



**ON THE OCCASION  
OF THE HIGH LEVEL SEGMENT  
OF THE  
FIFTEENTH CONFERENCE OF PARTIES TO THE UNITED  
NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

**7 - 18 DECEMBER 2009**

**STATEMENT BY THE  
HONOURABLE DR. VILIAMI TA'U TANGI  
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER  
OF THE  
KINGDOM OF TONGA**

**THURSDAY 17 DECEMBER 2009**

**COPENHAGEN**

**CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY**

Mr. President

Excellencies and Colleagues

Distinguished Delegates

At the outset Mr. President, I offer my congratulations on your assumption of the Presidency and extend the deep gratitude of my delegation to your Government and the good people of Copenhagen, with special reference to the Government of Sweden and the people of Lund, for the generous hospitality extended to us.

Tonga wishes to associate itself with the earlier statement by Grenada on behalf of AOSIS. Like my other Pacific colleagues we have followed the path since Bali that has led us here to Copenhagen with a heavy sense of duty and purpose to obtain a robust yet genuine collective agreement. An agreement that properly addresses the profound concerns that Parties like Tonga and her people have about the undisputed existential threat that climate change represents.

Mr. President

These negotiations have been about more than the science of Annex 1 reductions or global emission peak years or the restriction of long term global temperature to well below 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.

These negotiations have been about more than what enduring legal form such an agreement should take out of Copenhagen – whether a strengthened Kyoto Protocol and a new legal instrument altogether to further advance the implementation of the Convention.

WHAT these negotiations have been about is the future of our people, the preservation of our culture and the dignity of our unique identity.

We may be the Leaders of many Nation States but we share a global constituency – one whose high expectations of our leadership and its legacy for future generations – must be assured by the strength and quality of our actions here this week. It is a moral imperative.

Mr. President

One of the actions we have taken domestically has been a National Renewable Energy Road Map that sets a challenging and ambitious target to achieve 50% of our electricity generation utilising renewable energy sources by 2012! We appreciate we cannot undertake such an initiative on our own and so have begun the necessary consultations and work with interested development partners.

Such initiatives can only succeed with significant technological as well as new, predictable and considerable financial resources for such adaptation and mitigation measures. Ready and easy accessibility to such resources for small island States including ‘fast start’ financing for adaptation will ensure maximum benefit to the most vulnerable countries.

In closing Mr. President

The resilience of our Tongan way of life and indeed the way of life in the Pacific lies in managing the combination of the collective responsibilities and group values, the individual obligations to one’s immediate and extended family as well as the broader community. In this journey we rely on each other and no one person, community or country is big enough to be independent of each other. In many ways it’s a microcosm of just how much more can be done in our time left in Copenhagen – not just because the whole world and future generations need it to be so but because it is just the right thing to do.

As Scripture tells us “there is no justification required for doing the right thing”. For us all, this is our time in history, our collective opportunity to do precisely that!

I thank you Mr President.