



TUVALU

Statement

Delivered by

**H.E Mr Aunese Makoi Simati**

at the

**47th Session of the Commission on Population and Development**

10<sup>th</sup> April, 2014  
United Nations, New York

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Chairman,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen

1. At the outset, I join other delegates in congratulating you on your Chairmanship and we look forward to working with you in advancing the fruitful implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action (PoA).
2. Tuvalu associates itself with the statement made by the distinguished Minister of Cook Islands, Hon. Nandi Tuanie Glassie, on behalf of the Pacific Countries and we endorsed the Moana Declaration and the outcomes of the Sixth Asian and Pacific Population Conference in progressing ICPD mandates in our Pacific region.

Chairman,

3. Tuvalu has embedded key elements of the ICPD in its National Sustainable Development Plan – Te Kakeega II and our recently published Population Policy. We reaffirm our commitment to addressing the identified goals of improving the lives and wellbeing of our citizens in the years to come. The ICPD Review has revealed that we have made significant progress in key areas of population and development. We are also committed to addressing gaps in our current programs.
4. The government of Tuvalu has maintained good working relationship with NGOs, Churches and Youth Organisation in achieving our national goals, ICPD PoA and MDGs.
5. Whilst significant progress has been made in achieving of our MDGs, the impacts of various global financial and economic crises have taken a heavy toll on our small vulnerable economy. In the 2011 MDG progress report, Tuvalu was assessed to be “on track” on four of its MDGs (primary education, child mortality, maternal health, and global partnerships), with three MDGs having the “potential” to achieve the targets (gender, HIV/AIDS, and environment) and one MDG on poverty being “unlikely” to be achieved.
6. Tuvalu’s contraceptive prevalence rate is relatively low (22.4%). However, Tuvalu is committed under its Health Strategic Plan to promoting family planning services through awareness and behavioral change communication at community and household levels. In partnership with the Tuvalu Family Health Association (TUFHA), the Government is committed to promoting and providing comprehensive Sexual and Reproductive Health Services, especially for the young and the marginalized.

Chairman,

7. Tuvalu is committed to improving the lives of its young people through the implementation of its Youth National Policy. The main issues for our youth in Tuvalu are scarcity of

employment opportunities, high rate of unplanned teenage pregnancy and under-resourcing of youth activities.

Chairman,

8. Non-Communicable Disease is a serious health concern for Tuvalu. Tuvalu is committed to combating this epidemic through its National Strategic Plan on NCDs 2011-2015, with a focus on legislative reform and intense preventative measures like restricting Tobacco and Alcohol consumption and promoting healthy lifestyles.
9. In terms of education and capacity building, Tuvalu has been focused on improving the quality of education, completion rates, and vocational training for all. Almost all Tuvaluan girls and boys are enrolled in primary schools, and there are more girls than boys enrolled in secondary and tertiary education.
10. More women are now in full time employment in both government and private sector in Tuvalu. In the public service, the employment ratio of female: male is approaching equality, especially in the middle to senior management positions. In terms of self-employment, women are equally active as men.
11. The government of Tuvalu has zero tolerance toward violence against women under the Family Domestic Violence Bill, the Police Powers Act of 2009, and the National Gender Policy of 2014. The Tuvalu National Council of Women has set up for the first time, a Women's Crisis Centre in support of women and children who suffer from domestic violence. The center also provides shelter and counseling services.

Chairman,

12. As a society with strong traditional and cultural values, Tuvalu believes that the family unit is and remains to be the foundation for economic and social resilience and sustainability, especially in small island developing states (SIDS). We strongly emphasize the importance of family culture in our society, for without families, the next generation will have to deal with a different kind of poverty strain, that of poverty in morals. In small SIDS/LDCs like Tuvalu, limited resources and means of productivity give undue strain to family cohesion and progress, and therefore we urge all stakeholders to exact particular attention and assistance to "the family unit" as a key fundamental institution in advancing sustainable development goals and eradicating poverty.
13. Rapid urbanization and urban migration have resulted in approximately 60% of population residing on the capital island, giving rise to overcrowding, skewed development, increased population density and leaving an ageing population with less productivity in the outer islands.

Chairman

14. Climate change will threaten the very survival and the future of our people. The solution to this challenge is beyond the capacity of any single nation but requires collective global action and sector-wide strategies. Whilst different countries in the world take their doses of increasing frequencies and intensities of adverse effects of climate change, ranging from drought, tsunamis, wild fires, flash floods, ocean acidification, food insecurity and salinity in water lenses, countries like Tuvalu have to contend with slow onset impact that threatens its very existence as a country and as a people. My simple conclusion, Mr. Chairman, is this - Without addressing Climate Change issues, without healing the planet, we will not achieve sustainable development and many will be left behind.

Chairman,

15. Finally, we are deeply appreciative of the partnerships with the donors, civil society, and our regional and international partners, in our work on population and development. In a Least Developed Country like Tuvalu, there will still be a need for sustained partnerships in population and development related activities, focusing our efforts on individuals and families who are in difficult life situations.
  16. I would like to conclude with a reaffirmation of our commitment to a forward looking agenda for the ICPD Beyond 2014 and to it being mainstreamed into the Post 2015 Development Agenda.
  17. I thank You Chairman for giving me an audience.
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