

**AOSIS Statement on the Occasion of
the General Assembly Debate on Climate Change
1st August 2007**



**Delivered by H. E. Dr. Angus Friday
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Chairman of the Alliance of Small Island States

Madam President on behalf of Alliance of Small Island States I wish to convey to you our deep satisfaction with the format of this debate which has brought forward a distinguished array of world experts on the science and the challenges of climate change. As one of the most vulnerable groups of countries, we wish to express our sincere appreciation for this timely debate.

Madam President, weather patterns have changed the world over and therefore, by definition, the climate has changed. Climate change has been caused by human activity. And Climate Change is the single most important *threat* facing the economic development, the peace and security and the territorial existence of small island states.

As the most vulnerable, we have been the unwitting food tasters in a royal court that is being slowly poisoned by Climate Change. As the proverbial “canary in a coal mine”, The Small Island States have repeatedly raised the alarm bells on global warming over the last fifteen years.

Over the years...

We have said that:

- 1) the devastating impact of climate change is already being felt in small island states where environmental refugees are being moved from their island homes because of sea level rise. Sea Level rise threatens our very existence.

We have said that:

- 2) sea temperature rise is closely correlated with the increasing ferocity of hurricanes causing, in the case of Grenada, 90% loss of housing stock and damages worth twice times the national GDP.

We have said that:

- 3) Sea temperature rise is also causing bleaching of coral reefs. The loss of these eco systems impact negatively on fish stocks, one of the main protein sources of small island states. A further one degree increase in temperature will lead to significant loss of tuna and dolphin stocks for a large number of our island states.

We have also said that:

- 4) The loss of the natural habitat of coral reefs impacts negatively on tourism, one of the key industries for our member states.

In summary the challenge is economic and existential.

Yesterday’s discourse in the general assembly helped, once again, to re-energise delegates on this issue of Climate Change. However, **Madam President**, as stated by our colleague from the Maldives yesterday; we have been here before. In the past there have been overwhelming expressions of goodwill at conferences on this subject. Yet we have not *sufficiently* translated good intentions or worthy resolutions into implemented projects and programmes on the ground.