

Disaster in Tuvalu

Negotiation instructions for the Tuvaluan negotiation team

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Enclosed an memo requesting your presence at an urgent meeting.

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To: Tuvaluan Committee to Draft Negotiating Instructions

From: Office of the Special Climate Envoy, with Authorization from the Office of the Prime Minister

Date: October 31, 2022

Re: Urgent Meeting Regarding Tuvalu's Position on Negotiations for Disaster Relief for Tuvalu

Context:

In preparation for the meeting between our Special Climate Envoy and Finance Minister Seve Paeniu with US Special Climate Envoy John Kerry, their respective Chiefs of Staffs are meeting tomorrow.

The Chief of Staff is already on their way to the meeting in New Zealand. You are requested to partake in a pre-meeting to outline instructions to the Chief of Staff of how to represent the Tuvaluan interests.

Participants for the pre-meeting:

- Chief of Staff to the Prime Minister
- Special Climate Envoy and Minister of Finance
- Minister of Justice, Communications, and Foreign Affairs

Goals of the meeting:

- 1) Develop a joint position and guidance of what specifically you expect the Climate Envoy's Chief of Staff to achieve in the pre-meeting (e.g., whether the Chief of Staffs should reach a final binding agreement, whether the Chief of Staffs should reach a tentative agreement to be finalized by the Climate Envoy's, whether the Chief of Staffs should develop several recommendations to the Climate Envoy of what an agreement could look like, etc.).
- 2) Decide on what authority to commit the Climate Envoy's Chief of Staff will have (e.g., can they enter binding agreements, can they not agree to anything, can they agree to certain outcomes but no others, etc.).
- 3) Develop joint written guidance for the Climate Envoy's Chief of Staff for all discussion items (incl. Item 1: Amount of Funding, Item 2, Funding Vehicles, Item 3: Public Communication of the results, and Potential Item 4: COP27).

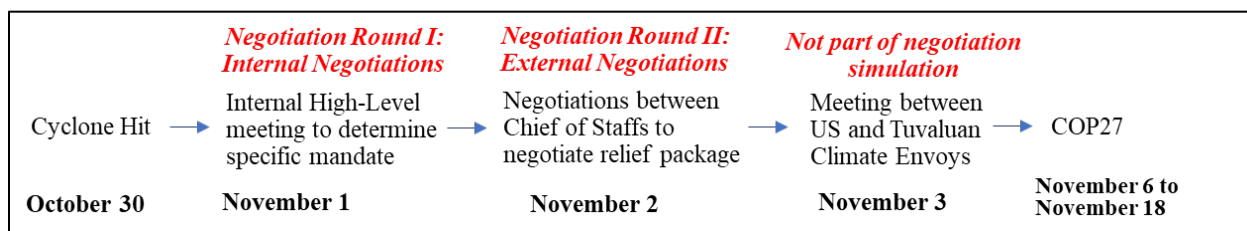
Expected outcome:

The Prime Minister expects for the outcome of your meeting to be a short document that will be sent to the Climate Envoy's Chief of Staff to guide their negotiation approach.

Suggested flow for the meeting:

- 1) Brief Introductions
- 2) Develop position and guidance on what the Chief of Staff should achieve as an outcome
- 3) Develop joint positions on all agenda items
- 4) Draft negotiation instructions for Chief of Staff and/or brief the Chief of Staff

Overview of Timeline of Events:



Guidance for you (developed in collaboration with the Office of the Prime Minister):

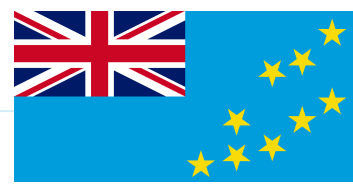
This committee is authorized by the Prime Minister of Tuvalu to provide instructions and whatever mandate it sees as appropriate to Seve Paeniu's Chief of Staff with the key goal to generate an outcome that advances Tuvaluan interests.

Our Prime Minister has called publicly for immediate relief, and long-term funding. This episode is just one instance of the frequent reality that Tuvalu will be facing over decades to come. As the US continues to evade responsibility for climate disasters, our government is dealing with destitute, hungry, and displaced people unable to return to their homes and communities. This moment can be used to garner international and public attention to well understood truths: The economic system that fueled growth of incomes in the developed countries and increasingly in emerging economics is costing lives in countries such as Tuvalu. Tuvalu has seen the costs materialize, not the benefits. We can no longer afford to pay the human or financial costs associated with increasing frequency of climate-induced crises.

Our ideal outcome of these negotiations is to get a maximum amount of funding to the people of Tuvalu as quickly as possible, while advancing new financial mechanisms to address climate disasters. We hope that this instance will help create a blueprint to fund climate disasters in the future and set a precedent of how losses and damages can be funded. This is crucial given Tuvalu's strong leadership role in driving the L&D discussion at the upcoming COP about a new fund that would cover such impacts.

With regards to Tuvaluan interests, the following guidelines for a successful outcome has been developed in collaboration with the Prime Minister's office:

- 1) **Maintain good diplomatic relations with the US. The US is a key ally of Tuvalu.** The US has supported Tuvalu, although insufficiently, with funding for its climate change adaptation. They are also a close partner in security policy. The negotiation should aim at improving the diplomatic ties between the countries.
- 2) **Ensure effective immediate funding for relief as well as long-term financial support for climate resilience.** People are suffering. Ensuring immediate and fast funding for rehabilitation, recovery and reconstruction is the top priority. As eyes are on Tuvalu, the negotiations should also be used to secure a commitment for long-term funding helping Tuvalu prepare for such disasters in the future.
- 3) **Ensure consistency with Tuvalu's foreign policy objectives.** The agreement should be in line with security objectives. China has offered funding for specific projects in what we believe might be an attempt to exert its influence in the Pacific region. We have particular concerns regarding China operating sensitive infrastructure in Tuvalu. The Minister of Justice, Communications, and



Foreign Affairs was asked to provide details during the meeting. That said, a stronger financial participation by China in Tuvalu's climate adaptation is in principle very welcome. You should evaluate how to balance these objectives.

- 4) **Ensure that clear link is maintained to the root cause of the ongoing disaster—climate change—and that the outcome advances Tuvaluan interests for the upcoming COP.** The cyclone is just a warning sign of the inevitable reality Tuvalu is facing: regular extreme weather events, rising sea levels, and the loss of biodiversity, etc. It has long been Tuvalu's position that a new international fund is needed to cover such losses, financed by those who benefitted from emissions-intensive production. The cyclone makes the public aware of this existing reality. The public communication chosen should highlight the clear link to climate change to galvanize support for a solution.

Moreover, there are specific elements in which the design of the relief package for the current cyclone can support our broader ambitions. It would be ideal if as much funding as possible is disbursed through climate-related funds to highlight the clear linkage between climate change and humanitarian catastrophes.

In addition, the US has so far spoken against Loss & Damages as an agenda item for COP27. If US support can be generated, it would benefit the Tuvaluan strategy for this year's COP.

Good luck at your upcoming negotiations and we thank you for your service.