



TUVALU

Statement

**Delivered by Honourable Willy Telavi
Minister for Home Affairs and Rural Development
at the Fifty-Second Session of the Commission
on the Status of Women
New York
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Mr. Chairman,

1. I am honoured to have this opportunity to address this 52nd session of the Commission on the Status of Women on behalf of the people and Government of Tuvalu. Let me firstly join previous distinguished speakers in congratulating you for your election as Chair to preside over this session. With your able leadership we are confident that you will be able to bring this session to a successful conclusion.

2. Let me also align myself with the statement to be delivered by the distinguished Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Tonga to the United Nations on behalf of the Pacific Island Forum Countries.

3. At the outset, Tuvalu welcomes the priority theme "Financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women" chosen for this 52nd session. We believe this is timely in view of the urgent and critical need to ensure that funds are committed towards national programs on gender equality and empowerment of women.

4. Tuvalu fully supports and acknowledges with appreciation the ongoing and significant efforts by the United Nations in supporting Member States in the promotion of gender equality through training, capacity building, and provision of technical assistance.

5. Mr. Chairman, much has been said and well documented on the need to improve gender equality in Member States and the continuous support from development partners in financing the required programs for mainstreaming gender equality as a cross-cutting issue. However, despite such commitment there are insufficient funds provided by development partners and a lack of financial and human resources allocated for the implementation of the required concrete programs at the national level. This is obviously an ongoing challenge for a small island country like Tuvalu with very limited resources.

6. Mr. Chairman, financing for gender equality is a new concept in Tuvalu which has been incorporated in the overall national budget process. As a result of the budget reform process over the years the government has adopted the programme and performance-based budgeting focusing mainly on identifying achievable outputs and outcomes from the implementation of

specific programs. Through this process, the concept of gender-responsive budgeting has been introduced and reflected to some extent through the incorporation of specific gender equality programs with specific allocation of resources in the national budget. These programs are directly coordinated and implemented by the Department of Women Affairs in close collaboration with the Tuvalu National Council of Women and other Government's public corporations.

7. Mr. Chairman, like other countries, the main obstacle that undermines the effective implementation of gender-responsive budgeting as a tool for mainstreaming gender equality in Tuvalu is the insufficiency of resources. This is further attributed to the high competition from other sectors of the economy for the limited resources provided under our national budget.

8. Mr. Chairman, on the overall development of women, I am pleased to reaffirm that the Government of Tuvalu maintains its commitment towards the advancement of women in Tuvalu through the implementation of the Tuvalu National Women's Policy, which aims at achieving gender equality and elimination of discrimination against women. However, the implementation of such policy requires strong political commitments and substantial commitment of resources and inputs from all stakeholders.

9. Like other developing Member States, the continued support from developing partners and multi-lateral funding agencies is critical to enable Tuvalu implement its development programs and other related enabling activities for mainstreaming gender equality and empowerment of women as cross-cutting issues.

10. Mr. Chairman, whilst we recognize and continue to support gender equality as a cross-cutting issue, climate change as global phenomena, is undoubtedly one of the greatest challenges that face humanity today. As a small island developing State, Tuvalu is extremely vulnerable to the impacts of climate change especially with sea level rise. In this context it is crucial that we integrate climate change in the existing international platforms for women as part of their global advocacy. I am delighted to note that the Commission on the Status of Women has taken up climate change as its emerging issue, and Tuvalu stands ready to support such initiative.

11. Mr. Chairman, let me conclude by acknowledging the continuous support and valuable contributions provided to Tuvalu by all development partners including those in the Pacific. We certainly look forward in strengthening these partnerships to further advance our common efforts in implementing the required programs for gender equality and empowerment of women in our respective country.

12. Let me also take this opportunity to thank the Chairman and all members of the bureau for the excellent work they have done in organizing this 52nd session of the CSW.

I thank you
