

Official Speech at the 4th Energy and Transport Ministers Meeting

18th September, 2019

Apia, Samoa

CEO of the Ministry of Public Utilities and Infrastructures

Government of Tuvalu

Chair of the 4th Energy and Transport Ministers Meeting

Senior Officials from the Development Partners

Members of the Diplomatic Corp

Directors and Senior Officials from the Government of Samoa

Director General of the SPC and your core staff who were part of the preparations of this meeting

Distinguished Delegates from Member countries

Ladies and Gentlemen

Talofa and good morning.

Let me first echo the sentiments shared on the tireless efforts by the SPC staff in getting us all here to Apia for this gathering, and also, express our appreciation to the Government and people of Samoa for the wonderful hospitality that has been provided to us, since our arrival to this beautiful country.

I am honoured to be here today to represent the Minister of Energy of the Government of Tuvalu, as you maybe aware, Tuvalu has just come out of fresh elections and formulation of Government is yet to be finalised.

At the recent 50th Pacific Islands Forum which was held in Tuvalu earlier this month, the Leaders reaffirmed that Climate Change is the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security and wellbeing of the people of the Pacific and, our commitments to progress the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

We need to move beyond just setting targets and ambition. We need to ACT. Tuvalu reaffirmed in that meeting that the Pacific can, and must show global leadership in our fight against Climate Change by switching to Renewable Energy and advancing progresses in our set Energy Security portfolios.

Energy Security is a cornerstone of the Samoa Pathway which seeks to address SDG 7, through the mechanisms of the Framework of Pacific Regionalism in order to achieve an enhanced Blue Pacific.

Tuvalu has set a bold and ambitious target of generating electricity with 100% renewable energy by 2025. It has also set a target of increasing energy efficiency by 30% on Funafuti.

The Nationally Determined Contributions being submitted to the UNFCCC underscores the bold ambition set forth within the energy sector of going 100% renewable energy by 2025.

To achieve these targets, Tuvalu has carried out several projects under its Master Plan and Energy Policy. These projects are being implemented and monitored with timely reviews of their impacts and to identify solutions to accelerate achieving these targets.

Tuvalu has also recently carried out its National Dialogue on Advancing Tuvalu's Energy and GHG Mitigation Targets with the support of the Pacific Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (PCREEE), following the 50th PIF Meeting. Important key findings and recommendations were highlighted as essential in advancing its Energy Security targets.

Some important messages from this Dialogue underscore the common issues Tuvalu and likewise other Pacific islands, continue to face challenges in the RE efforts on issues relating to;

-  Energy information Energy Security and Coordination
-  Sustainable Energy Financing, Access to those finances and Constraints
-  Enhancing institutional and technical capacity
-  Improving information on Energy

- ✚ Capacity Building (human resources to implement energy policies and initiatives)
- ✚ Improving electricity supply, access and tariffs,
- ✚ Integrating emerging technologies
- ✚ Integrating Climate Change and Energy Planning into national planning and budget processes
- ✚ Land Issues that hinder installation efforts and so forth.

Excellencies, Energy security and energy transformation against climate change, is inter-generational. It must be inclusive and to advance our energy and mitigation target faster, it requires a whole of sector approach through consultative discussions. The Private Sector, the civil society organisations, the village councils including women, the religious groups, the politicians and the government officials, must all act in a cohesive manner that promotes sustainable development and accelerate the achievement of our energy and GHG mitigation targets.

Tuvalu highly commends the strong commitment and support by its development partners and multilateral agencies in its Energy sector thus far. The need to accelerate these efforts must foster more stronger collaborations and partnerships in order to gain more on the global momentum to achieve the SDGs and global leadership to combat Climate Change.

Tuvalu has progressed into RE portfolio and is currently achieving 21% RE penetration as it aims to achieve 100% by 2025. It aims to include roof top grid connected solar installations with policy reviews to be undertaken to support this. Pre-paid meters installation will be implemented and this will enhance energy efficiency and reduce losses.

Tuvalu has also established two funds (Low Carbon Fund and the energy Efficiency Revolving Fund) nationally to support the uptake of energy efficiency appliances in the country. Reviews are being undertaken to allow greater flexibility and lower rates to individuals, to maximise the involvement of individuals in these initiatives.

Land space in Tuvalu is a hinderance to large scale solar installations. The option for floating PVs is being investigated for future installations.

Tuvalu is currently reviewing its Tuvalu National Energy Policy (developed in 2009) and the Tuvalu Master Plan for RE and EE with the support of SPC, in order to align it with the current RE market development trend. These efforts are with the focus of symbolising the strong push for global leaders to reduce their GHG emissions.

The review will also include investigating the inclusion of the Energy in transport sector to be included as a set target, as like most Pacific Island countries, around 70% of energy is being consumed annually in the transport sector.

Pursuing to advance Tuvalu's Energy and GHG mitigation targets has in itself profound opportunities, as it can also create business, employment and investment opportunities, reduced oil imports and can raise the profile of Tuvalu's carbon footprint.

Chair, I wish therefore to reiterate Tuvalu's support to the regional efforts by Pacific island countries and territories, in their energy targets as we draw closer to 2020 and 2025. We, and our development partners and multilateral agencies must step up in our efforts in our Energy sector targets. For together we can.

Fakafetai lasi.