



PERMANENT MISSION  
OF THE KINGDOM OF TONGA  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Statement by

His Majesty King Tupou VI

On the occasion of the

General Debate

of the Sixty-eighth Session

of the United Nations General Assembly

Friday, 27 September 2013

United Nations Headquarters, New York

**Check against delivery**

**MR. PRESIDENT,  
MR. SECRETARY-GENERAL  
EXCELLENCIES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN**

As this is my first time to address this august Assembly as Head of State, may I sincerely congratulate you upon your election to the Presidency of the General Assembly of the Sixty-eighth Session. I assure you that the Tongan Delegation will be fully supportive and cooperative under your very able leadership.

May I also commend the stewardship of your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Vuk Jeremić, during the Sixty-seventh Session.

I wish to also express my gratitude to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, for his persevering guidance and energetic leadership to further enhance the profile and work of the United Nations Organization in the face of unprecedented global challenges.

**Mr. President,**

Tonga welcomes your timely theme for the General Debate - "The Post-2015 Development Agenda: Setting the Stage" and the inclusion of a set of six thematic issues of focus for High-level events and Thematic debates during the Sixty-eighth Session.

Indeed, Tonga joins other Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in affirming that priorities in the outline of the Post-2015 Development Agenda should, with increased cooperation among UN Member States, be shaped on the Outcome of the 2014 Third International Conference on SIDS that will be convened in the Independent State of Samoa.

Tonga supports the proposed high-level event that would address the needs of women, youth and civil society and contribute to Development goals. Tonga applauds the high-level event on the contribution of human rights and rule of law to the Post-2015 Framework and hails the Twentieth anniversary of Vienna Conference on Human Rights. Earlier this year, Tonga submitted its second Universal Periodic Review, which was adopted by the Human Rights Council. The next review for Tonga is scheduled for 2017-2018.

The high-level event centring on South-South and triangular cooperation and examining how information and communications technology is appreciated as adding value to the realization of development targets. Tonga hosted the annual Pacific Islands Chapter of the Internet Conference (PICISOC) earlier this month to celebrate the emergence of high speed Internet connectivity in Tonga. The Conference showcased the achievements of the Pacific Region to access opportunities for internet users and how Tonga can best derive its own investment strategy for the new Cable Submarine Internet systems.

The thematic debate on partnership is highly praised particularly with the aforementioned Samoa Conference focusing on the overarching theme of 'SIDS' Sustainable Development through genuine and durable partnership. The second thematic debate on the establishment of stable and peaceful societies is also welcomed given the current chaos we are experiencing in the International Community. The Third Thematic Debate converging on the roles of Water, Sanitation and Sustainable Energy is equally crucial to the Development Agenda for the Post-2015 period.

**Mr President,**

Energy is the golden thread that connects Economic growth, increased social equity, and an environment that allows the World to thrive. Sustainable Energy is central in order to reach the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), including many Development goals that extend far beyond the Energy sector-eradicating poverty; increasing food production; providing clean Water, improving public health; enhancing education; creating economic opportunity; and empowering women, as well as an integral part of creating Sustainable Development, including Environmental Sustainability. A shift towards more Sustainable Energy sources is also essential in addressing Environmental sustainability, whilst tackling Climate Change challenges.

The concept of establishing a Pacific Regional Data Repository (PRDR) for Sustainable Energy for all (SE4ALL) is to focus on all energy related projects to be sourced, including all projects implemented in the Pacific, reflecting best practices as well as those that have not been so successful.

The lack of “bankable data” in the Region causes a disconnect to the true value of assistance from our Development Partners whereby 60% of project financing is absorbed by technical assistance, pilot projects, pre-feasibility feasibility studies and only 40% and in some cases less, on hardware. The PRDR 4 SE4ALL has an ambitious goal of implementation whereby the Pacific Small Island Developing States, with the assistance of its Developing Partners, will gift to the 2014 SIDS Conference in Samoa a documented process under which this has been achieved and which may be shared by all Regional Groups of the United Nations.

I therefore, urge all relevant stakeholders to work together to develop and establish a common Global goal on Sustainable Energy for all as part of the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

A set of related targets and indicators supporting the goal should encompass all three dimensions of sustainable development.

The three objectives of the Sustainable Energy for All Initiative (universal energy access, increased efficiency and renewable energy) can provide a solid framework to build on further, while keeping them fully adaptable to different circumstances and priorities at Regional, National and Local levels.

Tonga commends the Secretary-General for his laudable initiative to convene a High-level Summit Meeting on Climate Change in 2014 and joins SIDS in urging leadership from developed countries to enhance their mitigation ambition to bridge the Pre-2020 gap in a timely and effective manner. Furthermore, joins SIDS in calling for the inclusion of Climate Change as a cross-cutting issue of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Oceans are a thematic priority and should also be prominently featured in the SDGs and post-2015 Agenda.

**Mr. President,**

The Government of Tonga has adopted the UNDP Millennium Development Goals Acceleration Framework (MAF) and has chosen to apply it to MDG 6 (Combat NCDs), with applications to MDG 1 (Poverty) and MDG 3 (Gender Equality).

The following five key interventions were prioritised in Tonga to combat Non-communicable diseases: increase local food supply and create income generating opportunities for women and vulnerable groups; provide curative health service at hospital setting, screening of disease-specific risk factors; review of legislation, subsidiary legislation and policies affecting food, tobacco, kava, alcohol and physical activity; advocate healthy lifestyles through churches and

workplaces; and support resources. Tonga's MAF report is completed and ready for launching and moreover aligns itself to the SIDS' call for NCDs and other emerging health issues to be highlighted in the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

**Mr. President,**

Tonga joins other delegations of the International community in urging a swift and peaceful resolution to the situation in Syria.

**Mr. President,**

With respect to pertinent Regional issues, Tonga endorses the views expressed in the Marshall Islands Communiqué that is, the outcome document of the Annual Meeting of Pacific Island Forum Leaders held earlier this month.

May God continue to bless and guide UN Member States and the United Nations as they take their crucial work forward.

Mr. President, I thank you for your attention.

TUPOU VI