

Constructive dialogue with CEDAW Committee

Closing Remarks

Suva, 9 April 2025

Delivered by Tuvalu Head of Delegation, Attorney General Laigane Italeli Talia

Madam Chair, distinguished Committee members,

On behalf of the Tuvalu delegation, I extend my sincere gratitude to this Committee for the opportunity to engage in this constructive dialogue. Your expertise and deep understanding of gender equality and women's rights are invaluable, and we welcome your insights, observations, and recommendations as we continue working to fulfil our commitments under CEDAW.

Throughout this dialogue, we have highlighted the progress Tuvalu has made, the persistent challenges we face, and the areas where we need additional support to ensure that women and girls in Tuvalu can live free from discrimination and fully enjoy their fundamental rights. As a small island nation, we recognize that our journey towards gender equality is shaped by unique structural, cultural, and environmental realities. However, our resolve remains firm, and we are committed to finding solutions that reflect both our national values and our global obligations.

Madam Chair, as you rightly put during the Opening session yesterday, "culture and religion can pose challenges to the human rights of women and girls, which may hinder governments in their implementation efforts. It is my hope that through the interactive dialogue that we've just had, we are able to find ways to respect our Tuvaluan cultural values while promoting the rights of women and girls.

Tuvalu is at a crossroads where climate change, gender inequality, and development intersect. The choices we make today will define the future of our country and our people. The government cannot do this work alone. We recognize and deeply value the contributions of civil society organizations, whose advocacy, service provision, and leadership have been instrumental in advancing gender equality in Tuvalu. We also acknowledge the critical role of development partners in supporting our efforts through technical expertise, financial resources, and regional cooperation.

We stand before you not only to report on what has been done but to reaffirm our commitment to continuous progress. We are here to listen, to learn, and to

strengthen our strategies for ensuring that gender equality remains at the heart of our national development.

To that end, we are of the conviction that having such future dialogue within our region speaks volume of our collective efforts and commitment to realise the reality and the challenges that small island developing states like Tuvalu face in implementing its obligations under CEDAW.

Madam Chair, my delegation has just reported on the reality of women's lives in Tuvalu. As a government, we take our responsibility seriously with dedication and commitment, coupled with the challenges, which we will respond to positively to get positive results that protect, respect and empower women in Tuvalu.

Madam Chair, this is the story of Tuvaluan women. However, it is not the end of their story. We welcome the Committee's guidance in helping us move forward.

Thank you.