

# **New Zealand Permanent Mission to the United Nations**



## **Te Māngai o Aotearoa**

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**Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the implementation of the  
Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples**

**Question of Tokelau**

**Statement by  
Jonathan Kings  
Administrator of Tokelau**

**Friday 21 June 2013**

Mr Chairman

Members of the Special Committee

Ulu of Tokelau Alikai Faipule Salesio Lui.

On behalf of New Zealand, in my capacity as the Administrator of Tokelau , I have the honour to participate in this Committee's consideration of the "Question of Tokelau".

Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the relationship New Zealand maintains with this Committee through its two Pacific Island members – Papua New Guinea and Fiji – we extend our thanks to both delegations, in particular their Permanent Representatives, Ambassadors Aisi and Thomson.

We also wish to extend our appreciation to the Government and people of Ecuador who hosted the *Caribbean Regional Seminar* last month.

As New Zealand noted in our statement at the seminar, New Zealand continues to appreciate the interest of members of this Committee in Tokelau. New Zealand remains committed to working with this Committee to ensure timely and accurate information about Tokelau is provided not only for the Committee's consideration, but for the information of the wider United Nations system.

The focus of the relationship between New Zealand and Tokelau since 2008 has been addressing the core requirements of the three

atoll populations, following the decision by the leaders of Tokelau and New Zealand that there should be an appreciable period of time before Tokelau would undertake any further act of self-determination.

This decision was made following self-determination referenda in 2006 and 2007 where Tokelauans signalled that the timing and conditions were not yet right for constitutional change. From New Zealand's point of view, much remains to be accomplished by Tokelau to ensure core services are delivered for the people of each atoll before conditions for any future referendum could be seen to be met. Present rates of achievement continue to indicate this will be some time in the future.

From the New Zealand perspective, our relationship with Tokelau is in good shape. New Zealand remains committed to working in partnership with Tokelau to continue to ensure each of the three atolls have essential services. This continues to pose challenges with such a small population base, skill shortages and a relative lack of resources.

Mr Chairman

I will briefly outline some of the recent development achievements in Tokelau:

In June last year, I signed a contract for a two year shipping charter service between Apia and Tokelau, which will be a significant step

for achieving safe and secure transport for Tokelau.. In February this year, a tender was issued for a new vessel to service this route and we are currently in the final stages of contract negotiations with a firm to complete the design of the vessel. This is a critical service providing a vital lifeline, and New Zealand is committed to provision of a safe and effective service.

Mr Chairman

The Joint Commitment for Development signed by New Zealand and Tokelau in 2011, clearly sets out what Tokelau and New Zealand have committed to do over the term of the agreement so as to achieve Tokelau's vision and development for the future. New Zealand remains the largest bilateral donor to Tokelau, with our economic support amounting to around 75% of Tokelau's recurrent budget, and we are committed to this funding being used

effectively and efficiently.

Mr Chairman

Fishing revenues to Tokelau have risen significantly this financial year through the efforts of Tokelau fisheries officials. At Tokelau's request, I have taken on responsibility for managing Tokelau's Exclusive Economic Zone – in accordance with the Tokelau Fisheries Policy. This has required a significant investment of time and resource, together with new regulations.

Now that the solar photovoltaic renewable energy project is complete we look forward to Tokelau achieving its goal of reduced

reliance on fossil fuels through sustainable electricity generation in Tokelau.

We now hope attention will now focus on completing the Infrastructure Development Projects, which include two schools and a new hospital. We trust that with Tokelau's continued efforts the completion of these buildings will provide improved health and education services to Tokelau and her people

Mr Chairman

Tokelau's needs are primarily met by New Zealand but there are others who contribute. It is important to acknowledge the assistance of the wider international community and members of



the United Nations system. Particular thanks are due to the United Nations Development Programme, working through its regional office in Samoa, and the World Health Organisation.

Mr Chairman

The relationship between Tokelau and New Zealand continues to be framed by its strength and mutual respect. It is also a complex and developing relationship. New Zealand remains respectful of the wishes of Tokelau's people, and will continue to work closely with the Ulu on the way forward.

New Zealand takes great pride from its close association with Tokelau, and the unique challenges posed when considering how to

support these remote communities of New Zealand citizens. We welcome the on-going interest of the Special Committee (C24) in Tokelau and we will continue to report to you on developments.

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