



Statement delivered by Ms. Lara Daniel, Charge D’Affaires, Permanent Mission of Nauru to the United Nations

**On behalf of the
Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)**

**7th Session of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals
Thematic Issue of Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction
6-10 January 2014**

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Co-Chairs,

Nauru has the honor to speak on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), a group of 44 countries extremely vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change.

Climate change is an urgent threat to humanity. While SIDS, are among those that contribute least to global climate change, we are among those that suffer the most.

During the 6th Session of the OWG on the needs of countries in special situation, which includes SIDS, climate change was highlighted as “the most serious threat to SIDS in their pursuit of sustainable development.”

The briefing paper on climate change and disaster risk reduction provided for this session correctly notes that the impacts of climate change on sustainable development are observed through both slow onset events, such as sea level rise, increasing temperature, ocean acidification, glacial retreat and related impacts, salinization, land and forest degradation, and loss of biodiversity and desertification, and extreme weather events. Additionally, the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events are exacerbated by climate change.

The IPCC’s Working Group 1 Summary for Policy Makers indicates that climate change impacts are accelerating, and most aspects of climate change will “persist for many centuries even if emissions of CO₂ are stopped. This represents a substantial multi-century climate change commitment created by past, present, and future emissions of CO₂”.

From the findings of the IPCC Special Report on Extreme Events and the emerging results of the IPCC Fifth Assessment Report, it becomes evident that managing the risks associated with climate change-related impacts and loss and damage is crucial because of the irreversible threats these impacts and losses pose to sustainable development.

Co-Chairs,

SIDS continue to express alarm and grave concerns about climate change. It poses the most serious threat to our territorial integrity, viability and survival, and it undermines our efforts to achieve sustainable development.

For SIDS, the adverse impacts of climate change compound existing critical economic, environmental, social and security related issues and place additional burdens on national responses and development systems, as well as on national budgets and efforts to achieve national sustainable development objectives.

SIDS are already experiencing the impacts of climate change, including losses and damages from climate change impacts that can no longer be prevented through mitigation nor adaptation. The immediate losses that are now being experienced are challenging our limited capacity to respond.

Current loss and damage patterns strike at the central purpose of climate policy, which is, to avoid dangerous climate change and ensure the possibility of timely adaption so as not to impede food production and sustainable development.

Recent researches¹ show that people in vulnerable regions appear to be approaching the biophysical and social boundaries of adaptation, beyond which climate change compromises sustainable development. Further evidence suggests that in many places around the world today, autonomous and planned adaptation to climatic stressors are not enough to avoid loss and damage.

Some negative climate-related impacts on development are already being observed such as the changes in agriculture and increases in coastal vulnerability, even though adaptation efforts and resilience building are underway. These negative impacts in turn affect the ability to plan and implement adaptation at community, provincial, country and regional levels.

Co-Chairs:

While we firmly maintain that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change, climate change remains an existential threat, affecting everyone and everything. Climate change must therefore be treated in the SDGs and in the post 2015 development agenda as a cross cutting issue.

We note the different views regarding a separate goal on climate change and we maintain our strong views that without addressing climate change comprehensively in the SDGs and post 2015 development agenda, the goals on eradicating poverty and achieving sustainable development will be ineffective.

¹ Moser, 2009; Patt and Schröter, 2009; Adger et al., 2009, (Warner et al. 2012, 2013).

Co-chairs,

We remain concerned that while climate change has been recognized as a serious threat to poverty eradication and sustainable development, concrete and convincing suggestions on how to address it effectively and across the framework has not been forthcoming.

Many goal areas and targets that have been suggested do not address climate change at all. This could jeopardize current and future action to eradicate poverty and sustainable development.

SIDS urge that concerted effort and time be invested into discussing how climate change could be treated as a cross cutting issue in the suggested goals. We have heard some suggestions on integration and mainstreaming but we still do not know what we need to further define and elaborate these ideas. We are aware that some work are currently taking place in different countries and regions, on attempts to integrate or mainstream climate change and disaster risk for example. These could be welcomed case studies for our work.

We look forward to continue working closely and constructively with you both and all of our partners on the SDG process.

I thank you.