

**Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction**  
**Preparatory Committee Meeting – 14 & 15 July 2014 in Geneva**

**Tonga Country Presentation**

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Chair, Excellency's, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Government of the Kingdom of Tonga is honoured to be invited to this session of Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, Preparatory Committee Meeting

In 2009, with the support of her development partners, Tonga introduced a Joint National Action Plan for the integration of climate change and disaster risk management resulting in several projects being established to address the issues involved. As a testimony to its continual commitment to the integration of climate change and disaster risk management a new ministry was formed at the beginning of this month to ensure that smooth integration of these two issues are maintained. It also provides ample opportunity to ensure that the limited resources available are utilised effectively and efficiently when it comes to implementation of projects and activities arise out of the above.

Tonga is one of the many countries that live on the frontline of natural hazards. Indeed, the latest World Risk Report identified Tonga as the second most-at risk country in the world, with the constant threat of tsunamis, earthquakes, tropical cyclones and subject to the increasing effects of climate change as well. At the beginning of the year our Northern Islands Group of Haapai was hit by the category 4 to 5 Tropical Cyclone Ian resulting in one loss of life and with almost 5,000 displaced residents of the islands including widespread destruction to infrastructure, housing, agriculture and livelihoods. Tonga is continuing with its recovery and reconstruction efforts from that event with the emphasis on building back better and developing the resilience of its people. But these annual natural hazards increasingly erode our development gains, and effect the overall sustainability of our development, and must these be addressed. We therefore ask that there be strong links made between the Post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Sustainable Development Goals currently being developed.

Tonga continues to work together with its development partners in addressing its high degree of vulnerability to natural disasters as well as manmade hazards. While a reasonable amount of resources has been diverted to improve it early warning systems there is still a considerable amount more required for increasing the awareness and preparedness of our communities. We therefore support the call from our colleagues seeking greater investment in science and technology to better inform risk reduction activities and improved early warning systems.

Tonga together with our colleagues from the Pacific would like to reassociate itself with the outcomes of the 6<sup>th</sup> Session of the Pacific Platform for Disaster Risk Management particularly in relation to the recommendation pertaining to the Post 2015 Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction. We are committed to strengthening the ongoing collaborative efforts, aimed at preventing risk accumulation and building resilience in Pacific Island Countries and Territories, while involving all stakeholders, and giving special consideration to the needs of the most vulnerable and to the observation of human rights.

Thank you