead, to undertake urgent, ambitious and decisive action to significantly reduce emissions of all green house gases, including fast action strategies, and to support SIDS, and other particularly vulnerable countries, in their efforts to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change, including through the provision of increased levels of financial and technological resources.
2. We underscore that adaptation must be an urgent and immediate global priority.
3. We firmly maintain that the UNFCCC is the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change.
4. We reaffirm the principles enshrined in the Rio Declaration and the UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol, in particular, the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and



respective capabilities having regard to national circumstances, and, the precautionary principle.

5. We urge all Parties to work with an increased sense of urgency and purpose towards an ambitious, comprehensive and meaningful outcome that preserves the legal nature of the international climate change regime and the existing commitments under the UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol.
6. We assert thus that the outcome to be concluded at the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Copenhagen in 2009 should inter alia:
  - a. Use the avoidance of adverse climate change impacts on SIDS as one of the key benchmarks for assessing its appropriateness, consistent with the precautionary principle and the principle of prevention;
  - b. Adopt a package of mitigation activities, now, up to and beyond 2012 that provides for:
    - i. long-term stabilization of atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations at well below 350ppm CO<sub>2</sub>-equivalent levels;
    - ii. global average surface temperature increases to be limited to well below 1.5° C above pre-industrial levels;
    - iii. global greenhouse gas emissions to peak by 2015 and decline thereafter;
    - iv. reductions in global greenhouse gas emissions by more than 85% below 1990 levels by 2050
    - v. Annex I parties to the UNFCCC to reduce their collective GHG emissions by more than 45% below 1990 levels by 2020, and more than 95% below 1990 levels by 2050, given their historical responsibility;
    - vi. A significant deviation from business as usual by developing countries through measurable, reportable and verifiable nationally appropriate mitigation actions in the context of sustainable development, supported and enabled by technology, financing and capacity-building, in a measurable, reportable and verifiable manner.
  - c. Provide SIDS with new, additional, predictable, transparent and adequate sources of grant-based financing to fully meet the adaptation needs of these particularly vulnerable countries, and ensure for SIDS that access is timely, direct, prioritized and simplified.
  - d. Call for an urgent and significant scaling up of the provision of financial resources and investment that is adequate, predictable and sustainable to support action on mitigation



- in developing country Parties for the enhanced implementation of national mitigation strategies; including positive incentives, the mobilization of public- and private-sector funding and investment and facilitation of carbon-friendly investment choices.
- e. Ensure that renewable energy and energy efficiency form essential pillars of future mitigation actions by all countries, taking into account national circumstances.
  - f. Establish a mechanism to address loss and damage from climate change comprised of a disaster risk component, insurance, and compensation funds, to help SIDS manage the financial and economic risks arising from climate impacts; to assist in the rapid recovery and rehabilitation from climate related extreme weather events and to address unavoidable damage and loss associated with the adverse effects of climate change.
  - g. Provide support to SIDS to enhance their capacities to respond to the challenges brought on by climate change and to access the technologies that will be required to undertake needed mitigation actions and to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change, noting the obligations of Annex 1 countries under the UNFCCC in this regard;
7. In our voluntary efforts to defeat deforestation and increase carbon sequestration, finance, technology and capacity development is necessary to underpin a step-wise process for reducing emissions and increasing carbon sequestration through the conservation and sustainable management of forest crops which are good carbon dioxide sequestrators. Based on national circumstances, a well designed REDD Plus instrument will require resource mobilization from a variety of sources, including public, private and market-based, as appropriate<sup>1</sup>, that employ robust methodological standards for measurable, reportable and verifiable actions. Robust environmental integrity will need to be maintained if a REDD mechanism is linked to the international carbon markets.
  8. Acknowledging the portfolio of technologies identified by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to achieve lower stabilization levels, including hydropower, solar, wind, geothermal and bioenergy and determined to avail ourselves of such technologies as appropriate and based on their feasibility and applicability, we encourage, where applicable, national, regional and international efforts for consideration of a process to overcome technical, economic and policy barriers with a view to facilitating the development and commercialization of appropriate and affordable low- and zero- emission technologies.
  9. We further recognize that the inclusion of Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) is potentially an important mitigation option for achieving the ambitious emission reduction targets being supported by AOSIS and urge the development of a program of work on Carbon Capture and Storage in order to resolve related issues.

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<sup>1</sup> Tuvalu expressed a reservation on the reference to market-based sources.



10. We also emphasize that there is an urgent need to consider and address the security implications and the human dimensions of climate change, including where necessary, initiatives for preparing communities for relocation.
11. We underscore that while SIDS contribute the least to global emissions, and have limited human, financial and technical resources, our nations continue to take significant actions towards the reduction of our own emissions including through regional and inter-regional energy initiatives.
12. We also recognize the need to reinforce the UNFCCC process by calling on the big emitters to agree to produce enough clean energy to attain the targets of limiting temperature rise to 1.5 degree Celsius and 350 parts per million of atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations.
13. Finally, we express our support for the establishment of the Headquarters of the UNFCCC Adaptation Fund Board in Barbados.
14. We, the Member States of AOSIS, strongly emphasize the importance of urgent progress towards a fair and meaningful Copenhagen outcome which, through safeguarding the most vulnerable countries, ensures a truly shared and sustainable global vision for our present and future generations.