



STATEMENT BY

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MINISTER OF HEALTH ON BEHALF OF THE PRIME MINISTER

OF THE KINGDOM of TONGA

ON THE OCCASION OF THE ROUND TABLE DEBATE

WORLD SOCIAL SUMMIT

UNDER THE TITLE

THE SECOND WORLD SUMMIT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Strengthening the three pillars of social development: poverty eradication, full and productive employment and decent work for all, and social inclusion

4th to 6th November, 2025

DOHA, QATAR

Your Excellencies, Honorable Chairperson, Distinguished Delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

Malo-e-lelei and warm greetings from the Kingdom of Tonga.

It is an honor and privilege to stand before this assembly of nations – representing a small island Kingdom in the Pacific.

We meet here at a time when the world is tested – by economic uncertainty, climate change, inequality and social disconnection. Yet we also gather with hope; hope that through partnerships and a shared vision, we can build a better future.

Tonga's commitment to the three pillars of social development is at the center of our national vision for a resilient and prosperous Tonga.

Poverty in Tonga, as in many Pacific nations is not always measured by income alone. It is also the lack of access – to opportunities to services and the means to shape one's own future.

Tonga is strengthening social protection systems to ensure that no family is left behind – including support for the elderly, persons with disabilities and vulnerable households. We are investing in education and skills training, so that every Tongan – from the main islands to our most remote villages – can access the tools to improve their livelihoods.

Our goal is not just to alleviate poverty, but to empower communities to stand on their own two feet.

The second pillar – employment and decent work – is the heartbeat of social progress.

For Tonga, creating decent work means expanding opportunities for young people, women and those in rural areas. The Kingdom is promoting sustainable livelihoods through small and medium enterprise development, agricultural innovation, and the blue economy – harnessing our ocean resources responsibly for the benefit of our people.

Tonga is also investing in vocational and technical education, so that our workforce can meet the evolving needs of a modern, digital and resilient economy.

The third pillar social inclusion – is the spirit which binds our society together.

We are advancing gender equality, empowering women's leadership and ensuring that persons with disabilities are represented and supported. Tonga continues to work with youth organizations, faith-based groups and local communities to build social cohesion and mutual respect.

When inclusion thrives, unity grows and with unity comes resilience.

Your excellencies and distinguished delegates.

These three pillars –are not separate. They are woven together like the strands of a fine fala or mat. When one strand is weak, the others are weakened. But when all are strong, the nation not only stands strong but grows stronger.

Together – nations great and small - we can build a future that is united, full of opportunities, and healthy –let us as a global community continue to weave a better future for our future generations.

Thank you, Malo áupito. May God bless you all.