

**Statement by Ambassador Tuiloma Neroni Slade,
Permanent Representative of Samoa to the United Nations,
on Behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)**

**Ministerial Segment
Wednesday, 17 July 1996**

Mr President, Honourable Ministers,

I have the honour to speak for the 30 Convention Parties who are members of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS).

We are here under obligation of the Convention and at the direction of the Berlin Mandate to strengthen, as a matter of urgency, the commitments of Annex I Parties, through the adoption of a Protocol or another legal instrument at the third session of the Conference of the Parties, and in a manner consistent with the Convention's Objective.

The Convention's Objective directs us to stabilise atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system.

Our small island and low-lying developing countries believe that we have discerned first hand the dangerous impacts of human interference with the climate system. Tropical storms of increasing frequency and severity are devastating our homes, national economies and development plans. Global sea level has risen between 10-25 cm in the past century: clearly, it poses the most profound threat to small island and low lying states.

We now have the conclusions of the IPCC Second Assessment Report, built upon transparent processes, based on the work of over 2000 leading scientists and endorsed by policymakers representing the global community. The conclusions confirm that impacts we have long known were dangerous will be felt in vulnerable areas around the world if action is not taken urgently to stabilise concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. The SAR sounds a clear warning that we can no longer indiscriminately use the atmosphere as a dump for humankind's waste. We ignore this at the risk of the most serious consequences.

Uncertainties remain. But many of the anticipated changes may well be irreversible by the time there is certainty of outcome. Moreover, the momentum of change in the combined atmosphere-ocean system is such that the modifications of atmosphere composition taking place as a result of current human activity are already committing our children and their children to living in a world substantially worse to the one we know today. From the island perspective, dangerous anthropogenic interference is already occurring to the climate system.