The 2nd Ministerial Conference on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific, 16th – 19th November, 2021

Agenda Item 11

The importance of civil registration and vital statistics and legal identity for all to accelerate progress on the 2030 Agenda

Malo e lelei, Greetings from the Kingdom of Tonga.

Chairman of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, Your Excellencies, fellow Hon. Ministers, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, allow me to deliver a statement on behalf of the Kingdom of Tonga.

The Kingdom of Tonga is very much committed to accelerate the progress on achieving the 2030 Agenda, thus, the Kingdom of Tonga is supportive of a strong and robust Civil Registration and Vital Statistics system in place as Civil Registration and Vital Statistics is a Fundamental Rights of every human beings in Tonga, and endeavor to ensure that each and every citizen in Tonga has a legal identity. And the Kingdom is the custodian of this identity. Tonga’s Ministry of Justice and Prisons, through its Office of the Registrar General, with which is solely responsible for the registration of vital life events such as Births, Deaths and Marriages and the general updating of vital statistics, operates to provide a timely services throughout the Kingdom and has implemented several important projects which include the Digitization of Civil Registry records, Amnesty Programs to enable the free registration of unregistered births and the Validation of Data Project with line Ministries such as the Ministry of Health and the Statistics Department.

The Kingdom of Tonga maintains near universal birth registration rate of 97.7 percentage, as confirmed by results from its latest Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) in 2019, indicating the Kingdom’s on-going support to all the joint commitments to accelerate progress on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. On behalf of His Majesty, King Tupou the 6th, the Hon Prime Minister, Hon. Rev. Dr. Pohiva Tu’i’tonetoa and his Cabinet, I would like to thank the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and all other donor partners who have contributed to Tonga’s progress on the 2030 Agenda.

Best wishes to all participants and may this ministerial conference further strengthen our respective commitments and cooperation towards achieving the 2030 Agenda.

Malo ‘Aupito.

_Hon. Samiu Kuita Vaipulu_

_Hon. Minister of Justice and Prisons_