



Government of Tokelau

Office of the Council for the Ongoing Government



ASIAN MINISTERIAL MEETING ON DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

**PREVENTING DISASTER RISK
PROTECTING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

ULAANBAATAR, MONGOLIA

03-06 JULY 2018

'Living with Change: The Future Today'

**STATEMENT BY HON. KELIHIANO KALOLO
MINISTER OF CLIMATE CHANGE**

04 JULY 2018

‘Living with Change’: Preventing Disaster Risk. Protecting Sustainable Development

Introduction

Thank you, Chairperson.

Your Honourable, H.E. Mr Enkhtuvshin, Deputy Prime Minister of Mongolia, Distinguished Heads of Governments and Leaders from the Asia-Pacific region, Heads of UN and Regional Organisations, Invited Guests, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Let me start by thanking the Government and the people of Mongolia for the warm hospitality accorded to us since our arrival at your beautiful country.

Through you, Hon. Deputy Prime Minister, I convey to the Government and the people of Mongolia, our warmest and best wishes from the Ulu o Tokelau (Titular Head) of the Ongoing Government of Tokelau, the Elders and the people of Tokelau.

Malo Ni! Ma fakatalofa atu.

Tokelau: a brief overview

Tokelau is a non-self-governing territory of New Zealand consisting of three coral atolls in the South Pacific: Atafu; Nukunonu; and Fakaofu.

Tokelau and New Zealand work together in a partnership based on trust, openness, respect and mutual accountability. Our mutual goal is to maintain and improve the quality of life of our people living in Tokelau.

Living with Change: Preventing disaster risk, protecting sustainable development

Like many developing nations and territories, Tokelau is not immune from the winds of change sweeping our world – whether be via trade/globalisation, climatic, socio-economic, political or technological. We know these changes do not recognize political boundaries. And so, as disasters. These realities need to be considered when we discuss disaster risk reduction and management issues.

For the purposes of this Conference, I will focus on two national strategic plans we had in place that specifically target towards preventing and reducing disaster risk and management, and enhancing our resilience, in the context of our national sustainable development.

The first, is our climate change strategy called “*Living with Change: An Integrated National Strategy for Enhancing the Resilience of Tokelau to Climate Change and Related Hazards, 2017-2030 (LivC)*”¹ and the accompanying LivC

¹ https://www.tokelau.org.nz/site/tokelau/files/ClimateChange/LivCStrategy_web-2.pdf

*Implementation Plan, 2017-2022.*² Both documents are available on our government website; www.tokelau.org.nz

Its vision is a vibrant, innovative, climate-resilient, and ready Tokelau, with healthy communities, ecosystems, and an economy that are all resilient in the face of change.

To bring our vision to life, we identified three inter-related Climate Resilient Investment Pathways that we are pursuing, together with New Zealand, and other partners, to enhance our resilience and readiness to climate change and related hazards.

They are:

First, Mitigation, which revolves around decarbonization development - clean energy, low carbon, “no regrets” development policies;

Second, Adaptation that focuses on strengthening integrated risk reduction and adaptation to enhance our resilience in the face of climate change and disasters. The objective is to reduce the accumulation of such risks and prevent the creation of new risks, or loss and damage, and

Third, Human Development, which revolves around Capacity Building, Education, Training, Public Awareness & Outreach. It involves improving the capacity of our three villages by preparing for emergencies and disasters, enhancing disaster preparedness, response, and recovery initiatives; reducing undue human losses and suffering; and minimizing adverse consequences for national, village, and local communities’ livelihoods, and environmental ecosystems.

The second, is our draft Tokelau Disaster Risk Reduction Plan. Its purpose is to record the disaster risk management governance and related operational arrangements for the sustainable management of hazard risks, the preparedness for, response to, and recovery from hazard events that threaten or impact Tokelau.

The plan’s objectives are providing for effective coordination and cooperative efforts amongst stakeholders in order to minimise and reduce the impact of hazards to Tokelau; ensuring that the Tokelau communities and supporting agencies are informed and ready to respond to any disaster; ensuring that processes and systems are in place for recovery and rebuilding after a disaster affecting one or more of the Tokelau atolls; and outlining specific roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders to enable prompt, effective, appropriate, and coordinated responses.

[Tokelau is supported in times of emergency by New Zealand – the Office of the Tokelau Administrator, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT); NZ Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management (MCDEM); Meteorological Service of New Zealand Limited (MetService); and NZ Red Cross; Samoa – the Samoan Meteorological Division (SMD); Samoa Red Cross; and the WMO Pacific Specialised Meteorological Centre, Nadi, hosted by the Fiji Meteorological Service; and the United States Pacific Tsunami Warning Centre in Hawaii.]

² https://www.tokelau.org.nz/site/tokelau/files/ClimateChange/LivCImplementPlan_web-2.pdf

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Governments of New Zealand, Samoa, Fiji, and the United States, for their unwavering support to Tokelau. I would also like to acknowledge the support of UN, Pacific Regional Agencies, and Non-Governmental Organizations, to Tokelau. It is heartening to know that multilateralism and assistance among good neighbours contribute to our resilience.

[Living with Change: The Future Today]

It is worth noting both our climate change strategy and our draft DRR Plan align closely with *The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, 2015-2030*.

The Sendai Framework places strong emphasis on disaster risk management as opposed to disaster management, the definition of seven global targets, the reduction of disaster risk as an expected outcome, a goal focusing on preventing new risk, reducing existing risk, and strengthening resilience.

Similarly, our strategies also align with the *Framework for Resilience Development in the Pacific: An integrated Approach to Address Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management (FRDP), 2017-2030*.

I recognize our current political status often results in us being placed in the 'too hard' basket when it comes to the United Nations system. We understand this is the legal nature of our situation, whereby we can only be at the UN table with New Zealand's endorsement. I am extremely grateful to New Zealand for enabling me to speak to you today. This is first for Tokelau to speak at a UN ISDR Conference.

I am also grateful to New Zealand for extending their ratification under the Paris Agreement to Tokelau as well as including our climate change strategy "Living with Change" as an annex in their seventh National Communication, released in December 2017.³ Tokelau and New Zealand will continue to work together to meet our reporting obligations under the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement.

We are also working with New Zealand to implement both our climate change strategy and disaster risk reduction projects such as Reducing Risks of Coastal Hazards in Tokelau, and the NZ Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management (MCDEM) Disaster Risk Reduction programme.

We considered these partnerships as 'no regret', 'win-win-win' situations that we would like to extend to the implementation of the Sendai Framework and the FRDP with other development partners and the international community.

In this regard, I urge the United Nations to assist us and not exclude us from participating in full, with its work and accessing the much-needed financial resources

³ <http://www.mfe.govt.nz/sites/default/files/media/Climate%20Change/21-12-17%20Web%20FINAL%20-%20Seventh%20National%20Communication%202017.pdf>

like the Green Climate Fund (GCF) to assist us implement activities identified under our climate change strategy, Tokelau DRR plan and related national plans.]

Fakafetai ni.