

AOSIS OPENING STATEMENT FOR 20TH CONFERENCE OF PARTIES TO THE UNFCCC

Mr. President,

Congratulations on your assumption of the Presidency. I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States, a coalition of 44 small island, low-lying, and coastal nations highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. At the outset, let me extend our gratitude for the warm hospitality extended to us by the people of Peru and for the extensive preparations you and your staff have made for this crucial meeting.

Mr. President,

To begin, it is important that we describe some of the climate change impacts that we are already experiencing: sea-level rise, ocean acidification, and extreme weather events, coastal flooding, storm surges, erosion and other coastal hazards have become our new normal, threatening vital infrastructure, settlements and facilities that support the livelihoods of island communities.

Additionally, our food security and water security is increasingly at risk, posing a growing risk to our island's subsistence and commercial agriculture operations. There is little doubt that small island developing states are facing numerous life altering or and even life threatening impacts. Simply put, we cannot survive—let alone grow and prosper—without food, water and land.

Mr. President,

We want to stress that financial issues are central to the success of this COP and, appropriately, take up much of the agenda. However, covering all of these critical discussions represents a challenge for our small delegations and we hope that this reality will be carefully considered in the organization of our work.

Long Term Finance and Guidance to the Green Climate Fund are of particular importance to us. We must see significant progress here toward providing more predictability and clarity on how developed country Parties will fulfill their pledge of mobilizing \$100 billion USD per year by 2020. This is essential to restore trust in this process and give developing countries confidence that support to enhance our adaptation and mitigation actions will be available when we need it.

AOSIS is now evaluating submissions from Parties on the strategies and approaches communicated to the Secretariat. We look forward to sharing our views on the best practices as well as any gaps identified. Our capacity to implement the Convention is already limited so we are concerned that any increases or new reporting obligations could pose increase the burden on Parties and discourage participation. We therefore call on partners to provide the support we need to fulfill reporting requirements when necessary.

Mr. President,

AOSIS welcomes the contributions to the initial capitalization of the Green Climate Fund at and after the Berlin High-Level pledging meeting. We are pleased to see that the GCF is finally becoming a reality and so we call on all contributors to make pledges as soon as possible.

It is our view that the GCF must be in a position to start approving projects and programmes by mid-2015 and immediately make funding available thereafter. A priority must be fast-tracking the accreditation of entities needed to facilitate direct access to resources to ensure swift implementation on the ground.

With the impacts of climate change mounting, the adaptation needs for SIDS are urgent. The recent pledges to the GCF has already increased trust, but we stress that confidence can erode quickly if disbursements are not timely and implementation is not effective.

Similarly, technology transfer can provide many benefits when applied for mitigation and adaptation. We urge Parties to cooperate and expedite the approval of the Joint TEC/CTCN Report for 2014 so that there are no repeats of the embarrassment that occurred last year when the COP failed to approve the report. We are looking forward to hearing suggestions from Parties on how linkages between the Technology Mechanism and the Financial Mechanisms of the Convention can be enhanced to the benefits of all.

Mr. President

AOSIS wishes to take this opportunity to underscore the importance of the 2013-2015 Review. We are emphasising that the outcome of the Review should be taken into account both in the preparation of intended Nationally Determined Contributions as well as in the context of setting the level of ambition for the long term global goal in the 2015 agreement. We are already two thirds of the way through the Review process and have considered the Working Group reports of the IPCC Fifth Assessment Report that has established that at levels of warming of at least 2°C the assessments for regional climate impacts reveals with high to very high levels of confidence, risks to ecosystems and livelihoods as well as the sustainable development for the most vulnerable countries such as SIDS and LDCs. Numerous other significant reasons for concern were identified.

In considering this information it is clear to us that an increase of 1.5 degree Celsius in average global temperatures could result in dangerous climate change impacts that in some cases will THREATEN the survival of SIDS. MODERATE TO HIGH RISKS are identified at 1.5 degree Celsius and at this LEVEL OF WARMING it will still have very stark implications for the cost of adaptation and permanent loss and damage.

In this session we urge Parties to move forward with consideration of the AR 5 Synthesis Report and other sources of information in addition to IPCC AR5. It is

critically important that we continue to consider this additional information, in particular as it relates to the adverse impacts of climate change on SIDS at and ABOVE 1.5 degrees Celsius. We must ensure that the Review process takes into account in a holistic manner all of the relevant information so that any decision taken by the COP on this critical matter will be informed by the latest science.

As you well know, we all have our work cut out for us in the next two weeks and as small delegations it is critical for us that the discussions are run efficiently and start and finish on time. We ask for your support in helping to ensure that neither the Secretariat nor we are forced to stay here into the small hours of the morning agreeing to text. The outcome will be better for all concerned if we adhere to this discipline.

Thank you for your attention and we assure the Presidency of our support in the weeks to come for a successful outcome in Lima. An outcome that addresses the needs of the most vulnerable groups, like SIDS, LDCs, and Africa will ensure we are on the right course to Paris.