



**Statement by Republic of Maldives on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States at the High-Level Event on Climate Change**

**29 June 2015 / Trusteeship Council Chamber**

Distinguished President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Maldives has the honour to speak on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), a coalition of 44 low-lying coastal and island nations, highly vulnerable to the impacts of extreme weather and other climate change impacts.

*AOSIS would like to associate with the statement delivered by South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.*

Mr. President,

We thank you for your initiative and welcome the convening of this high-level event to maintain the international community's focus on climate change, which will help provide momentum towards reaching an ambitious agreement at COP 21 in Paris.

Mr. President,

Climate change has long been an important issue for SIDS. In fact, it was this early recognition of the consequences of climate change for small islands that led to the formation of the Alliance of Small Island States, 25 years ago this year and the legacy of our advocacy – and wide appreciation for our particular sustainable development challenges – bears out in the special recognition given to our group in international agreements over the decades.

For instance, *The Future We Want* reaffirmed that the adverse impacts of climate change on SIDS, including persistent drought and extreme weather events, sea-level rise, coastal erosion, and ocean acidification threaten our sustainable development efforts and, for many of us, represent an existential threat.

In fact, just this year we witnessed how real these threats are. Cyclones and typhoons left a trail of destruction across many of our member states; upending entire communities and killing many.

Furthermore, such events are happening in the context of an average global temperature increase of less than 1 degree Celsius, reminding us that without bold and very urgent action, far worse is yet to come.

Therefore, it is imperative that we conclude a new legally-binding agreement on climate change in Paris this year, applicable to all Parties, with a level of ambition sufficient to ensure a safe climate for current and future generations. It is AOSIS' clarion and consistent call that we must limit global warming to well below 1.5 degrees above pre industrial level in order to significantly reduce the impacts and damages from climate change, including risks to food production and vulnerable ecosystems. The weight of scientific evidence indicates that the current global goal of "below 2°C" is too high, and in our view, presents unacceptable risks to SIDS.

"1.5 To Stay Alive" has long been the AOSIS rallying cry, because it represents a level of global warming beyond which many vulnerable small island states will be simply overwhelmed.

To achieve this goal, AOSIS has emphasized the need to also rapidly scale up and implement mitigation solutions in the pre-2020 period. In this effort, we reiterate developed countries' obligation to take the lead, both in reducing their own emissions, as well as scaling up the provision of climate finance for developing countries to \$100 billion by 2020. AOSIS has also made very concrete proposals for increasing multilateral and multi-stakeholder cooperation in areas of high mitigation potential, such as renewable energy and energy efficiency.

Mr. President,

It goes without saying that 2015 is a fortuitous year for SIDS and other vulnerable nations: We have finalized the multilateral frameworks for disaster risk reduction and are well on our way to concluding our frameworks for sustainable development and financing for development.

We fully recognize that the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is the primary international intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change and we assure you of our firm commitment to achieving an ambitious climate change agreement in Paris.

Indeed, we have already begun to lay a foundation for success, with important progress operationalizing the Green Climate Fund. We encourage further contributions to the GCF in order to make it the transformative institution we envisioned in Cancun. To be sure, climate finance is a critical component of building trust.

But we, of course, all have a role to play in addressing climate change, and AOSIS members are committed to tabling our Intended Nationally Determined Contributions as soon as possible. We thank Parties that have already come forward with their iNDCs. And I want to

emphasis that the collective ambition of the iNDC presented in Paris should place the world on a pathway to achieving the 1.5 degree target.

Mr. President,

We recognize that we have a great deal of work between now and COP 21 to reach a strong agreement, but success is within reach. We assure you of our full and constructive participation in the weeks and months ahead.

Thank you.