



Statement of

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INFORMATION, DISASTER MANAGEMENT, ENVIRONMENT,
CLIMATE CHANGE, AND COMMUNICATIONS**

KINGDOM of TONGA

**on the occasion of the
High-level Dialogue on Energy**

Friday, 24th September 2021

Pre-recorded Statement
United Nations Headquarters, New York

Mr. President,

It is truly an honour to be part of this momentous occasion where the UN Secretary-General convenes this high-level meeting on Energy, mandated by the General Assembly, after 40 long years, from when the General Assembly last convened an energy meeting at this level.

The last of which, was in the aftermath of the oil crisis in 1981. And the gathering of today is a demonstration of bold and concrete steps taken to move this agenda forward in supporting the overarching goal of the **United Nations High-level Dialogue on Energy**, to promote the implementation of the energy-related goals, and targets of the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**.

Tonga's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) priority was to achieve the 50% share of **Renewable Energy** in our total electricity generation mix by last year, 2020. Unfortunately, the intervening global pandemic disrupted to a great extent, a number of **renewable energy projects** that were to commence in mid-2020, thereby stalling these projects.

However, despite the major setbacks, caused by the impacts of COVID-19 and the negligible amount, Tonga contributes to global greenhouse gas emissions, we are nonetheless, ambitious in supporting the goal of limiting global warming, through the submission of our second NDC in 2020, in line with the **timeline agreed to, under the Paris Agreement**.

Furthermore, Tonga launched the **Tonga Energy Efficiency Master Plan (2020 – 2030)** and the **National Certificate on Sustainable Energy (NCSE)**, confirming our unwavering commitment, to achieving a sustainable energy future, while **mitigating the effects of climate change**.

Mr. President,

The impacts of climate change are escalating in frequency and intensity, and has been felt by our people, which is why our priority NDC has been increased to 70% share of renewable energy, by 2030 and 100% by 2035.

For 50% share of renewable energy, we have been able to negotiate, and secure funding required to achieve this target, and we would like to sincerely thank and acknowledged the development and donor partners alike, that have assisted Tonga, despite the fact that, the implementation of most projects, is currently affected by COVID-19.

Tonga's **transition to Renewable Energy** and resilient infrastructure in support of SDG7, and its national energy targets, are very much supported by New Zealand, Australia, China, Japan, ADB, the World Bank, EU, SIDS DOCK, public-private partnerships, and others.

Tonga looks forward to taking up the presidency of the sixth session of the Assembly of SIDS DOCK, to be held on 28 September 2021.

Tonga and the International Solar Alliance's headquarter located in India, are now working hard, to replace all diesel and electricity sources water-pumps, with solar water pumps in all of our local communities in Tonga, demonstrating the importance of access to affordable, sustainable and secure water supply, which helps in addressing the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

To conclude, Tonga joins others, in calling for accelerated actions in the realization of SDG 7 and relevant targets.

Recognizing the universal energy access, while maximizing the positive spill-over effects of an inclusive energy transitions, on the attainment of SDGs, through the improved synergies, with major intergovernmental processes of the ocean, biodiversity, gender equality, food systems and climate change.

I thank you.