

MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON CIVIL REGISTRATION AND VITAL STATISTICS
(CRVS)

IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

24 – 28 November, 2014

United Nations Conference Centre, Bangkok

Chairman, Excellencies, Ladies & Gentlemen.

Thank you for the opportunity to address this meeting. It is indeed a great privilege for me to be part of this august occasion.

In Tuvalu, births and deaths are required to be registered by law. In practice, however, while most vital events are recorded through the health system, formal registration is not yet complete; and the country faces major challenges in reaching remote populations on the outer islands, and sustaining a strong CRVS system in the face of widely dispersed, sparse populations.

CRVS is however essential for Tuvalu for individual identity purposes including ability to travel, and for supporting national planning through population and health statistics.

Tuvalu has committed to the importance of CRVS through the Pacific Ministers of Health declaration (in 2013 and 2014) and at the Pacific Heads of Planning and Statistics Meeting in Noumea in 2013.

While there is much to be done, Tuvalu started work on improving CRVS by working through the WHO comprehensive assessment in 2011 through a sub-regional workshop supported through the Pacific Vital Statistics Action Plan. The Ministry of Health, National Statistics Office and National Civil Registry office are working together to work through the issues identified. More recently, work has included capacity building in data analysis and report writing with support from Brisbane Accord Partners.

Coordinated support, both in country and at the regional level, as provided through the Pacific Vital Statistics Action plan has been very important to Tuvalu, and will continue to be critical as we move forward.

We support the **Regional Action Framework proposed at this meeting, and agree that this provides an important means to elevate the political commitment that Pacific countries have already made.**

Tuvalu is committed to improving CRVS and achieving the goals in the Regional Action Framework. Discussions will be held following this meeting to set specific targets and formalise our current priorities into a national plan. Fulfilling our national CRVS targets, we will certainly need technical and financial assistance from our donors and development partners which I believe most of them are represented here in this conference, such as the SPC, UNFPA, UNICEF and BAG. We do also welcome any relevant and possible assistance from any member country of our Asia-Pacific region.

Before I conclude, I would like to acknowledge with great appreciation the ESCAP and all partners of this conference for organising and sponsoring this conference.

Thank you.