



# Tuvalu

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## Statement

Delivered by

Hon. Willy Telavi

Prime Minister and Minister of Women Affairs

At the 57<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status  
of Women

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## **Madam Chair**

## **Honourable Ministers**

## **Excellencies**

## **Distinguished Delegates**

1. I am honored to address this year's meeting and in particular on this year's theme of eliminating and preventing all forms of violence against women and girls. On behalf of the Tuvalu delegation, I wish to express my nations support and commitment to the realities and spirit of which this years theme tries to bring about new life to an ongoing anomaly that can best be dealt with by both genders efforts and commitments.
2. Congratulations and our blessings to you Madam Chair in presiding over this session. My delegation is confident that with your leadership and guidance, the memberships dedication and commitment, we will be able to progress our tasks successfully and advance women's issues to practical and tangible outcomes of peace and development for women and girls, to become productive participants in households, public and private organizations and country alike.
3. Madam Chair, the sentiments from successive women forums and statements dwells on the need for leadership, for commitment, for budgets and for cooperation, in-country and between countries to ensure that proper support and guidance of specific national requirements are sanctioned to expedite and enact work on all gender issues including the elimination of any form of violence against women and girls.
4. Too often we are inundated with reports, news and documentaries of gender based violence and other human rights violations which is a result of pervasive gender stereotyping and discrimination. How we deal with such rampant wrongdoing should begin with ensuring that our laws and legal framework dispense with such offence fittingly.
5. In Tuvalu we have formulated a "Family Protection Bill" and we are launching our community consultations this year. The Family Protection Bill aims at safeguard our women and girls against sexual and gender based violence, domestic violence and rape. The Bill also facilitates access to justice and improved provision of services to women and girls who experience discrimination and violence in private and public spheres.
6. Madam Chair, we reaffirm our commitment to this year's theme by using the current and existing international and regional conventions and agreements as also articulated in the Pacific Statement to formulate specific national strategies and interventions in eliminating violence against women and girls. The Tuvalu delegation is of the view that national strategies and measures, including and not limited to policies and laws should be encouraged to lift the status of women, and more importantly empowering women to actively participate in the socio-economic and political arena. This is done through formal and informal education, retraining programmes and practical workshops, business mentoring and targeted financial support.
7. Madam Chair, Tuvalu is appreciative of the lessons learnt from the prevalence of studies done in the Pacific, particularly of the impacts and consequences and the responses to eliminating violence

against women and girls. We acknowledge the ongoing technical and financial assistance rendered by United Nations agencies and other donor Partners to the Pacific in regards to addressing the elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls.

8. The Tuvalu Government continues to advance the promotion and ensuring the participation of women in all spheres of public and private domain, in all levels of decision making and implementation of development activities. Enhancing the involvement of women and girls in design and planning of development undertakings for example, perpetuates a renewal of perception to counter the business as usual of culture being seen as a hindrance to the advancement of women.
9. Understanding the complementarity between different sectoral priorities, partnership between men and women, between non-government and civil society actors allows for a more wholistic, participatory and harmonized partnership in every sectors and levels of development for efficient and effective outcomes. Strategically, a wider expanse of engagement has been effective with the use of faith based leaders, male police officers, elders, celebrities and male leaders and boys as champions and role models advocating for elimination of violence against women and girls.
10. In a Least Developing Country like Tuvalu, the lack of natural and financial resources to implement activities and programme in a comprehensive manner remains a challenge. Women and girls activities are left for the donors resource support and goodwill when Government fiscal ceilings are threatened by global financial crisis. But we seek consistent and continuous support of donors' financial commitments to LDCs like Tuvalu to enable us to gain traction in these myriad of human right objectives.
11. Climate change as a global phenomenon continues also to be a threat to the women of Tuvalu. If it is a security issue – it is a women's issue. If it is an existential issue – it is violation against women's right; to live and be productive in this a shared world. Climate change affects us all but it is the women and girls who will be hit hardest. If it affects our fisheries and crops for example – it is the women who will be confronted with household budget issues, therefore health issues and family utility or happiness. The impact of climate change is a grim reality and it is the women and girls who at the forefront of such impacts.
12. Tuvalu reassures the Commission that implements immediate effective measures that guarantee the effective protection and support for female victims of violence while imposing appropriate penalties for perpetrators of violence; must be enacted now. I would like to end by acknowledging a quote by the United Nations Women's Secretary General- Michelle Bachelet, "Gender Equality must become a lived Reality"
13. Madam Chair, I once again extend our sincere thanks and gratitude to all members of the Commission, the Bureau for the tremendous work in making this 57th session a success.

Thank you and Fakafetai Lasi.