

NDC Workshop in New York on 7th August 2019
Opening Remarks by Chair – Amb. Lois M. Young

Good morning,

1. It is my pleasure to welcome you to New York and to this workshop on Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) in our fight against the impacts of Climate Change.

A new Phase in the Climate Change fight.

2. Today, the Alliance of Small Island States is stepping up to the challenge at a point when the climate change process as we know it under the UNFCCC is entering a new phase.
3. Up to COP 24 in Katowice, AOSIS was engaged in the negotiation of the Paris Agreement and its Rulebook. Until then, we invested significant resources in preparing negotiators for the task of negotiating.
4. With the near completion of the Rulebook, all eyes are now set on the implementation of the Paris Agreement. For AOSIS Members this has to be a crucial moment, for we have no more than 10 years to get this phase right, if we are to stand any chance of safeguarding the only world that small island developing states will be able to survive in. And that is a 1.5 C world.

It is therefore our responsibility that as Chair we offer support to our Members in preparing for this new implementation phase of the Paris Agreement (“the Agreement”).

The Place of NDCs in the CC Fight

5. The centrepiece of implementation under the Agreement are the nationally determined contributions (NDCs). By March 2020, all state parties to the Paris Agreement are invited to submit new and updated NDCs

The current NDCs put us nowhere close to a 1.5 world and are nowhere near what is needed for SIDS to survive. It is in our vested interest to urge new and updated NDCs that will correct course and drive the ambition and action needed to meet the 1.5 test.

6. AOSIS Members may be the least contributors to greenhouse gas emissions and our potential contribution to mitigation efforts may be relatively negligible. However, we have always been at the forefront of ambition and, given that our immediate future is at stake, we must remain at the forefront.
7. If Belize as the Chair is to convey one message to the world at the UN Secretary General's Climate Action Summit, it would be the irrefutable truth that there can be no talk of ambition if it does not include the Small Island Developing States.

We are the indispensable benchmark of ambition.

8. So dear colleagues, we are here to break new ground. Through this NDC Workshop, the AOSIS Chairmanship intends to support you in taking forward the drive of ambition in this new implementation phase. And it is very much in line with our Chairmanship's initiative to magnify the SIDS ambition for all the world to see and for all the world to benefit from.
9. We have a solid basis for this drive because in each and every one of our countries we have proven innovative approaches that we are employing or are ready to deploy to respond to the present climatic

threats to our people and their sustainable development. Many of these approaches at scale can be used as models by other countries - developing and developed alike. What we need is both enhanced capacity and enhanced support.

10. I hope the workshop will play a part in addressing that need and that it will help each of you with your preparations of new and or updated NDCs.
11. Recently, I shared with my fellow Ambassadors the draft of the AOSIS NDC Initiative for the Climate Action Summit which will capture our Members' commitment to commit to NDCs in 2020. Importantly, the NDC Initiative will also bring together a coalition of ambitious partners who are willing to render support to our Members to fulfill that commitment. I very much look forward to having your contributions in this Workshop enrich the Chair's initiative moving forward.
12. I wish to thank RICARDO for collaborating with the AOSIS Climate Team (ACT) in preparing the agenda and materials for this Workshop as well as for providing logistical support to our Team. I also wish to personally thank my AOSIS team –Ambassador Janine Felson, Ms. Nellie Catzim, Ms. Diana Ruiz, Mr. Alfonso Gahona - and my Mission staff - Mr. Andrew Smith, Ms. Sharleen Henderson for all the time and effort they have put into the groundwork.
13. Finally I wish to thank Price Waterhouse Coopers for providing the space to hold this workshop and to our partners in CABIN and the European Union for their contributions.