

**STATEMENT BY THE COOK ISLANDS
WORLD HUMANITARIAN SUMMIT 2016**

Your Excellences
Heads of State and Governments
Hon. Ministers
Heads and Representatives of UN Agencies, International and Regional Organisations
Representatives of Civil Society and the private sector
Distinguished Delegates
Ladies and Gentlemen
Greetings and Kia Orana

To the Government and the people of Turkey, as our gracious host, I extend on behalf of my delegation, our sincere gratitude.

To the Secretary General of the United Nations, I applaud your inspiration, belief and hope in the potential of our global family to act together to improve the outcomes for humanity.

Secretary General, the Cook Islands shares your belief and hope that we can all share the responsibility of changing the course of humanity and navigating our world towards a future that is resilient. One where we can manage risk and vulnerability. One that is free from conflict and suffering.

Needless to say, that this is a very aspirational outcome. But let's dream big, dig deep within our own respective and collective belief and value systems and most importantly commit and act with conviction and unity to make this a reality.

As a Small Islands Developing State, the Cook Islands accepts that it is difficult to prepare for disasters and exceptionally harder to recover from. A category five cyclone will set our hard earned development back decades. Not to mention, the slow onset impacts of climate change, as the increasingly acidified sea encroaches on our low lying islands, threatening our very survival.

For the past five years, we have taken an integrated approach to building our resilience, raising awareness, and increasing preparedness to response and recovery from disasters.

Excellencies,

We commit to taking to the next level our integrated approach, strengthening coordination, having greater transparency and dissemination of information to our stakeholders and communities, and most importantly, incorporating the human side of disasters far more adequately with particular attention to gender, our children, and persons with disabilities.

Since 2011, we have been building our National Disaster Recovery Trust Fund and pledge that we will continue to accumulate and to invest our own resources, though limited, towards recovery and preparedness in all sectors.

Excellencies,

As part of the Pacific Islands family, the Cook Islands will align its national efforts to the implementation of the Strategy for Resilient Development in the Pacific.

We will also work with our Pacific partners, to develop a Pacific mechanism for disaster risk management to further reinforce national leadership in disaster and risk management, including a coherent and harmonised approach to international assistance in the wake of disasters.

Furthermore, the Cook Islands is dedicated to progress the establishment and hosting of the Pacific Catastrophe Risk Insurance Program, together with partners who have pledged support.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

The Cook Islands commits to being proactive in our support for the Agenda for Humanity. However, like our fellow Small Island Developing States, we also acknowledge that we will need the financial, technical and capacity support of the international community as envisioned in the SAMOA Pathway, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. International cooperation will truly complement our own national efforts.

I thank you all.