



**Statement delivered by H.E. Ambassador Marlene Moses  
Permanent Representative of Nauru to the United Nations  
Chair of Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)**

6th Session of the OWG-SDG on the needs of countries in special  
situations (SIDS)

December 10, 2013

Co-Chairs,

Nauru has the honour to speak on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), a coalition of 44 island and low lying coastal states from the AIMS, Caribbean and the Pacific region.

AOSIS associates its statement with the statement delivered by the distinguished Permanent Representative of Fiji on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

We offer our sincere appreciation to the eminent panelists. We are grateful to have them share their perspectives and experiences on the needs of countries in special situations.

In 1992, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development formally recognized for the first time the special sustainable development case of Small Island Developing States. Last year the Rio+20 outcome, the “Future We Want”, reaffirmed the special case of SIDS for sustainable development in view of our unique and particular vulnerabilities.

The structural challenges that SIDS face are well known. They include our small size, remoteness, narrow resource and export base, isolation from markets, diseconomies of scale and capacity limitations. External shocks such as the global food, fuel and financial crisis and the impacts of climate change and natural disasters have the power to shake our countries to our very foundations.

We have made considerable strides in pursuit of the MDGs, but there is still a tremendous amount that needs to be done. Improvements have been slow and uneven and we need continued support and partnership with other SIDS and the rest of our global community to overcome the significant challenges that stand between us and our inclusive, equitable, and sustainable development.

The brief prepared for today's meeting rightly calls climate change "the most serious threat to SIDS in their pursuit of sustainable development." But it is not just SIDS that face impacts from climate change; it is our entire global community. For this reason the SDG process must ensure that it effectively addresses the linkages between climate change and sustainable development by including climate change, in accordance with the principle of CBDR, as a cross-cutting issue in the SDGs.

A major impediment to our sustainable development is our dependence on imported fossil fuels for our energy needs. A staggering amount of our annual budget goes towards expensive diesel fuel. Renewable energy would be a far better investment for us in the long run. Efficient buildings would also help cut our outrageous power bill. Doing these things isn't easy for us; we will definitely need financial and technological support, along with effective capacity building. But make no mistake; we are

absolutely committed to shifting to renewables and support a sustainable energy SDG. We fully recognize that if we are able to reduce how much we spend on our energy needs, it would go a long way towards allowing us to increase our attention to some of our other sustainable development challenges.

However, we are already feeling the impacts of climate change and require support to address these impacts. We have seen persistent degradation of our island environments, which threaten such basic needs as food and water. Extreme weather conditions and rising sea levels pose a myriad of environmental, social and economic challenges, while also having significant security implications that in fact threaten the very existence of some SIDS.

Co-Chairs,

SIDS are custodians of vast expanses of oceans and as such they must have ownership of strategies concerning the sustainable development of oceans.

Fisheries, coastal tourism, possible exploitation of seabed resources, and potential sources of renewable energy: these are the building blocks of an ocean-based economy. By emphasizing the economic power of the ocean economy, SIDS can seize their competitive advantage and carve a niche in global economy.

In line with the importance of oceans and seas to SIDS, we highlight the importance of taking steps to preserve its ability to be a long term resource for our peoples.

This includes ensuring the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction.

It includes addressing the causes of ocean acidification, land based sources of pollution, and IUU fishing. It includes promoting the full recognition of the special requirements of SIDS in regional fisheries management organizations and providing for enhanced participation for SIDS within fisheries and fisheries-related industries in order to overcome critical barriers to sustainable development and to make concerted efforts and consider innovative options to reduce or restructure their fleets so as to accommodate aspirations of SIDS to further develop their own fisheries. It includes implementation of regional initiatives to promote sustainable conservation and management of coastal and marine resources, including the designation of the Caribbean Sea as a special area in the context of sustainable development, the Caribbean Challenge and Coral Triangle Initiatives and the Micronesia Challenge to aid the achievement of Target 11 of Aichi under the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Given the critical importance of oceans and seas to SIDS, we underscore that healthy, productive, and resilient oceans and seas are a critical source of livelihoods and are an important element of identity for the people of the SIDS. We believe that that oceans and seas are a thematic priority and should be prominently reflected in the Sustainable Development Goals and the post-2015 agenda, including through the consideration of a thematic Sustainable Development Goal.

The implementation of the BPOA and MSI over the last two decades has illuminated important lessons learned in the value of SIDS-SIDS cooperation, triangular, and partnerships with development partners. Partnerships no matter how big or small should continue to provide an important platform through which

SIDS proceed towards achieving sustainable development objectives.

In order to overcome the challenges presented thus far and to move towards a stronger methodology for measuring policy impact, SIDS calls on the international community to provide the political, technical and financial support needed to make essential transformations required to ensure our sustainable development. However, this support must be effective and result in measureable benefits for our people and communities.

Co-Chairs,

We look forward to continue working with all of our partners on the SDG process to ensure that it provides a framework for the delivery of sufficient means of implementation and effective partnerships to allow for us to go beyond the rhetoric of sustainable development and make real, measurable progress on the ground in the post-2015 development framework.

I thank you.