

Statement on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) under Agenda Item 82
Report of the International Law Commission on the work of its seventy-second session

Sixth Committee
Thursday, 28 October 2021

Madam Chair,

1. I have the honour to present this statement on behalf of the members of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS). We would like to thank the International Law Commission, and in particular the Study group on Sea Level Rise in Relation to International Law for their work over the past two years. We have been waiting for this Report, have read it closely and welcome the present opportunity to enter into a dialogue with the Commission on the effects of sea level rise on international law.
2. Last year in this Committee, Belize as then Chair of AOSIS stated that 39 small island and low-lying developing States that make up AOSIS are especially affected by sea level rise. The territories of SIDS encompass vast swaths of the ocean and the maritime zones allocated to us under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) are central to our statehood, economies, food security, health and education prospects, and even our unique culture.

through domestic legislation, maritime boundary agreements, and deposit of charts or coordinates and declarations attached thereto.

8. As we further noted last year, this State practice can be both evidence of emerging customary rules (where joined by *opinio juris*), as well as considered subsequent practice useful to the interpretation of provisions of UNCLOS. And we recognize that there may not yet be sufficient State practice and *opinio juris* to make a conclusion that there is a general customary rule concerning preservation of maritime zones. We think that the trend is in that direction.

9. Finally, concerning