



**Statement by H. E. Dr. Dessima D. Williams
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On Behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)

**At the Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting for the CSD-17
On the Thematic Discussion on Inter-linkages, Cross-cutting Issues
and Means of Implementation Plenary session**

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Distinguished Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS).

AOSIS shares the view expressed in the report of the Secretary-General on the need for a holistic approach using national sustainable development strategies and other national sustainable development plans to yield better results by addressing the inter-linkages among the issues. Support to strengthen human resource and institutional capacity is required by Small Island Developing States to develop these strategies and implement them.

Food production is hampered by the scarcity of land, energy, technology, investment, and capacity in SIDS. Land degradation, bio-fuels production, droughts, and floods also reduce food security. In order to boost agricultural production in SIDS and ensure food security the international community should:

- Support and strengthen efforts undertaken by the SIDS, especially food security and vulnerability reduction programmes aimed at improving the sustainability of forestry, fisheries, and agriculture sectors;
- Support diversification of options for growing crops and harvesting fish;
- Significantly increase the level of official development assistance and investment devoted to agricultural production;
- Provide policy space for SIDS in the global trading regime to encourage the use of locally grown products to reduce reliance on expensive imports and boost the agricultural sector.
- Assist SIDS in creating an appropriate investment climate for agricultural and rural infrastructure

Climate change exacerbates threats already affecting food security and poses new challenges in land, agriculture, and rural development. Policy responses at the international level should:

- Support climate vulnerability analysis for all food production sectors in SIDS;
- Support the efforts of SIDS to diversify agricultural production systems to adapt to climate change;
- Ensure new, additional and predictable resources are provided to SIDS to address the impact of climate change;

- Support the establishment of research and monitoring institutions, and support for MSI implementation, and programmes for boosting renewable energy production and reducing vulnerability to disasters;
- Institute a system of carbon credits to help preserve standing forests and boost SIDS' mitigation and adaptation efforts;
- Support the integration of climate change adaptation strategies with land, watershed, and coastal zone management;
- Engage in re-forestation, sustainable land use, zoning and other sustainable measures to improve resiliency to climate change;
- Secure increased assistance, resources, capacity building and technology transfer targeted especially to SIDS;
- Support ecosystem approaches that integrate management of land, water and living resources to protect and build the resilience of the biodiversity base supporting livelihoods of SIDS communities.
- An ambitious and comprehensive agreement(s) within the UNFCCC that results in significant reductions in global greenhouse gas emissions

The effect of the global financial crisis has been particularly devastating in SIDS given our small size, high exposure to international markets and dependence on sectors such as tourism. AOSIS is concerned that the financial crisis could further threaten the fulfillment of commitments made by the international community to support the sustainable development efforts of SIDS including the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy. The crisis should not be used as an excuse to reduce international support to SIDS.

The special challenges and capacity needs of SIDS must be taken into account in the implementation of technical assistance programmes, including in technology development and technology transfer in areas such as agriculture and food production systems.

As it relates to the means of implementation policy responses include:

- Support "truly" integrative approaches in programming to increase efficiency and effectiveness of ODA support;
- Assist SIDS in strengthening partnerships between NGOs, governments, the UN, and the private sector in order to encourage technology transfer, capacity building, and resources for development;
- Support the establishment of a structured framework for the sharing of best practices and lessons learnt among SIDS, using the SIDS Unit in UNDESA as a platform.
- Support efforts to build national and regional capacity in SIDS
- The international financial institutions including the Global Environment Facility (GEF) should facilitate SIDS' access to financial and technical resources to develop and implement projects to address land degradation.
- Wherever possible, utilize local expertise to strengthen local capacity;
- Pursue a bottom-up approach in improving rural livelihoods, where responsibility for outcomes is shared and community ownership of the development process encouraged;
- Overcome limited rural development opportunities with empowerment, participatory assessment, and training to build capacity;
- Simplify processes and systems in project management

I thank you Madam Chair