



TUVALU

Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction

19th September, Brisbane

Honourable Leaders,

Excellencies

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Today represents a historic moment. It is a pleasure to be given to speak at the Asia Pacific Ministers Forum and I am particularly pleased to speak, as I believe that with your support, the team work and navigating together through the Region and the Asia Pacific forest of processes would no doubt will result in a good outcome.

I am here at this very important meeting as the representative of the people of Tuvalu. I carry a huge burden and responsibility. I carry their hopes that there will be a future for Tuvalu.

Climate change and the impacts of disasters, are the greatest challenges facing my country. It is threatening the livelihoods, security and wellbeing of all Tuvaluans. And I believe, there are others that also share this burden.

Tuvalu is one of the most vulnerable nations to disasters. We have remained COVID free, but our economy has suffered due to COVID and wider global impacts. Climate change is an ongoing crisis for us, and we are currently experiencing drought and facing freshwater shortages throughout Tuvalu.

Our mid-term review, which has been supported by UNDRR Suva Office, shows that Tuvalu has made progress towards the Sendai Framework and the Framework for

Resilient Development in the Pacific, but we have **much more** to do. Tuvalu fully supports the inaugural Pacific Disaster Risk Reduction Declaration of Commitment to Action towards a safer and more resilient region in the face of disaster risk and climate change which was agreed last week.

I am going to focus highlights from our mid-term review which Tuvalu needs to progress to reduce disaster risk.

We have restructured government departments and developed relevant policies, strategies and plans, **what is missing is implementation** ... DRR interventions must be practical and are most effective at the local level.. Tuvalu's small size is an advantage as scale up of successful interventions can be achieved, but in some cases, Tuvalu is too small to qualify for some sources of finance.

In this regard, our mid-term review highlighted many issues with access to finance, from difficult donor-recipient relationships which do not respond to country needs, to complicated and burdensome application and reporting processes... It seems that in terms of access to financing for DRR initiatives, we haven't moved on since the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness back in 2005, and we have not followed the SAMOA Pathway either. DRR financing needs immediate attention.

A lack of capacity was cited as the most common restriction to achieving DRR, and capacity development and education was the most suggested intervention for achieving risk reduction. We are hoping to work with UNDRR and our development partners such as the ADB, EU, Australia, Japan, New Zealand, US, World Bank, CROPs and others, to provide development assistance for practical community DRR and related capacity development initiatives... We want to make DRR education and training sustainable by supporting local education and training providers.

Sendai Framework reporting is difficult, we need to share data and ensure that small-scale disasters have been included to support risk reduction plans and early warning systems. This is crucial for monitoring progress of policies and plans. Our capacity for this needs to be improved.

Going forward, the adoption and implementation of building codes, particularly for the residential sector, is one of our primary priorities. Again, we will need training and capacity development to ensure codes are enforced effectively.

So, I look forward to hearing about the outcomes of this meeting. I certainly hope that it comes forward with a regional action plan that will deliver concrete options.

Thank you.

Tuvalu mo te Atua