



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

Statement on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) at the Joint SBSTA and SBI Closing Plenary

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Introduction

I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), in alignment with the statement by the Group of 77 & China.

Transitioning the UNFCCC to full implementation mode

Let me begin by thanking the UNFCCC Secretariat, for their stellar efforts in organizing this novel Virtual Session of the SBs. After a year-long hiatus, this session was instrumental in reviving the work of the UNFCCC, and shifting gears towards full implementation mode. As we emphasized at the beginning of this session, we have already lost too much time since the entry into force of this landmark instrument. Following COP 26, the primary focus of the UNFCCC should be delivery on the ground. In the global *plan-implement-review* cycle, we are now at “implement”. We need action and results on adaptation and mitigation, which are intrinsically linked to means of implementation.

For Small Island Developing States, capacity constraints and challenges continue to be the biggest challenge in implementation, as explicitly recognized in Article 9 of the Paris Agreement. Following the socio-economic devastation of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are in even more dire need for this critical support, especially public and grant-based resources for adaptation and for averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage associated with climate change. We believe that the UNFCCC system should address these needs more robustly, as well as the persistent issues SIDS face in accessing the resources that are available.

Progress at the Session on closing the PAWP

The first step in switching to implementation mode is to complete the outstanding work on the PAWP by COP 26. While the aim of this session was to make up for lost time, we still appear to be circling around the common ground we need to land in Glasgow:

Markets

- On markets, we still need to find a workable compromise package, with a robust set of rules that will protect environmental integrity, result in a substantial overall mitigation in global emissions, generate substantial finance for adaptation, avoid double counting and manage the

transition from the Kyoto Protocol to the Paris Agreement, recalling that, in AOSIS's view, pre-2020 Kyoto units and underlying emissions reductions are not appropriate for NDCs.

- The collection of Chairs' Summaries produced from technical expert dialogues at this session have been helpful to identify options. More technical work is needed on the quantitative implications of different proposals on the table for global emissions and other indicators, including funding for adaptation. This will help Parties take a decision in Glasgow.
- Non-market approaches have the potential to advance both the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement in small islands, given market barriers in SIDS such as a high landed cost of technology. A prompt start to the work programme on non-market approaches could help SIDS with a just transition.

Transparency

- In transparency, we need to remember the mandate, which is to provide guidance on how information is reported under the Enhanced Transparency Framework, in line with the principles of transparency, accuracy, completeness, comparability and consistency, or TACCC principles.
- We recognize the numerous interlinkages between the ETF and other thematic areas such as finance and markets. However, we emphasize that progress should not be stalled with blocking tactics, and, in the case of markets, appropriate placeholders can address these linkages where needed.
- Concluding the technical work on the Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF) is critical on the basis that further delay will place Parties with limited reporting experience at a further disadvantage for the preparation of the reports mandated under the ETF.
- Further technical work on these issues at the intersessional level will help us to continue to consider the practical consequences of the positions we advance and put us in a better position to take decisions in Glasgow.

Common Time Frames

- For common times on NDCs, it is critical that we work towards a streamlined set of clear options to enable our Ministers to take a decision at Glasgow.
- The decision, which needs to be taken at COP 26, should promote ambition, transparency and comparability of NDCs, effective monitoring of the aggregate level of climate action, and facilitate synergies with the various processes under the Paris Agreement including the global stocktake and the climate finance replenishment cycles.

Progress at the Session on Accelerating Implementation

To enable the transition into full implementation mode, constituted bodies and the UNFCCC Secretariat itself should be better equipped to deliver on the objectives of the Paris Agreement. In

doing so, as SIDS we strive for gender balance in our own nominations to Constituted Bodies and in other leadership positions, and encourage all Parties to do the same.

We need to ensure that procedural and budgetary arrangements are in place through relevant decisions at COP 26:

Finance

- The 2022-2023 budget is pivotal for transitioning into implementation through securing predictable resources for core mandated activities, with a fair balance struck across adaptation, mitigation, loss and damage, means of implementation, and transparency.
- Regarding the review of the Adaptation Fund, we need to ensure that it is adequately and sustainably resourced from various sources, given the growing demands of the fund.
- Parallel to this session, we have taken note of the G7's restated intention to deliver on the 100 billion goal, originally promised for 2020. Contrast the long struggle to reach this goal with the fact that \$189 billion of the G7's combined economic recovery funds were spent on fossil fuels, during this pandemic, despite pledges to cut emissions. The \$100 billion goal is clearly inadequate.
- COP26 is fast approaching, where we must in good faith begin to elaborate a new scaled up climate finance goal in Glasgow that is truly accessible by vulnerable communities. Some sage advice: when it comes to the delicate art of building trust, actions always speak louder than words.

Mitigation

- As we indicated at the beginning of this session, the large emissions gap remains unacceptable, and threatens the integrity of the COP itself. Why gather in Glasgow at all, if not to show the world we are treating with this emergency seriously. We reiterate our request for a suitable platform at COP 26 to address this formally.

Adaptation

- In the context of Adaptation, we want to see more adequate, predictable and accessible financing to formulate and in particular to implement NAPs. We must explore fast-track implementation of NAP actions and priorities.
- We also want to see how the knowledge products of the Nairobi Work Programme can be more accessible, applicable and usable to help scale up adaptation action in SIDS.
- On renewing the mandate of the LEG, AOSIS supports this expert group and is exploring ways in which it can best serve climate vulnerable countries on their adaptation planning.
- We also look forward to the Global Stocktake adequately capturing the progress on adaptation.

Loss and Damage

- On loss and damage, we thank the UK and Chile COP Presidencies for focusing on the Santiago Network for loss and damage.

- We reiterate that the Network should be able to provide the technical assistance that countries require and look forward to inclusive engagements in the coming months to further refine its operationalisation.
- AOSIS also looks forward to more concrete proposals on how the upcoming COP 26 Presidency will resolve the issue of the governance of the WIM before we meet in Glasgow.

Technology

- The review of the CTCN should be independent process, and its output should feed into the periodic assessment of the Technology Mechanism.
- Financing of the CTCN secretariat also remains an issue – financial support for the Climate Technology Center’s operations are under the Convention and remain insufficient.
- Discussions on technology at this session have been limited to the alignment of the independent review of the CTCN and the periodic assessment; other key agenda items were deferred. We had fruitful discussions; however, further work is needed to consider the effective operation of the Technology Mechanism as a whole.
- We look forward to exploring options for linking the Technology Mechanism and the Financial Mechanism in a way that ensures country ownership and maximizes private sector opportunities in SIDS and other developing countries in achieving our climate ambition goals.

Response Measures

- To address the issues of response measures, Parties made a considerable effort with a collective spirit in Madrid to draw up a 6-year ambitious Workplan.
- However, in this session, it is disappointing to report that not much progress was made to advance the work of the Forum and KCI. Technical work mandated to the Forum and KCI under its 6-year work plan should be delivered on time. All Parties see these times as extraordinary, which means both virtual meetings and intersessional meetings should not set a precedent speed up delivery.

Cross-cutting issues

- On oceans, we welcome the summary report by the Chair of SBSTA on the dialogue on the ocean and climate change to consider how to strengthen mitigation and adaptation action as an outcome of 1/CP.25. We request the UK Presidency to explore opportunities under the UNFCCC for existing workstreams and constituted bodies to strengthen inclusion of the ocean in relevant aspects of their work, and for continued dialogue to strengthen understanding and action in this regard.

Intersessional Work

Despite the numerous challenges faced by delegations in this new mode of work, AOSIS is pleased that we have made some substantive progress, albeit limited. This progress, captured in the informal notes and supplementary inputs by Parties, should guide the intersessional period.

We see the utility of an additional negotiation session to progress work ahead of COP 26. However, there are very real challenges and concerns to an in-person meeting at this time. Some islands in the Pacific are serviced by just two flights per month, with one month of quarantine, while other islands have closed borders. We do have concerns regarding effective participation in the virtual format, given time zones, and persistent challenges with internet connectivity and access in our regions. We also note the procedural limitations of this format, including no formal outcomes. For these reasons, we believe that any potential intersessional work should take place in an improved format with clearer guidelines that avoid procedural delays.

Broader mechanisms impact the success of our work here. Climate finance needs to be truly accessible and not restricted by arbitrary criteria, like GDP per capita, that do not reflect our inherent climate and economic vulnerabilities. We need to overhaul such systematic barriers to improve delivery of Paris Agreement mandates, with the seriousness and urgency required. To do this, we need solidarity from Member States.

There are also broader political issues that impact our technical discussions here, where we need our Heads and Ministers to find a way forward. We are disappointed that the recent G7 Summit failed to deliver ambitious outcomes that could have laid the political groundwork for a successful outcome at COP 26. We hope that more trust and political goodwill can be built at a higher-level between now and November to put us in a better position by then.

That being said, AOSIS looks forward to the various initiatives announced by the incoming COP Presidency, as well as the Pre-COP hosts. We emphasize the importance of linking these to the formal processes and existing efforts that are underway, to strengthen rather than duplicate work.

Outcomes at COP 26

The road to COP 26 remains nebulous. COVID-19 remains a serious concern for many of us, and travel restrictions continue for many countries. Access to vaccines and testing facilities is still a challenge in SIDS, and the safety of our delegates is a priority.

At the same time, there are decisions that must be adopted before the end of 2021, namely the UNFCCC Secretariat's budget, and we remain ready to work with the COP Presidency, the Secretariat, and all Parties to ensure this is achieved in an inclusive and transparent manner. We see the utility in extending the time allocated to COP 26, if necessary, taking into account the logistical constraints that we are all facing this year.

Conclusion

As this SB Session wraps up, the Atlantic Hurricane Season is underway. While SIDS do not yet know the magnitude of the destruction that will take place, we do know that we do not have the

capacity to respond on our own. This is precisely what the UNFCCC should be addressing through full implementation; the Paris Agreement must not be allowed to waver at its infancy.

I thank you.