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Statement

by

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and
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Developing Countries
and Small Island Developing States**

at the

Tuvalu Partnership Roundtable Meeting

**Dag Hammarskjold Library Auditorium
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Distinguished Prime Minister
Minister for Finance and Economic Planning
Excellencies
Colleagues
Ladies and Gentlemen:

I warmly congratulate you, Mr. Prime Minister, and your distinguished colleagues for the launch of “*Te Kakeega II: National Strategies for Sustainable Development 2005 – 2015.*”

The timing for this launch is indeed significant. It comes immediately on the heels of the High Level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly, and within eight months of the conclusion of the Mauritius Meeting on SIDS in January 2005. Besides being a Small Island Developing State, Tuvalu is also in the category of the Least Developed. It is pertinent that today’s event also comes at a time when the international community is preparing for the comprehensive mid-term review of the Brussels Programme of Action for the LDCs next year by the UN General Assembly.

The Brussels Programme calls upon the international community to fulfil the Seven Commitments to address the specific development challenges in the 50 LDCs, Tuvalu being one of them. Preparations at the national, regional and global levels are being initiated. I consider today’s presentation to be an important national input by Tuvalu to this process.

Then we have the Mauritius Strategy for the Small Island Developing States, which was the outcome of the UN International Meeting held in Mauritius. SIDS and their development partners have been called upon to take action and come up with resources for fulfilling the commitments made and the provisions agreed to by the international community in the Mauritius Strategy. Tuvalu confronts serious economic, social and environmental challenges as a very small island that need to be addressed through special and differential measures by the international community.

I have been emphasizing that for the LDCs, Landlocked Developing Countries and SIDS, unless their vulnerabilities are addressed in an effective manner as outlined at

Brussels, Almaty and Mauritius, there is no way that they can achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and their targets by 2015. This same sentiment was recently echoed in the *Jakarta Declaration on Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific: The Way Forward* brought out on 5 August 2005 by the regional Ministerial Meeting and presented at the on-going High Level Plenary meeting by the President of Indonesia.

In this context, I am happy to see that the proposals contained in *Te Kakeega II: National Strategy for Sustainable Development* has been put forward to enable Tuvalu to achieve the MDGs by 2015. This is what has also been called for by the High Level Plenary Meeting in its outcome document. Each of the MDGs and the targets has been addressed. Above all, the challenges and constraints that Tuvalu faces have been clearly outlined. For instance, Tuvalu is characterized by limited natural resources, widely scattered and sparsely populated island geography, little potential for economies of scale, and lack of economic potential. At the same time, the principal structural weaknesses have also been identified. And for facing these challenges, Tuvalu needs international assistance and support.

The expected outcome of implementing this development programme by Tuvalu will result in better employment opportunities through higher economic growth, better health and education facilities, increased participation by the private sector, continued social stability and improved national infrastructure. These are most laudable objectives and the international community must help Tuvalu to take this initiative to the next level of implementation.

I am heartened to see the presence of the donor community and development partners at this event as their roles are critical to Tuvalu's development. While Tuvalu must take every step necessary to fulfil its national commitments as outlined in the MDGs, the Brussels Programme and the Mauritius Strategy, based on *Te Kakeega II*, I call upon the donor community to urgently come forward with financial and technical assistance to help Tuvalu to move ahead speedily to implement the proposals that we have heard today from the highest levels of the Government of Tuvalu. I call upon the development partner countries to provide Tuvalu with their commitments of support – both financial and technical as soon as possible.

The strategy document presented here has been arrived at as a national consensus by the Tuvalu National Summit for Sustainable Development. In other words, it is a strong national commitment involving everyone and every sector in Tuvalu. The international community must now come up to Tuvalu's expectations. My Office and I are ready to help the process in full collaboration with Tuvalu and its development partners.

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