

**COMMUNIQUE**  
**Fourth Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Alliance of Small  
Island States (AOSIS)**  
**Adopted at Johannesburg, 1 September 2002**

1. The Heads of State and Government of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) met 1 September 2002 at World Summit on Sustainable development, held in Johannesburg, South Africa from 26 August to 4 September, 2002. The meeting was chaired by H.E. the Honorable Tuila'epa Sailele Malielegaoi, Prime Minister of the Independent State of Samoa, and was attended by: H.E. (Heads of State and Government)
2. The meeting was also attended by the following Heads of Delegation of AOSIS member States: H.E. (Ministers, PRs, etc)
3. The following special observers were also in attendance: (UN, SIDS organizations, NGOs)
4. The Heads of State and Government of AOSIS recalled that ten years ago in Rio de Janeiro, small island developing States (SIDS) met for the first time at the Summit level to discuss common concerns. The efforts of SIDS delegations at Rio prompted the international community to accept the special circumstances of SIDS. The convening of the Barbados Conference was a milestone in this regard, as it set the framework for the implementation of sustainable development in SIDS. However, ten years since Rio very little is being done at the international level to assist SIDS in overcoming their unique problems.
6. The Heads of State and Government of AOSIS welcomed the results of the Twenty-Second Special Session of the General Assembly to review the implementation of the BPOA, which was held from 27 to 28 September 1999 in New York. Nevertheless, the SIDS are still financing almost 70% of current activities aimed at the implementation of the BPOA. They reaffirmed that the key issues identified during the 22<sup>nd</sup> Special Session remain high priorities, while some issues such as climate change have taken on even greater urgency. In this regard they reiterated their support for the Marrakech Accords, and called for real commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support SIDS in their adaptation efforts.
7. The Heads of State and Government of AOSIS expressed concern that adequate, predictable, new and additional financial resources in support of implementation of the BPOA had not been provided by the international community.
8. The Heads of State and Government of AOSIS therefore emphasized the need for the international community to assist SIDS in advancing their sustainable development strategies, through full support for the implementation of the BPOA at all levels and in all SIDS. As the custodians of enormous oceanic areas and resources they affirmed the need

for greater international attention, support, research and assistance to be provided to SIDS in their efforts to avoid or mitigate serious environmental degradation.

9. The Heads of State and Government of AOSIS reviewed several topics of importance to SIDS (vulnerability of SIDS, capacity building, climate change and sea level rise, energy for sustainable development, tourism, oceans and marine resources and reefs, trade and finance, and progress in the implementation of BPoA – **LIST TO BE COMPLETED AFTER LEADERS DEBATE**).

- The vulnerability of SIDS is far more egregious than the vulnerability of developing countries in general. SIDS face special and unique circumstances that the international community has recognized, yet has failed to act upon.
- Capacity building remains a foremost priority for SIDS in all aspects of sustainable development. The special report for the GEF Capacity Development Initiative recognized and reiterated many of the findings of SIDS capacity building needs, and the clear priority to move beyond needs assessments and further study into actual implementation of programs.
- As custodians of vast ocean resources SIDS recognize and accept their special responsibilities. Assistance is required at various levels to ensure that SIDS are enabled to fully discharge those responsibilities and ensure the sustainable development of these resources.
- Climate change remains an important challenge for SIDS. There is even greater urgency to bring about changes in consumption patterns and energy use, in particular in the developed countries.
- Energy for sustainable development is recognized by SIDS as a crucial component for their future economic growth, while the byproducts and waste from many energy production processes represent direct threats to their survival. A careful balance is required based on energy efficiency, renewable energy and other innovative technologies.
- Tourism is the mainstay of many SIDS economies, but many detrimental effects have been observed in some SIDS in regards to the impact of tourism on the environment, culture and social development.
- SIDS continue to be marginalized in international trade, and are to a large extent alienated from the WTO and UNCTAD.
- In terms of financing for sustainable development in SIDS, the GEF continues to be a reliable partner. While there are documented problems with the EA and IA, the GEF has been a significant resource for SIDS, and must be fully and effectively replenished at greater levels.

10. The Heads of State and Government of AOSIS agreed that the international community should meet to consider the implementation of the BPOA, and that such an international meeting should focus on activities and efforts that have promoted sustainable development in SIDS and to look at areas where further work is needed. They recognized the great effort carried out by the SIDS themselves in the implementation of Agenda 21 and the BPOA, and the need for further support and promotion, and welcomed the continued advocacy efforts of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) in this role.

11. The Heads of State and Government of AOSIS welcomed the attention given to the special situation and vulnerabilities of SIDS in the WSSD Draft Plan of Implementation. They agreed that the international community must pay special attention to the means of implementation of initiatives identified in Section VII of the Draft Plan for the Implementation of the WSSD, and to assist SIDS in addressing the new challenges faced by SIDS, and in this regard the international community should consider regional and inter-regional cooperation to further advance their implementation, and to find ways and means to accelerate the full implementation of the BPOA in the agreed timeframes. The real challenge will be the political will in the international community to move towards implementation.

12. The Heads of State and Government of AOSIS expressed their gratitude to the Chairman and the many officials who have worked tirelessly to accomplish the goals of AOSIS in many international negotiations. Gratitude was also expressed to AOSIS member States which have hosted meetings of experts and workshops. They encouraged the pursuit of further cooperation among AOSIS member States, and support for increased participation of the wider AOSIS membership in meetings and workshops held in AOSIS regions.

12. The Heads of State and Government of AOSIS reaffirmed their agreement to exchange views at future international to ensure that AOSIS remains a forum to promote the shared interests of its member States, and to strengthen cooperation among SIDS.

13. The Heads of State and Government of AOSIS expressed the hope that the WSSD would be a catalyst for enhanced international participation in and support for the implementation of the BPOA. Ultimately this will require a process to convene an international meeting to consider the comprehensive review of the implementation of the Program of Action in the year 2004.

*Done at Johannesburg , 1 September 2002 .*