

**Third Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction,**

**General Plenary Statement By:**

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**Tuvalu**

**Geneva, 12 May 2011**

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Madam Chair,  
Honorable Ministers,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the People and the Government of Tuvalu, may I first of all extend my warm greetings to the Third Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction.

We welcome this Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction and look forward to significant outcomes from this meeting. For Tuvalu, disaster risk reduction is vitally important for the future of my nation. Tuvalu is undoubtedly one of the most vulnerable countries in the world to the impacts of climate change. Climate change presents many problems for Tuvalu.

First there is an increasing risk of severe weather events. Higher water temperatures as a result of climate change bring with it the higher risk of more severe cyclones. With a country whose highest point above sea level is on 4 metres, the threat of severe cyclones is a constant worry for us. The slow onset of sea level rise will eventually become a serious disaster for Tuvalu and may threaten its very existence. So climate change can present sudden disasters from severe weather events or slow progressive disasters like ocean acidification or sea level rise. Consequently we must reduce the risk of both short term and long term disasters.

Madam Chair, Tuvalu was amongst other Pacific Island countries that fully participated in the meeting held in Kobe in 2005 that endorsed the Hyogo Framework of Action. Following that endorsement, Tuvalu supported and endorsed the development of the Pacific Regional Framework for Action for Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management 2005 – 2015

At the national level the government of Tuvalu implemented the national framework for disaster management with the endorsement of the National Disaster Management Act 2007 and currently embarked on the review of the National Disaster Management Plan 2010.

The arrangements enshrined in the framework reflect the commitment by the government of Tuvalu to strengthen the governance arrangements around disaster planning, preparedness, response and recovery.

The arrangements are designed to ensure that disaster preparedness and the outcome of disaster events inform the sustainable development strategy, and link to the annual strategic planning and budget cycles, they also provide consistency with the themes within the Pacific Regional Framework for Action, as well as the HFA.

Guidance to stakeholders for taking decisions in all aspects of the disaster risk management process is of key importance, and the successful implementation will depend on the commitment of those with specific roles and responsibilities within the framework. Involving both our disaster risk management and climate change stakeholders in country is considered essential.

The governance framework when managed appropriately will provide assurance to Cabinet that climate and other natural hazard risks which threaten the sustainable development of our communities have been identified, and effective controls are implemented and monitoring and review processes are established.

Madam Chair, to ensure implementation of our national governance framework is not an easy undertaking, particularly for a small and poor resourced island country as Tuvalu. Key partnerships need to be strengthened and new ones should be created. We do acknowledge that implementation is primarily a national responsibility, but simply we need sufficient capacity to do all that is needed. Help from donor partners with technical assistance and increased financial resources will be deeply acknowledged. On the same token, we recognized the many assistances that had been provided by our developing partners, regional

organizations in the area of Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation for Tuvalu.

Our hope is that this meeting will add value to work already being undertaken around the world and the Pacific region. That it will lead to greater co-ordination and co-operation amongst countries and organizations, and by the end of the Global Platform we will have agreed on some practical disaster risk reduction solutions to enhance the resilience of small island developing states. Tuvalu looks forward to being involved with ISDR on follow-up actions to implement decisions from this meeting.

I thank you Madam Chair.