



TUVALU – EUROPEAN UNION
Enhanced High Level Political Dialogue
Funafuti, Tuvalu, 31 May 2017

Joint Conclusions

- (1) **The Government of Tuvalu**, represented by the Hon Enele Sopoaga, Prime Minister of Tuvalu and **the European Union** (hereinafter EU) represented by HE Andrew Jacobs, Ambassador for Tuvalu and Head of Delegation of the European Union to the Pacific, on behalf of the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, met in Funafuti on 31 May 2017, pursuant to Article 8 of the Cotonou Agreement. This was the First Enhanced High Level Political Dialogue between Tuvalu and the European Union.
- (2) The EU reiterated its commitment to Tuvalu and the Pacific Region, pointing out that the relationship had moved on from a donor-recipient relationship towards a more political partnership: a partnership that goes far beyond development issues, broadening cooperation to, for instance, collaboration in international fora in matters of common concern such as climate change. The Parties committed to move bilateral relations further.
- (3) The Parties exchanged views on **recent political** and **economic developments** in Tuvalu and the EU, reviewed bilateral political relations and strategic priorities, discussed issues of democracy and human rights. The Parties conducted an in depth exchange of views on sustainable and inclusive development in Tuvalu, on recent developments of regional and sub-regional integration, and mutual priorities for the strategic co-operation between Tuvalu and the EU.
- (4) The EU gave an account of the recent **migration crisis** in Europe, noting that migration had become a global and urgent challenge, requiring a common response from the international community. The EU informed Tuvalu about its response to this challenge on the basis of the new Partnership Framework with third countries.
- (5) On **BREXIT**, EU informed that on 29 of March the UK has officially submitted its request to leave the EU thus triggering Article 50.

- (6) The EU pointed out that the challenges to the security situation in Europe needed a response that combined aspects of internal and external policies. To this end, the High Representative Federica Mogherini had presented the new **EU Global Strategy on Foreign and Security policy** last year. The strategy, entitled 'Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe', sets out the EU's core interests and principles for engaging in the world. The Global Strategy was of special significance to Tuvalu and the Pacific given that it puts all the tools available to the EU at the service of peace and regionalism. The EU will invest in cooperation among and within regions. Emphasis was on development, empowering women and human rights defenders, and investment in the world's youth.
- (7) The EU also gave an account of recent **economic developments**, noting that the Eurozone was continuing its economic recovery.
- (8) The Parties noted that **EU-Tuvalu Short Stay Visa Waiver Agreement** was signed on 1 July 2016 and is being applied on provisional basis. The EU side ratified the Agreement on 7 February 2017 and invited Tuvalu to ratify the Agreement. The EU underlined the importance of correct implementation of the agreement and invited Tuvalu to ensure that EU visitors receive a stamp allowing them to stay in Tuvalu for the duration of 90 days. The EU expressed concerns regarding the possible Tuvalu Immigrant Investors Programme.
- (9) Tuvalu informed on the continuing political stability in the country and the planned consultations on the revision of the Constitution in 2017 and the upcoming 2019 elections.
- (10) Tuvalu updated on the performance of **Tuvalu Trust Fund** and **Tuvalu Survival Fund**.
- (11) EU welcomed the ongoing discussions on National Human Rights Institution Bill and invited Tuvalu to establish a National Human Rights Institution compliant with Paris Principles.
- (12) Tuvalu gave an update on the implementation of the **Universal Periodic Review (UPR)** recommendations and preparations for the upcoming 2018 UPR. Tuvalu will engage in the discussions on Human Rights issues with Civil Society Organisations and development partners. The EU commended Tuvalu on adoption of the national Human Rights Action Plan 2016-2020. Following the recent decriminalisation of homosexuality in Palau and Nauru, the EU invited Tuvalu to examine the possibility of decriminalising male homosexuality.
- (13) The EU invited Tuvalu to adhere to the **International Criminal Court**, to accede to the remaining **six core Human Rights Conventions** and to the **Convention on Biological and Toxin Weapons**. Tuvalu noted that progress in ratifications is restricted by limited capacity and financial resources. The EU informed about its regional programme which assists Pacific Island Countries in ratification of Human Rights Conventions and compliance with related reporting requirements.
- (14) Currently Tuvalu has only one **woman MP**. In order to improve women political participation Tuvalu is considering introduction of a quota for women MPs.

- (15) Tuvalu informed about ongoing legislative process in establishing a National Human Rights Institution. The EU welcomed progress in this area as a major step in improving implementation of human rights on a ground and an important signal to the other Pacific Island Countries that still do not have National Human Rights Institutions.
- (16) The Parties discussed the possible ways to increase utilisation of **Everything But Arms** arrangement and to intensify **EU-Tuvalu trade flows**. The EU welcomed P-ACP Leaders' decision to defer the negotiations for a comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) for three years, as proposed last year by Commissioner Malmström. The EU invited Tuvalu to accede to the existing EPA between the EU, Fiji and PNG. Tuvalu requested trade related assistance in order to build its export base (for example replanting coconut trees). Tuvalu informed about upcoming signature of PACER+. The Parties discussed the impact of PACER+ on EPA and vice-versa.
- (17) Tuvalu remains committed to cooperate with the EU to prevent, deter and eliminate **IUU fishing** in its waters and to address the shortcomings identified in its fisheries legal and management systems. The EU stressed the importance of receiving timely progress reports on the activities carried out to address the problematic issues identified during the mission that led to its pre-identification as a non-cooperating country (yellow card) in December 2014. Tuvalu will provide the outstanding 2017 progress report by mid-June at the latest.
- (18) The EU invited Tuvalu to ratify the **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species** (CITES) in order to improve marine protection in the Pacific and boost Pacific representation under the Convention.
- (19) Tuvalu emphasised that the Tuvalu's **National Sustainable Development Strategy** - Te Kakeega III has domesticated the Agenda 2030 and the Samoa Pathways, this was based on the basis of ownership of priorities by the people of Tuvalu. Tuvalu further invited the EU to work with Tuvalu on the implementation and tracking of SDGs.
- (20) The Parties noted the long-standing relations between the European Union and the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries. It was recalled that the Cotonou Agreement would expire on 29 February 2020. In this regard, the EU invited Tuvalu to actively engage in the upcoming negotiations on a framework for future relations.
- (21) On bilateral **EU-Tuvalu development cooperation**, the EU noted with satisfaction good results particularly in waste management and renewable energy and that Tuvalu has improved records of its **Public Financial Management** (PFM) and that Tuvalu is highly committed to endorse the PFM Road Map 2017-2021 by July 2017. These form a sound basis for signing a Financing Agreement for the EDF 11 EU budget support to waste sector. The Parties noted that there is room for improvement in the areas of fiscal stability, public procurement and Public Enterprise Reform.

- (22) The EU expressed concerns about the results of the project of compost toilets, locally known as “falevatie” implemented in Funafuti. It was agreed that work needed to be done to ensure increased use and sustainability of the project.
- (23) The Parties discussed the state of implementation of the **Regional Indicative Programme**. Tuvalu noted that regional organisations have to step-up the delivery of results on the ground.
- (24) The Parties discussed the upcoming **48th Pacific Islands Forum Leaders meeting** in Apia, the Independent State of Samoa. Tuvalu was cautious regarding possible implications of French Polynesia and New Caledonia becoming full members of the Pacific Islands Forum last year. The EU informed about the planned attendance of Mr Neven Mimica, the European Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development. The Commissioner is expected to hold post-Cotonou discussions with P-ACP Leaders and an event on gender. Tuvalu was invited to both events.
- (25) Tuvalu announced about hosting 50th PIF Leaders Meeting in 2019 and invited the EU to cooperate in order to achieve ambitious outcomes in area of climate change and upcoming revision of Paris Agreement. EU recognised the importance for an EU Commissioner to attend the PIF Leaders Meeting in Tuvalu.
- (26) The Parties discussed progress in **sub-regional integration** in the Pacific. Tuvalu expressed support for the formalisation of the Polynesian Leaders Group in order to advance sub-regional cooperation among Polynesian countries.
- (27) The Parties noted excellent cooperation in the multilateral fora on priority UN resolutions addressing **human rights** issues. Tuvalu expressed its willingness to co-sponsor human rights resolutions at the UN and invited EU and Member States to support a resolution on People Displaced by Climate Change.
- (28) The EU acknowledged the important role played by Tuvalu on **climate change** in international fora. The Parties agreed to continue working closely together on climate change issues in various international fora such as COP23, COP24, IMO and ICAO. The parties noted recognised shared priorities for COP23: agreement on modalities for Facilitative Dialogue in 2018, rulebook and Global Climate Action Agenda. Tuvalu requested support for sending a larger delegation to COP23.
- (29) The Parties agreed to work together on COP23 deliverables.
- (30) The EU informed that Malta will host the fourth high-level '**Our Ocean Conference**' on 5 and 6 October 2017. The EU informed that the Minister of Foreign Affairs is invited to attend the Conference and official invitation will follow should he be available to attend.
- (31) The Parties agreed that the next enhanced political dialogue would be held in 2018 with the venue to be decided at a later stage.

Done in Funafuti, 31 May 2017

For Tuvalu



Hon Enele Sopoaga
Prime Minister of Tuvalu

For the European Union



H.E. Andrew Jacobs
EU Ambassador for Tuvalu and the
Head of EU Delegation for the
Pacific