



Collective Commitment by the Members of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) at the High-Level Leader's Roundtable on Natural Disasters and Climate Change: Managing Risks and Crises Differently

25 May 2016

Mr President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. The Republic of Maldives today, is honoured to speak on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS).
2. We stand here today to highlight the disproportionate impact that disasters have on Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Our small size, geographic isolation, narrow resource base, and exposure to global environmental challenges and external shocks make it extremely difficult for SIDS to prepare for disasters before they strike, and exceptionally harder to recover in their aftermath.
3. We stand here today, to emphasise how the adverse impacts of human-induced climate change have added to the challenge of disaster risk reduction. Sea level rise, more frequent and intense storms and coastal erosion, which are exacerbated by climate change, will only compound the challenges SIDS already face from natural disasters.
4. We are here today, because the impacts from disasters go beyond direct deaths: because they have wider implications on the socio-economic order in SIDS. They affect our livelihood, economies and the well being of our people and our communities.
5. We are here, because we are concerned about our own capacity and our own resilience, to meet and cope with the challenges from the projected increase in extreme weather events, and related disasters.
6. And it is becoming increasingly evident that addressing disasters and managing disaster risks must be synonymous with other related frameworks on sustainable development and climate change, in a holistic approach.
7. We recognise that there is a critical need to build resilience, strengthen monitoring and prevention, reduce vulnerability, raise awareness and increase preparedness to respond and recover from disasters in SIDS.
8. Having taken this into account we, the Members of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), align ourselves to Core Commitment 1 – “to accelerate the reduction of disaster and climate-related risks through the coherent implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the

Paris Agreement on Climate Change, as well as other relevant strategies and programmes of action, including the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway”.

9. In this regard, we reiterate our commitment, as outlined in the SAMOA Pathway, to continue, with the support of our partners, our efforts to:
 - a) Gain access to technical assistance and financing for early warning systems, disaster risk reduction and post-disaster response and recovery, risk assessment and data, land use and planning, observation equipment, disaster preparedness and recovery education programmes, including under the Global Framework for Climate Services and disaster risk management.
 - b) Promote cooperation and investment in disaster risk management in the public and private sectors;
 - c) Strengthen and support contingency planning and provisions for disaster preparedness and response, emergency relief and population evacuation, in particular for people in vulnerable situations, women and girls, displaced persons, children, older persons and people with disabilities;
 - d) Mainstream policies and programmes related to disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and development, as appropriate;
 - e) Harmonize national and regional reporting systems, where applicable, to increase synergies and coherence; and
 - f) Establish and strengthen risk insurance facilities at the national and regional levels and place disaster risk management and building resilience at the centre of policies and strategies, where applicable;

Excellencies,

10. We continue to work towards integrating disaster risk considerations into our national development plans and policies, as outlined in the SAMOA Pathway. And we are already spending significant amounts of public funds on resilience building and climate adaptation. We have the political commitment to institutionalize disaster risk reduction.
11. But we cannot do it alone. The reality is that we need the financial, technical and capacity building support of the international community as envisioned in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and the SAMOA Pathway.
12. We look forward to standing together with the international community, as we begin implementation of the 2015 frameworks on sustainable development, towards the common future we want.

Thank you.