



PERMANENT MISSION  
OF THE KINGDOM OF TONGA  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Mahe 'U. S. Tupouniua  
Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Tonga to the United Nations  
On Agenda 4 of the Forty-eighth session of the Commission on Population and Development**

**New York, Monday, 13<sup>th</sup> – Friday, 17<sup>th</sup> April 2015**

*Check Against Delivery*

Madam Chair,

Allow me at the outset to firstly congratulate you on your assumption of the Chair of this 48th Session. I assure you of my delegation's full support as well as support for your Bureau.

Madam Chair,

The Kingdom of Tonga is honoured to take part again in this continuing global dialogue toward building a better future development pathway for all humanity, based on what has been accomplished and learned since the 1994 International Conference on Population Development in Cairo, and the lead up preparation for the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals within the post-2015 development agenda.

Today, the Kingdom of Tonga would like to reaffirm our position in support of the recommendations of the ICPD beyond 2014 review, as well as the Outcome Document of the Sixth Asian and Pacific Population Conference, the S.A.M.O.A Pathway, as well as the Moana Declaration, but subject to Tonga's national laws and policies.

Madam Chair,

We are living in exciting time in Tonga. Our first major reform was at the time of King Tupou I who, as Monarch, was able to introduce major political and social reforms, and established our Constitution as one of the most forward-looking of its time in 1875. We are now working through our second major reform following the introduction of major changes to our 1875 Constitution transferring most of executive government to an elected Cabinet.

Madam Chair,

Tonga's recently elected government endorsed its new National Strategic Development Framework for the next 10 years. The Plan brings with it a renewed sense of purpose and confidence in Tonga's ability to progress the quality of life for all of its' people. It drives and consolidates our national development by building an enabling environment for both social and economic development such as, *inter alia*, the introduction of the National Health Strategic Development Plan 2015 - 2020.

Madam Chair,

Our national support for population and development issues is progressing well, with our parliament established a Standing Committee on Population and Development last month. This Committee will focus on Population and Development issues as part of our national preparation to welcome the revised Population Development Agenda beyond 2014. Additionally, this Committee brings together key relevant stakeholders from both government and non-government organizations. It is also anticipated that Tonga will have only one integrated governance body to address the entire range of development issues which previously were discussed in separate tracks related to the Millennium Development Goals on the one hand, and the International Conference on Population and Development on the other. There are also existing structures that complement the parliamentary initiative, such as the Cabinet Sub-committee for MDGs, the MDGs Acceleration Experts Group and the MDGs Technical Working Group.

EMAIL: tongaunmission@aol.com

Madam Chair,

Tonga's ICPD journey over the last two decades has enabled it to encounter a series of real success stories that ranges from better health services delivery, better maternal and child health outcomes, accessibility to the full range of family planning methods, and full access to primary education.

Today, we are present at this 48<sup>th</sup> Session to reaffirm our commitment to continuing our engagement with the intergovernmental negotiations here in New York leading up to the post-2015 Summit in September, as well as the development of a robust post-2015 indicator framework that is transformative, aspirational, and consistent with the level of ambition of the SDGs. It may be useful Madam Chair if you might place the report of this session before the Co-Facilitators of the post-2015 process for their attention and consideration.

In so suggesting, we would like to highlight the importance of expressing a common position by this meeting, which also takes into account the unique circumstances and challenges of Pacific Island Countries as Small Island Developing States, and to have it translated into the SDGs' means of implementation within the context of the post-2015 development agenda, the outcome document of the Financing for Development Conference, and the outcome to the 21<sup>st</sup> Conference of Parties on Climate Change to be held in Paris in December.

And despite all the milestones that Tonga has achieved in the last 20 years, we cannot stress enough the importance of completing the unfinished business of the MDGs, and the full implementation of the ICPD Beyond 2014.

Finally Madam Chair,

At the global level, Tonga supports the following:

Firstly, dignity and human rights through:

- The elimination of severe poverty and inequality;
- The investment in population group specific development needs, such as children, adolescents and youth, and a proper social protection for the aging population; and
- The eradication of discrimination toward the disabled.

Secondly, on the issue of Health, through:

- The scaling up of commitments towards universal access to health care services which includes sexual and reproductive health-care services; and
- Promoting healthy behavior to address the risk factors for NCDs.

Thirdly, on Place and Mobility, through:

- Addressing migration related issues, through increased international, regional and bilateral cooperation, dialogue, and shared responsibility;

And finally, on Governance Accountability:

- Tonga would support the ICPD Beyond 2014 monitoring framework, as a basis for national and global reporting on progress that can enhance the review and appraisal of implementation of the Programme of Action functions, where relevant.

I thank you Madam Chair.