

## India-Tuvalu Bilateral Relations

### Background

Bilateral relations between India and Tuvalu have grown steadily since the reopening of the High Commission of India, Suva, in 1999.

### High-Level Exchanges

**FIPIC:** The Forum for India-Pacific Island Countries was inaugurated on 19 November 2014 at Suva. Hon'ble Prime Minister of India also hosted the First Summit of the Forum in Suva (Fiji) during his historic visit to Fiji on 19 November 2014. The Forum saw participation of 14 Pacific Island Countries. Tuvalu delegation was led by the Governor-General Sir Italeli Iakoba, attended the Summit.

**FIPIC-II:** As a follow-up of the historic first FIPIC Summit in 2014, India organized the second FIPIC at Jaipur on 21 August 2015, which was hosted by Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Building upon the success of the first FIPIC, India announced major initiatives to boost cooperation with the 14 Pacific Island countries. Tuvalu delegation led by former Prime Minister Hon. Enele Sosene Sopoaga, attended the Forum.

**Interaction with PSIDS at New York:** On 24 September 2019, on the sidelines of the UNGA, Prime Minister of India Hon. Narendra Modi held an interaction, first of its kind, with the leaders of the Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS). This high-level exchange will be followed up with the third Summit meeting of the Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC), which is scheduled to be held in the first half of 2020.

**India-Pacific Islands Sustainable Development Conference (IPISDC):** Government of India organized the India-Pacific Islands Sustainable Development Conference (IPISDC) at Suva, Fiji on 25-26 May 2017. Minister of State for External Affairs Gen. (Dr.) V.K.Singh (Retd.) hosted the event. Hon. Maatia Toafa, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and Economic Development, led the Tuvalu delegation to the Conference.

**International Solar Alliance:** Tuvalu has become one of the Founding Members of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) – a joint initiative of the Governments of India and France to promote solar energy. Former Prime Minister Hon. Enele Sosene Sopoaga visited New Delhi to attend the Founding Conference of ISA on 11 March 2018.

### **Other Important Visits/Exchanges:**

- Minister of Foreign Affairs, Taukelina Finikaso visited India in August 2013 for the commissioning of the new Tuvalu Hon. Consulate office in New Delhi.
- Tuvalu delegation, led by Mr. Fauoa Maani, Minister of Education, Youth and Sports, visited India in connection with the Second High Level Meeting (HLM) on South-South Cooperation for Child Rights in Asia and the Pacific, held in New Delhi on 23-25 October 2013.
- Hon. Samuela Penitala Teo, Special Envoy for Disaster, attended the First Asian Ministerial Disaster Risk Reduction Conference, in New Delhi from 2 to 5 November 2016.
- H.E. Sir Iakoba T Italeli, Governor General attended 17<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Chief Justice, held in Lucknow from 9-15 November 2016.
- Mr. Avafoa Irata, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Transport, Energy and Tourism attended the Second Assembly of the International Solar Alliance in New Delhi on 31 October 2019.
- Shri Ashwani Kumar Choubey, Minister of State for Health & Family Welfare visited Tuvalu on 27-29 May 2018.

### Development Partnership Assistance

Government of India provides annual grants for community development projects in Tuvalu. In addition, training slots are offered to Tuvalu under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme of the Government of India. Diplomats are also offered training at the Foreign Service Institute of India. In 2019, India assisted Tuvalu with US\$1.9 million as contribution towards construction of Tuvalu Convention Centre for hosting the 50<sup>th</sup> Pacific Islands Forum Summit in Tuvalu in August 2019.

### Cultural Relations

The **International Day of Yoga** is celebrated with great enthusiasm in Tuvalu every year with participation from high dignitaries, including the Prime Minister. As part of **Namaste Pacifika Festival of India**, Bollywood Dance Group Centrestage led by Shri Rishi Sharma visited and performed in Tuvalu in February 2018.