LEADERS' DECLARATION
ON THE SOLIDARITY OF THE ARCHIPELAGIC AND ISLAND STATES FORUM
BALI, INDONESIA, 2023

We, the Heads of State and Government representatives of the archipelagic and island states (as shown in the Annex), gathered in Bali on 11 October 2023 for the High-Level Meeting of the Archipelagic and Island States Forum (hereinafter referred to as AIS Forum),

Recalling the Manado Joint Declaration adopted in Manado, Indonesia, in 2018, on the Establishment of the Archipelagic and Island States Forum.

Noting the collective desire of archipelagic and island people for good governance, sustainable economic development, prosperity, environmental protection, and sustainability,

Emphasizing that archipelagic and island states, irrespective of location, size, and level of development, share common but differentiated environmental and development challenges that should be resolved through joint efforts, and concrete collaboration.

Confirming the multidimensional impact and existential threats caused by the climate change, sea level rise, compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic, to the survival of the archipelagic and island people,

Welcoming the leadership and role of Indonesia and the United Nations Development Programme in facilitating the collaboration among the archipelagic and island states through the cooperation framework of the Archipelagic and Island States Forum,

Reaffirming that archipelagic and island states shall engage in a mutually beneficial collaboration built upon the principles of peace, solidarity, fairness, territorial integrity, and reciprocity to protect and preserve the health of the ocean ecosystem, successfully address sustainable-development related challenges, and ensure welfare and prosperity of all humanity in the generations to come.

Do hereby declare to:

1. Underline the establishment of AIS Forum has created inclusive space to forge synergy with other initiatives and serving as an avenue for collaboration, sharing of expertise, and generate smart-innovative solutions among archipelagic and islands states and its collaborative partners;

2. Affirm that the framework of cooperation established under AIS Forum and the work of the Secretariat is instrumental to facilitate the implementation of smart and innovative solutions to resolve sustainable development-related challenges and pressing global social-environmental issues in the areas of

(a) climate change mitigation, adaptation, and disaster management, including the challenge of reducing risks from extreme weather events and the need to improve forecasting and early warning capacities;

(b) creation of sustainable economic development and decent blue job opportunities through the implementation of blue economy, responsible and sustainable fisheries and aquaculture as part of our common efforts to achieve food security, development of inter-island connectivity, and enhancement of capacity on marine research and innovation, including biotechnology;

(c) protection of the marine environment from the challenges of ocean health degradation, loss of biodiversity, acidification, plastic waste, and marine pollution; and

(d) good maritime governance.

3. Recall the joint statement of the Archipelagic and Island States Forum delivered during the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference held in Glasgow, United Kingdom, on 1 November 2022, that has provided the AIS Forum with an instrument to magnify the voices of the archipelagic and island states over pressing issues related to the future of the ocean and the future of the people whose lives are inseparable from it;

4. Considering the ongoing collaboration programs and projects and the desire to strengthen concrete development cooperation, to these ends, agree on the importance of advancing our effective collaboration, through the strengthening of the AIS Forum framework, by establishing a strategic roadmap to set up a charter-based organization based on the principles of equality, solidarity, peaceful resolution of disputes, and respect of sovereignty and territorial integrity.

5. Task Ministers of the Archipelagic and Island States Forum Participating Countries to initiate discussion on the strategic roadmap and modalities to establish a charter-based organization to advance the cooperation.

Agreed in Bali, Indonesia, on the Eleventh of October in the year Two Thousand Twenty-Three, in a single original copy, in the English language.

Annex: List of Participating Countries

1. Bahrain
2. Cabo Verde
3. Cook Islands
4. Cyprus
5. Fiji
6. Indonesia
7. Ireland
8. Japan
9. Madagascar
10. Maldives
11. Malta
12. Marshall Islands
13. Micronesia
14. Nauru
15. New Zealand
16. Niue
17. Palau
18. Papua New Guinea
19. Philippines
20. Saint Lucia
21. Samoa
22. Sao Tome and Principe
23. Seychelles
24. Singapore
25. Solomon Islands
26. Sri Lanka
27. Suriname
28. Timor-Leste
29. Tonga
30. Tuvalu
31. United Kingdom
32. Vanuatu