



Statement of

**THE HONOURABLE REV. DR. POHIVA TU'I'ONETOA
PRIME MINISTER OF THE KINGDOM OF TONGA**

**on the Commemoration of the
SEVENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY of the UNITED NATIONS**

Monday 21st September 2020

Pre-recorded Statement
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Mr. President,

It is an honour to join fellow leaders in commemorating the 75th anniversary of the United Nations, an occasion deserving better circumstances than in the midst of this prevailing COVID-19 global pandemic.

I salute, with respect, the foresight and determination of our esteemed founders, 75 years ago, in formulating the United Nations Charter to promote peace and security, development, and human rights in the aftermath of the Second World War. The UN Charter begins with the words "*We the Peoples*" which set for an enduring legacy of the principles and values, enshrined in the Charter, with an emphasis on the peoples.

The 75th anniversary of the United Nations is an opportunity to focus on the world, its current challenges, and how to shape the future we want. While we appreciate the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, the urgency to achieve those targets related to two critical priority areas of climate change and sea level rise cannot be stalled. These have become security issues that threaten Small Island Developing States (SIDS), including Tonga. We continue to excessively bear the burden, owing to accelerated sea level rise and climate injustice.

Mr. President,

We must renew our faith in multilateralism and commitment to international cooperation. In order to engage better in this context, we need to continue to reform the UN system to ensure a more positive impact upon the lives and livelihoods of our peoples.

In conclusion, the 75th anniversary of the United Nations and the impacts caused by the COVID-19 pandemic present us with the opportunity to recommit, reshape and realign our strategies.

I thank you and may God bless the United Nations with many more years to come.