

PRESS RELEASE

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May 17, 2018*

56 Million Pa'anga Japan's Grant Aid for the Project for "Nationwide Early Warning System (NEWS) and Strengthening Disaster Communications"

The Exchange of Notes for Japan's 2.8 billion Japanese Yen (equivalent to approximately 56 million pa'anga) General Grant Aid for the Project for "Nationwide Early Warning System (NEWS) and Strengthening Disaster Communications" for the Kingdom of Tonga, were signed by Mr. Kazuyuki Nakane, State Minister for Foreign Affairs and Hon. Semisi Kioa Lafu Sika, Tonga's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Tourism on 16 May 2018 in Tokyo, Japan.

The Project funds installation of emergency radio systems, early warning sound alert systems including the provision of equipment and the construction of a headquarter building for Tonga Broadcasting Commission, TBC. The Project's objective is to contribute to the sustainable development of the Kingdom, through strengthening its disaster prevention systems.

The Kingdom of Tonga, due to its geographical characteristics, faces threats of natural disasters including tropical cyclones and earthquakes that exposed a high risk of tsunamis. Considering such disaster-prone environment, Tonga has urgent needs for upgrading disaster prevention countermeasures such as tsunami evacuation with enough equipment and soft-components operated by the Tonga Metrological Services to secure communication links to outer islands, and also with new facilities of TBC.

The alert transmission in time of tsunami evacuation will be shorter from 90 minutes to 8 minutes and number of beneficiaries will increase from 13,000 to 67,000 people through the NEWS project.

Hon. Semisi Sika is in Japan for the 8th Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM8) which will be held in Fukushima Prefecture on 18 and 19 May 2018. Japan and Pacific Islands leaders will discuss wide range of topics including sustainable development in the Pacific countries at the meeting.

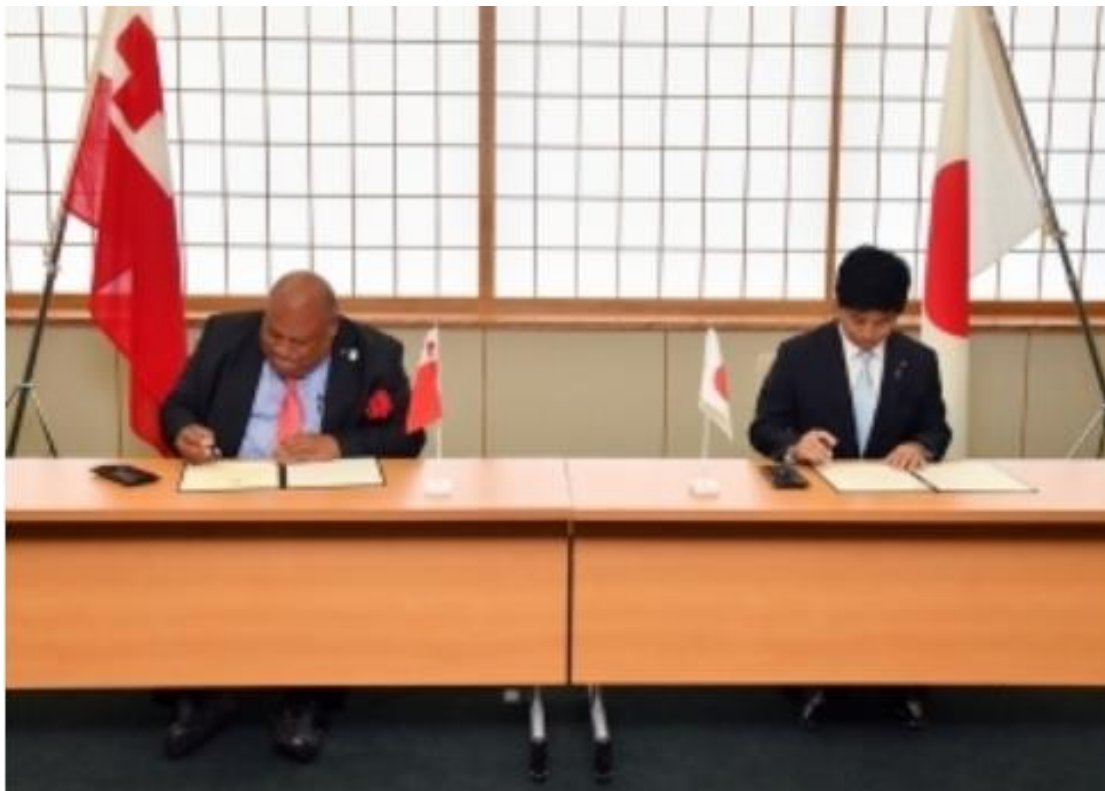
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Attached; photos

Photos:



Mr. Kazuyuki Nakane, State Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan with Hon. Semisi Kioa Lafu Sika, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Tourism of the Kingdom of Tonga signed the exchange of notes for Japan's General Grant Aid for the Project for "Nationwide Early Warning System (NEWS) and Strengthening Disaster Communications" for Tonga on Wednesday, May 16 in Tokyo, Japan.



The signing ceremony.

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