



**Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) Opening Statement  
at the Joint Opening of the SBI50 and SBSTA 50 Sessions  
World Conference Center  
Bonn, Germany  
Monday, June 17, 2019**

Distinguished Chairs of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation, Belize is honored to deliver this statement on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States, the group of small island and low-lying coastal developing states, a coalition of 44 countries that are most vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change.

Notwithstanding the important outcomes of COP 24, AOSIS notes the work that must be completed in order to fully realize the effective implementation of the Paris Agreement. Critically this includes issues relating to article 6, the enhanced transparency framework and the further consideration of the IPCC Special Report on 1.5°C.

*1.5 Work Programme and NDCs*

Chairs, Small Island Developing States (SIDs) continue to face disproportionately high risks to the impacts of climate change and are projected to face extreme losses of adaptive capacity and ecosystem services, which are both critical to preserving lives and livelihoods. In light of these facts, we note, with alarm, that global GHG emissions continue to rise and the global concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere has now reached 415 parts per million. The current nationally determined contributions puts us on an emission pathway inconsistent with the Paris Agreement goal of 1.5.

AOSIS envisions 2019 as the year of ambition, which encapsulates enhanced mitigation, adaptation, loss and damage and finance. The IPCC Special Report 1.5 finds that rapid and far-reaching transitions in land, energy, industry, buildings, transport and cities are required to reduce emissions by about 45% by 2030 and achieve net zero by around 2050 if there is any chance of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius, beyond which is likely to trigger climatic, environmental, and ecological tipping points and thresholds from which the world would not be able to reverse or recover. This implies the facilitation of feasible, yet faster, socio-technical transitions, the deployment of multisectoral mitigation measures and the fostering of ambitious international cooperation and transformative policy environments in the short term that target both energy supply and demand. As SIDs, we call on the international community to deliver by



2020 new or updated NDCs that are in line with the Paris Agreement mandates contained in paras 23, 24 and 25 of 1/CP.21.

Importantly, this meeting of the Subsidiary Bodies must maintain the momentum from Katowice on realizing the 1.5°C goal in the Paris Agreement. The Talanoa Dialogue and the IPCC Special Report on 1.5° C provided us with a solid platform for addressing the goal; thus, this SB meeting must start the process of converting this platform into an action agenda that will enable all parties to achieve greater emissions ambition, in line with a 1.5° C pathway.

AOSIS sees the periodic review as a critical aspect of this work to be completed at this session and stands ready to engage constructively in developing the recommendation to forward for consideration at COP 25. We also look forward to working with our partners to initiate and launch a work programme on achieving 1.5°C, with a view to further assisting countries in understanding what needs to be implemented by the different sectors to get on a 1.5°C pathway, providing concrete examples of the available technologies and practices that are already delivering at the level of ambition required, and identifying opportunities for partnerships and support that are available to assist countries to enable action on the ground. Limiting warming to 1.5°C is still possible - the world has the scientific understanding, the technological capacity and the financial means.

Some countries have already mapped out what is required at their national level to get onto a 1.5°C pathway. Others must follow suit as a matter of urgency. Access to finance and technology, and enhancing domestic capacities, are critical for SIDs to meaningfully and effectively join in collective efforts being made to limit global GHG emissions.

In this regard, AOSIS has initiated and championed the work of the Marrakesh Partnership on Global Climate Action and its predecessors since 2013 because we are convinced that all Parties and non-state actors, both individually and collectively, need to take greater climate action and raise their ambition. We must seek out new solutions to the barriers that exist that have prevented all parties from taking up the mitigation and adaption opportunities that will benefit both our countries and our planet as a whole. We look forward to meaningful discussions with all stakeholders as we collectively work to enhance the effectiveness of the Marrakesh Partnership over the coming year, and we look forward to beginning the discussions on expanding the Partnership beyond 2020.

### *Finance*

Chairs, we are at a point of transition from a pre-2020 to a post-2020 context. That transition must be immediate, it must be urgent; and it must be drastic because the scale of action required must



be far reaching across whole of economies and societies. Finance will be pivotal for that transition and 2019 should effectively mark a turning point in how we, in this process, approach finance.

For AOSIS, at the current session we can already begin to set the stage systemically by decisions that will ensure that the Secretariat is well resourced to carry out the mandates we have issued to support full and effective implementation of the Paris Agreement. We will require a 2020-2021 programme budget with adequate core resources for this purpose.

We can also already set the stage substantively by elaborating how climate finance can respond to achieving pathways consistent with 1.5°C. In so doing, we should consider how we use the work on long term finance to inform the launch of the process for a new collective goal in 2020.

In this regard, the GCF replenishment process must also deliver adequate finances, in line with the best available science, including the IPCC Special Report on 1.5°C. We also stress the need to ensure that new conditions and criteria are not imposed for developing countries to access these much needed funds.

In addition to these broader issues, AOSIS is ready to engage constructively this session to prepare recommendations to the CMP to ensure that developing and developed country Parties are eligible for membership on the Adaptation Fund Board, and to elaborate common tabular formats for the new and improved transparency regime under the Paris Agreement.

### *Transparency*

Chairs, the Enhanced Transparency Framework lies at the core of the successful implementation of the Paris Agreement. It is essential that we uphold the highest standards of environmental integrity and reflect the principles of no backsliding, transparency, accuracy, completeness, consistency and comparability and the avoidance of double counting, when designing common reporting tables and common tabular formats, as well as outlines for the Biennial Transparency Report, National Inventory Document and Technical Expert Review Report. Overall improvement in the scope and quality of reporting over time should be facilitated by capacity-building initiatives, which includes the CBIT.

In our approach to the work this session, we must begin substantive discussions as soon as possible while at the same time planning our work out to 2020 in line with the mandate from COP 24.. We also call on Parties to engage in discussions in a constructive manner that does not attempt to re-negotiate the MPGs agreed at COP 24.



As we move from a system of biennial reviews for a limited number of Parties, to one that will be reviewing the 185 Parties to the Paris Agreement, it is critical that we ensure that training programmes for a new and expanded roster of expert reviewers is equipped to address the challenges that will inevitably occur. The review must be done taking into account the special circumstances and particular needs of SIDS and LDCs as well as the need to avoid an undue burden on Parties or the Secretariat.

AOSIS welcomes the general principles outlined in the Transparency MPGs on market mechanisms, it is clear that these provisions are an initial placeholder only, and must be complemented by the outcome of discussions under Article 6 to be completed at COP 25.

### *Markets*

Chairs, AOSIS wishes to reiterate the importance of the conclusion of the negotiations under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, as we recognize the potential value of market-based mechanisms in realizing the objective of the Paris Agreement. AOSIS underscores that at a very minimum, comprehensive and robust rules on the issues of transparency, environmental integrity, no double-counting, and overall global mitigation, are aspects of the criteria for markets that are of critical importance to achieving the 1.5 degree Celsius target that we set ourselves, and which is of survival value to our members. In our view, these are fundamental, rational, and logical principles agreed to by all Parties in the Paris Agreement, that we all need to be faithful to, and advance substantially at this session if we are to conclude at COP 25. We stand ready to contribute constructively to positive advancement of the discussions.

### *Loss and Damage*

Chairs, as you know, addressing loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change is a matter that AOSIS has long championed - in fact as early as the outset of the negotiation of the Convention itself - and our group advocated tirelessly for a separate article on loss and damage in the Paris Agreement. Therefore, the 2019 review of the Warsaw International Mechanism for loss and damage (WIM) is a high priority for AOSIS. It provides us with the opportunity to assess progress in achieving the objectives of the WIM and to ensure that the institutional arrangements that were established under the Convention in 2013 are able to address the urgent needs of small island developing States in the face of the very real impacts threatening our existence in the present and even more so, in a 1.5 degree Celsius or warmer world. The recent submission made by AOSIS sets out our views on the parameters of the review, including the critical importance of financing for loss and damage in accordance with the principles of the Convention.



At this session, we look forward to completing robust terms of reference for conducting this review, as we cannot afford to wait on this important matter. In this context, while we recognize that the governance of the WIM is another matter on the table this year, we thank you, the Chair of the SBSTA for reminding us that we should take forward the technical work of the review of the WIM without prejudging the outcomes of future consideration of its governance.

### *Adaptation*

Chairs, adaptation remains an issue of major importance to everyone but even more so for Small Island Developing States where in most, if not all cases, building adaptive capacity to climate impacts is directly linked to economic growth.

AOSIS appreciates the decisions that were taken on Adaptation at COP24, including the establishment of a Public Registry and the guidance for Adaptation Communications, that will provide a more direct platform for Developing Country Parties to increase the visibility of their needs and concerns regarding their efforts to adapt to the impacts of climate change. We look forward to commencing its operationalization with the presentation of the prototype here at SB50.

AOSIS continues to support advancement of the work of the NWP on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change and looks forward to discussing the implementation of activities under the NWP at SB50 as mandated, with a view to continued enhancement and partnership through the Programme.

### *Capacity- Building and Technology*

Capacity Building is also of utmost importance for AOSIS. The assistance provided through the multi-lateral process has facilitated our participation and engagement in this process. We do not have the required resources and in some instances the human capacities to undertake the kinds of activities that are required as a Party to the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement. We have greatly benefited from the training workshops enabling a better understanding of the application of methodologies to determine our vulnerability, as well as determining the most suitable solutions that can minimize the adverse effects of climate change.

The Paris Committee on Capacity Building is mandated to streamline how these capacity building initiatives are planned and organized in a manner that ensure effectiveness and efficiency. Despite limitations such as inadequate funding that has restricted the full involvement and participation of its membership and the Observer Organizations, the PCCB has made significant progress in delivering on its mandate.



We welcome the review, as despite these shortcomings, the PCCB has made its mark to define its usefulness to support the needs of Developing Country Parties, demonstrated that a new constituted body is the right approach.

The Durban Forum can provide some of the solutions that we seek for moving forward with Capacity Building and we will remain actively engaged in the activities.

For technology development and transfer, we welcome the decisions made at COP24. AOSIS believes that the Technology Framework can play an important role to achieving the goals set in the Paris agreement by providing overarching guidance to the Technology Mechanism. We hope that the efforts and progress made in Katowice can be emulated in this session as well.

### *Conclusion*

Chairs, we look forward to a productive session, one that moves us towards concluding the outstanding agenda items and finalizing the Paris Agreement Work Programme at COP 25. We also need to urgently formulate an actionable plan, which will put us on the right track to achieve a world below 1.5 degrees, which for SIDS, is a matter of survival.