



**Statement by the High Commissioner of the Kingdom of Tonga to the United Kingdom
on the volcanic eruption and tsunami disasters in Tonga**

On 15 January 2022, a massive eruption of the Hunga Tonga Hunga Ha'apai volcano resulted in tsunami waves that struck parts of Tongatapu, 'Eua and Ha'apai island groups of the Kingdom of Tonga. The disastrous impacts affected 85 percent of the country, devastating entire villages and islands, with three confirmed fatalities so far.

Tonga's High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, H.E Hon. Fanetupouvava'u Tu'ivakano issued the following statement today:

"The Tongan people have undoubtedly been traumatised by this unprecedented catastrophe and we may not know the full extent of the damage until much later. This includes a death toll that may rise, as more information is received from capital. Resilient as they are, the people of Tonga are in dire need of support from the international community, as they embark on the long road to rebuild their lives and their country.

"We are extremely grateful for the outpouring of support from across the world, not only in terms of essential relief supplies and humanitarian response generously provided by partners, but also in the overwhelming number of messages of solidarity and encouragement we have received from people all over Great Britain and across the globe.

"The message from Her Majesty the Queen of England is deeply appreciated, highlighting the committed and longstanding relations between Tonga and the United Kingdom, as well as the rest of the Commonwealth. At the same time, our hearts go out to those who tragically lost their lives, including a British national.

"The Government of Tonga is actively coordinating a response to the crisis. We are grateful for all the prayers and support being offered. With determination, resilience, faith and the support of our partners, we will rise from this disaster."

The Tongan High Commission is currently accepting donations from the public, which will be conveyed to the Government of Tonga to help address urgent needs in the wake of the disaster. We kindly ask that any donations be made to the following account:

Bank: Barclays

Account name: Tonga High Commission

Account number: 20908355

Sort code: 20-65-90

Swift code: BUKBGB22

For more information, please find contact information in the footer.