



TUVALU GOVERNMENT

73rd (VIRTUAL) WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

COVID-19 SPEECH

HON. ISAIA TAAPE, MINISTER FOR HEALTH, SOCIAL WELFARE & GENDER AFFAIRS

1. MR PRESIDENT, DIRECTOR GENERAL, DR TEDROS ADHANOM, EXCELLENCIES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I AM PLEASED TO GIVE THIS STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF TUVALU
2. AS OF TODAY, TUVALU REMAINS COVID-19 FREE.
3. OUR THOUGHTS TODAY ARE WITH OTHER NATIONS THAT HAVE, AND STILL CONTINUE TO FIGHT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 AND OUR PRAYERS ARE WITH THE FAMILIES OF THOSE WHO HAVE LOST LOVED ONES TO THIS NOVEL VIRUS
4. ON THIS INTERNATIONAL DAY OF NURSES AND MIDWIVES, WE THANK ALL THOSE AT THE FOREFRONT OF INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS TO MINIMISE IT'S SPREAD, ESPECIALLY HEALTH WORKERS AROUND THE GLOBE.
5. SINCE THE END OF JANUARY, WITH OUR PRIME MINISTER AT THE HELM, TUVALU HAS BEEN PREPARING FOR THE POSSIBILITY OF COVID-19 REACHING OUR BEAUTIFUL SHORES
6. WE HAVE BEEN WORKING HARD TO STRENGTHEN OUR SYTEM SO THAT WE ARE READY. THIS HAS INCLUDED:
 - a. MOBILISING MULTI-SECTORAL COORDINATION THROUGH A NATIONAL PLANNING AND RESPONSE TAKSFORCE AND 7 SUB - COMMITTEES
 - b. IMPROVING SURVEILLANCE AND RISK ASSESSMENT;
 - c. PREPARING OUR LABORATORY TO TEST FOR THE VIRUS AND OUR HOSPITAL TO TREAT IT, IF THE NEED ARISES;
 - d. MAINTAINING ESSENTIAL CLINICAL MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH CARE SERVICES FOR OUR PEOPLE;
 - e. STRENGHTENING OUR INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL MECHANISMS;

- f. INSTITUTING NON-PHARMACEUTICAL PUBLIC HEALTH MEASURES AND;
 - g. DISSEMINATING RISK COMMUNICATION VIA EMAIL, RADIO, TV, SOCIAL MEDIA AND NATIONAL PRESS CONFERENCES, TO KEEP OUR COMMUNITIES INFORMED.
7. WE ARE WORKING WITH PARTNERS TO INVESTIGATE SAFE MODES OF TRANSPORTATION FOR MEDICAL SUPPLIES AND OPERATIONAL LOGISTICS.
 8. COVID-19 IS A WAKEUP CALL TO DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES OF THE NEED TO INVEST IN OUR PUBLIC HEALTH SYSTEMS, INCLUDING IN TRAINING HUMAN RESOURCES FOR STRENGTHENING PUBLIC HEALTH SYSTEMS.
 9. TUVALU SUPPORTS GLOBAL RESEARCH INTO FINDING AND PRODUCING A SAFE VACCINE THAT WILL ASSIST OUR RECOVERY TO BECOMING A 'COVID-19 FREE WORLD' AGAIN.
 10. THANK YOU TO THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION FOR YOUR LEADERSHIP AND SUPPORT. WE KNOW THIS HAS BEEN AN IMMENSE CHALLENGE. WE ESPECIALLY THANK DR TAKESHI KASAI, WESTERN PACIFIC REGIONAL DIRECTOR FOR RALLYING YOUR TEAM BEHIND US.
 11. THANK YOU TO THE MYRIAD OF OTHER TECHNICAL AND FUNDING AGENCIES AND PARTNERS WHO CONTINUE TO SUPPORT TUVALU IN THIS GREAT TIME OF NEED.
 12. NOT WITHSTANDING, TUVALU THANKS THE GOVERNMENT OF TAIWAN.
 13. TAIWAN SUCCESSFULLY MITIGATED THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 IN TAIWAN AND THE GOVERNMENT OF TAIWAN CONTINUES TO SUPPORT TUVALU IN OUR COVID-19 PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE EFFORTS.
 14. HENCE, TUVALU CONTINUES TO SUPPORT THE GOVERNMENT OF TAIWAN'S INCLUSION IN THE WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY
 15. FAKAFETAI LASI AND GOD BLESS YOU ALL