



ALLIANCE OF SMALL ISLAND STATES

AOSIS Statement
Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)
2021 Operational activities for development segment (OAS)

Session 1: Opening of the ECOSOC OAS and interactive dialogue with the UN Secretary General
18 May 2021, New York

Distinguished Secretary-General, President and Vice-President of the ECOSOC, Excellencies, Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen

1. I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Members of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS). We align ourselves with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of the Republic of Guinea on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.
2. AOSIS wishes to thank the President and Vice-President of ECOSOC for convening this year's ECOSOC-OAS and for the very full and interesting programme before us. We look forward to constructively engaging and to ensuring this year's segment is successful, especially as we continue to work during some very unprecedented and challenging times due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.
3. Through you Mr. Vice-President, we also wish to thank the Secretary-General for his presentation of his report and his vision for the continuation of the UN repositioning and the implementation of the 2020 QCPR during this time of crisis.
4. It is no secret that prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, our small vulnerable island states were already struggling to implement the very ambitious 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It is also well known that this was not at all due to our lack of not diligently trying as we faced external crises after crises – from economic and financial shocks to natural disasters. Though our people remain resilient, the economic/financial, social and environmental toll on our peoples and countries are tremendous and ongoing.

5. This is why, Mr. Vice-President, our mission here within the United Nations is to ensure that the system is fit-for-purpose and able to provide the backstopping support for our countries, so that we would not be left behind. We are especially thankful for the special attention the Secretary-General has been giving to SIDS and our challenges, since he had assumed his office, and we are happy that his recently repositioned UNDS and the reinvigorated RC system has begun to focus on the special and unique circumstances of SIDS. We especially note the review and enhancements of the Multi-Country Offices (MCOs), which service several SIDS. However, we again impress upon the System that its SIDS response cannot and should not be concentrated solely through the MCOs.
6. We are also happy to hear that the Secretary-General will be dedicating a funding round for SIDS through the SDG Fund to aid with the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. We look forward to hearing more about this, including finding out how SIDS can be instrumental in ensuring that the SIDS round is successful.
7. For SIDS it is extremely important that during these very challenging times we receive assistance to help us not only recover from COVID-19 and procuring vaccines, but our already high indebtedness and our preparations for the annual onslaught of more frequent and intense hurricane and typhoon seasons, and here let us remember our sisters and brothers of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines who are currently being ravished by volcanic eruptions.
8. We remain thankful for the movements in the system to establish multi-dimensional vulnerability index for SIDS, and also for the establishment of targets and indicators for the Samoa Pathway that would complement that of the SDGs framework, in order to help us track our implementation of the Samoa Pathway.
9. In this vein, we reiterate our call to the international community, especially our developed partners and the IFIs, to continue to consider as a matter of urgency the special circumstance facing SIDS in an effort to enhance a more comprehensive and holistic approach to addressing our particular needs and priorities.
10. In closing, Mr. Vice President, we wish to once again thank you, and through you the Secretary-General and his Team for the leadership and stewardship during these very difficult times, and to acknowledge the great job the newly repositioned UNDS is doing during these unprecedented time – As the Secretary-General rightly said in his report COVID-19 was the litmus test for the system, and we are happy to say it seemed to have done a great job.
11. I thank you.