



DG Remarks at AIS High-Level Meeting

11 October 2023, Bali, Indonesia

H.E Joko Widodo, President of the Republic of Indonesia and Chairman
Leaders of the AIS Forum
Heads of Delegations
Distinguished Delegates

It would be remiss of me not to join others that have preceded me to thank and congratulate the Indonesian Government for the warm hospitality showered on us since our arrival, the lovely Gala Night yesterday evening, and the excellent arrangements for this first High-Level Meeting of the AIS Forum.

Thanks to the foresight of my predecessor, H.E. Ambassador Amena Yauvoli of Fiji, who is amongst us today in the Fiji Delegation, the MSG Secretariat was in attendance at the Manado Meetings in 2018 that gave birth to the establishment of the Archipelagic and Island States Forum.

MSG is proud of this long association - manifesting the seriousness with which MSG Members (Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu), attach to addressing the challenges of climate change, sea level rise, good maritime governance, waste disposal and the development of a viable Blue Economy where all of us can mutually benefit.

MSG countries commitment to addressing these issues is reaffirmed and re-demonstrated in the MSG Leaders agreeing at their 22nd Summit in August in Vanuatu to adopt the Udaune Climate Change Declaration. This Declaration complements the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific continent.

In that Declaration, amongst other things, the MSG Leaders agreed to work towards a possible Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Fossil Fuel as part of the Port Vila Call for Just Transition to a Fossil Fuel Free Pacific, to pursue aggressively the ICJ Advisory Opinion on Responsibility of States vis-à-vis Climate Change, and undertake not to allow underwater seabed mining to be carried out in their jurisdictions.

MSG countries have all legislated to ban single use plastic products.

We see AIS as a reliable and pragmatic partner.

We thank Indonesia, UNDP and the AIS Secretariat for their stewardship of the work of the AIS so far. The Report rendered to the Ministerial Meeting yesterday affirms to us and convinces us that AIS is on the right track and provides us an appropriate platform to prosecute our concerns in the areas of climate change, sea level rise, good maritime governance and waste disposal.

In partnership with the AIS Secretariat, we have already begun our constructive collaboration by running a Bluepreneur Training Program for a number of our youth and women entrepreneurs for our members.

Yesterday, I signed a Statement of Intent with AIS for more collaborative efforts in the areas of advocacy of AIS collaborative efforts, upscaling of the Blue Entrepreneurship Programme and the Plastic Waste Management.

MSG is happy to support the elevation of the AIS Forum into a Charter-based organization.

We are confident that by doing so, we will be strengthening the inclusive cooperation and collaboration that has already taken roots between AIS Forum Members, between AIS Forum and other Inter-Governmental Organisations, between AIS Forum and Educational, Research and Scientific Institutions to achieve the aims of **fostering collaboration, enabling innovation, for our ocean, and our future.**

MSG is happy to associate itself with, and lend its support for, the Leaders' Declaration on the Solidarity of the Archipelagic and Island States Forum.

I thank you.