

Embassy of Japan  
Tonga

**PRESS RELEASE**

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September 27, 2022

**Opening Ceremony for the Project for Introduction of Nationwide Early Warning System and Strengthening Disaster Communications,**

On 27 September 2022, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Tupouto‘a ‘Ulukalala officially commissioned the new warning system by Japan’s General Grant Aid, the Project for Introduction of Nationwide Early Warning System and Strengthening Disaster Communications better known as the, NEWS Project. His Royal Highness Crown Prince Tupouto‘a ‘Ulukalala and Crown Princess Sinaitakala Tuku‘aho were the Guest of Honour at the opening ceremony held at the new Tonga Broadcasting Commission Building, constructed and equipped under this Project.

Her Royal Highness, the Princess Royal, Princess Salote Mafile‘o Pilolevu Tuita, grace the opening ceremony with her presences along with Lord Tuita.

His Excellency Mr. MUNENAGA Kensaku and Mrs. MUNENAGA attended the Ceremony. Present were Hon. Samiu Vaipulu, Acting Prime Minister, Lord Fakafanua, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, His Eminence Cardinal Soane Patita Paini Mafi of the Catholic Church of Tonga and Reverend Dr. Tevita Koloa’ia Havea, President of the Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga, Head of Diplomatic Missions, Government Chief Executive Officers, Tonga Broadcasting Commission Board Members, and many guests.

The NEWS Project is a Grant Aid Assistance from the People and the Government of Japan with a goal to minimize damages caused by natural disasters through the improvements of early warning information system. Valued at about US\$30million dollars, the Project strengthens disaster communications throughout the Kingdom, including the construction of the Headquarters Broadcasting Building for Tonga Broadcasting Commission and the Medium Wave (MW) Transmitter Hut.

In the Royal Address by HRH Crown Prince Tupouto‘a ‘Ulukalala, he thanked the People and Government of Japan for their kind offer in funding the NEWS Project. “It is a modern system and fully equipped with a purpose and the truth to saving lives wherever and whenever, is required.” He said, “Our calling today is preparing ourselves to help those in needs, those in despair, those who may be dying from extreme event of natural disasters and worst impact of climate change. We can save them with this system, and this is resilience in facing the challenges of our time.”

H.E Mr. MUNENAGA Kensaku in addressing the occasion said, “This nationwide network is very valuable and crucial in the occurrence of disasters.”

“It will strengthen Tonga’s capacity for risk management and its resilience against disasters through the improvement of 3 systems; the Emergency Radio Communication System, Early Warning Sound Alert System and the Medium Wave Radio Broadcasting System.” He added that the new telecommunication system of this project covers the whole Kingdom all the way to the Niuas, and the early warning sound alert transmission will straightaway reach everyone in the Kingdom in a very short time compared to before, and the coverage of alert will significantly increase.

“I hope the NEWS Project would become an epoch-making project for the people of Tonga. I believe the Project will play a significant role in making Tonga more resilient against disasters and it will be memorable symbol of Japan and Tonga’s cordial relationship,” said Ambassador MUNENAGA.

Hon. Samiu Kuita Vaipulu, Acting Prime Minister in the address from the Government of Tonga said “Tonga is the second-most at risk country in the world vulnerable to natural disasters, as the population spreads over small isolated islands predominantly in low lying coastal areas, where response efforts are often difficult. We thank you Japan for your continued support and assistance at time of needs to saving our people from the adverse impacts of disasters and climate change.”

The ceremony witnessed the demonstration of the Emergency Siren System, after installation of 75 siren stations and 514 sets of Remote Activated Receiver throughout the Kingdom including both Niua islands.

END

Attached: Photos

Photos;



HRH Crown Prince Tupouto'a 'Ulukalala officially open the new building for Tonga Broadcasting Commission funded by Japan under the NEWS Project on Tuesday, 27 September 2022.



H.E. Mr. MUNENAGA, Ambassador of Japan to Tonga with HRH Crown Princess Sinaitakala Tuku'aho, HRH Princess Salote Mafile'o Pilolevu Tuita and Lord Tuita with Lord Fakafanua inside the new building for TBC.



Launching of the Emergency Siren System by HRH Crown Prince Tupouto'a 'Ulukalala, and demonstration by MEIDECC.

*For further enquires please contact: Mr. Fujiwara Issei, Second Secretary, Embassy of Japan in Tonga.  
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NEWS Project Tour during the opening ceremony on Tuesday, 27 September 2022.



H.E Mr. MUNENAGA with Hon. Samiu Vaipulu and guests at the opening ceremony for the NEWS Project.



The new broadcasting building for Tonga Broadcasting Commission equipped with nationwide early warning system funded by Japan. .

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