



GOVERNMENT OF TONGA

PRESS RELEASE

(17 March, 2026)

“New Zealand Prime Minister Visits Tonga: Strengthening Bilateral Ties”



Photo of Prime Minister Lord Fakafanua and The Right Honourable Christopher Luxon, Prime Minister of New Zealand, following the conclusion of their bilateral meeting today, 17 March 2026.

Issued by the: *The Prime Minister's Office, St George Government Building, Nuku'alofa, Kingdom of Tonga* **Postal Address:** *P.O. Box 62, Nuku'alofa* **Tel:** (676) 7401351 **Fax:** (676) 23 888;
For media enquiries- Email: evk@pmo.gov.to **Website:** www.pmo.gov.to

Nuku'alofa, Tonga - The Prime Minister of New Zealand, the Right Honourable Christopher Luxon, officially arrived in Tonga today with a delegation of ministers, private sector representatives, and members of the media.

Prime Minister Luxon was welcomed at the VVIP Airport by the Deputy Prime Minister of Tonga, Honourable Viliami Uasike Latu, and the Minister for Lands, Survey, Planning and Natural Resources, Honourable Taniela Fusimalohi.

The purpose of the visit is to reinforce the longstanding bilateral relationship between the Kingdom of Tonga and New Zealand.

Day one of the visiting Prime Minister's programme commenced with a Leaders' Meeting hosted by the Prime Minister of Tonga, Lord Fakafanua. This was followed by a Joint Press Conference, during which Prime Minister Luxon announced three key areas of support for Tonga: \$20 million in direct budget support over the next two financial years, \$5 million in new health development funding, and \$5 million for climate flexible funding.

Prime Minister Lord Fakafanua also highlighted the Governments support for growing private sector collaboration between Tonga and New Zealand businesses and investors, including the recently signed Memorandum of Understanding between Sudima Hotels and His Majesty King Tupou VI for the development of a hotel at the new Parliament Precinct. This project will further contribute to Tonga's economic development and tourism sector.

The planned upscale hotel, resort, and convention centre is expected to create up to 100 permanent and part-time jobs and contribute approximately T\$18 million annually to the local economy through wages and procurement. The development will also benefit the wider community by acting as a catalyst for new investment and helping meet the growing demand for quality accommodation in Tonga.

The Prime Minister also highlighted that the Government welcomes the lowering of non-tariff barriers for Tongan pineapple exports to New Zealand, supporting our agriculture sector - particularly producers in the Vava'u island group - and the construction of a specialist packing shed for fresh produce.

Following the press conference, a Cabinet Roundtable was convened with members of Tonga's Cabinet. Those in attendance included Prime Minister Lord Fakafanua; the Deputy Prime Minister, Honourable Viliami Uasike Latu, Minister for Justice and Minister for Trade and Economic Development; His Royal Highness Crown Prince Tupouto'a 'Ulukalala, Minister of His Majesty's Armed Forces and Minister of His Majesty's Diplomatic Services; Honourable Siaosi Sovaleni, Minister for Health and Minister for Public Enterprises; Honourable Semisi Kioa Lafu Sika, Minister for Tourism and Minister for Infrastructure; Honourable Taniela Fusimalohi, Minister for Lands, Survey, Planning and Natural Resources; Honourable Mo'ale 'Otonuku, Minister for Education and Training; Honourable Viliami Sisifa, Minister for

Agriculture, Forestry and Food, and Minister for Fisheries; and Honourable Sevenitini Toumoua, Minister for Customs and Inland Revenue.

The first day concluded with a welcoming reception hosted by the New Zealand High Commissioner to Tonga, His Excellency Mr Brody Sinclair, at the Official Residence of the New Zealand High Commission.

On the second day of the programme, Prime Minister Luxon will attend an audience with His Majesty King Tupou VI. The programme will also include a Tonga Police and Transnational Crime event at the Tonga Police Headquarters, a visit to a Government Middle School, site visits to the Fanga'uta Lagoon Bridge Site and Nishi Trading Farm, as well as a sit-down interview with Tonga's national broadcaster. The visit will conclude with a dinner reception hosted by the Government of Tonga.

- ENDS -



PULE'ANGA TONGA
ONGOONGO TUKUATU

(‘Aho 17 ‘o Ma’asi, 2026)

“A’ahi mai Palemia ‘o Nu’usila ki Tonga: Fakamalohi’iange ‘a e va fengaue’aki”



‘Ata ‘o e Eiki Palēmia Lord Fakafanua mo e ‘Eiki Palēmia ‘o Nu’u Sila, Palēmia Christopher Luxon, hili ‘a e faka’osi ‘o ‘ena fakataha fakavaha’apule’anga ‘i he ‘aho ni, 17 ‘o Ma’asi 2026.

Tuku atu mei he: ‘Ofisi ‘o e Palēmia, Pule’anga Tonga, Nuku’alofa, Tonga
Tu’asila: St George Government Building, Taufua’ahau Road, P.O. Box 62 **Telefoni:** (676) 7401351 ;
Ngaahi Faka’eke’eke - ‘Imeli: evk@pmo.gov.to **Uepisaiti:** www.pmo.gov.to

Nuku'alofa, Tonga - Na'e tu'uta mai ki Tonga he 'aho ni 'a e Palemia 'o Nu'u Sila, Right Honourable Christopher Luxon, pea muimuifolau ki ai mo e kau minisita, kau fakafongfa fale alea, kau fakafongfa 'o e sekitoa taautaha, pea mo e kau memipa 'o e mitia.

Na'e talitali lelei 'a Palemia Luxon 'i he Mala'e Vakapuna Fua'amotu 'e he Tokoni Palemia 'o Tonga, Hon. Dr. Viliami Uasike Latu, pea mo e Minisita Fonua, Savea, Palani mo e Ngaahi Koloa Fakaenatula, Hon. Dr. Taniela Fusimalohi.

Ko e taumu'a 'o e 'a'ahi ke fakamalohia 'a e va fetu'utaki fuoloa 'i he vaha'a 'o e Pule'anga Tonga mo Nu'u Sila.

Ko e 'aho 'uluaki 'o e polokalama 'a'ahi 'a e Palemia 'o Nu'usila na'e kamata'aki ha Fakataha 'a e ongo taki na'e fakahoko 'e he Palemia 'o Tonga, Lord Fakafanua. Na'e hoko atu ai ki he Fakataha mo e Kau Faiongoongo, 'a ia na'e fakaha ai 'e he Palemia Luxon 'a e ngaahi tafa'aki mahu'inga 'e tolu 'o e tokoni 'a Nu'usila ki Tonga: \$20 miliona ko e tokoni hangatonu ki he patiseti 'i he ta'u fakapa'anga 'e ua ka hoko, \$5 miliona ko e tokoni fo'ou ki he fakalalaka 'o e mo'ui lelei, pea mo e \$5 miliona ki he fakapa'anga 'o e ngaue ki he feliliuaki 'o e 'ea.

Na'e fakamamafa'i foki 'e he Palemia, Lord Fakafanua 'a e poupu 'a e pule'anga ki hono fakalahi 'o e fengaue'aki mo e sekitoa fakatautaha 'i he vaha'a 'o e ngaahi pisinisi mo e kau 'inivesitoa 'a Tonga mo Nu'u Sila, kau ai ha Aleapau Femahino'aki 'i he vaha'a 'o e Sudima Hotels mo 'Ene 'Afio Tupou VI ki hono langa 'o ha hotele 'i he tafa'aki 'o e Fale Alea fo'ou. 'E tokoni lahi ange 'a e ngaue ni ki he fakalalaka faka'ikonomika mo e takimamata 'a Tonga.

'Oku 'amanaki 'e 'omai 'e he hotele, talitali'anga kakai mo e senita fakataha'anga ko eni 'a e ngaahi ngaue tu'uma'u mo fakataimi 'e a'u ki he teau pea tokoni fakata'u 'o a'u ki he T\$18 miliona fakata'u ki he tu'unga faka'ikonomika fakalotofonua 'o fakafou 'i he vahenga mo e fakatau. 'E toe 'aonga foki 'a e fakalalaka ki he kolo fakalukufua, 'aki 'ene hoko ko ha faka'ai'ai ki ha 'inivesi fo'ou mo tokoni ke feau 'a e fakautuutu 'o e fie ma'u ki ha nofo'anga lelei 'i Tonga.

Hili 'a e fakataha mo e kau faiongoongo, na'e hoko atu ki he fakataha mo e kau memipa 'o e Kapineti 'o Tonga. Ko kinautolu na'e 'i ai na'e kau ki ai 'a e Palemia, Lord Fakafanua; ko e Tokoni Palemia, Hon. Dr. Viliami Uasike Latu, Minisitā ki he Fakamaau'anga mo e Minisitā ki he Fefakatau'aki mo e Fakalalaka Faka'ikonomika; Tama Pilinisi Kalauni, Tupouto'a 'Ulukalala, Minisita ki he Kau Tau 'a 'Ene 'Afio mo e Minisita ki he Ngaue Fakatipilometika 'a 'Ene 'Afio; Hon. Siaosi Sovaleni, Minisita Mo'ui mo e 'Eiki Minisita ki he Ngaahi Pisinisi 'a e Pule'anga; Hon. Semisi Kioa Lafu Sika, Minisita Takimamata mo e Minisita ki he Ngaahi Ngaue Lalahi 'a e Pule'anga; Hon. Dr. Taniela Fusimalohi, Minisita Fonua, Savea, Palani mo e Koloa Fakaenatula; Hon. Dr. Mo'ale 'Otunuku, Minisita Ako mo Akongaue; Hon. Viliami Sisifa, Minisita Ngoue, Vao'akau mo e Me'atokoni pea mo e Minisita Toutai; pea mo Hon. Sevenitini Toumoua, Minisitā ki he Kasitomú mo e Tanaki Pa'anga Humai.

Na'e faka'osi 'aki 'a e 'uluaki 'aho ha talitali na'e fakahoko 'e he Talafekau Lahi Nu'usila ki Tonga, His Excellency Mr. Brody Sinclair, 'i he 'Api me'a'anga 'o e Talafekau Lahi Nu'u Sila.

Ko e 'aho hono ua 'o e polokalama, 'e fakataufolofola 'a Palemia Luxon ki He'ene 'Afio, Tupou VI. 'E kau foki 'i he polokalama 'a e 'a'ahi mo e faka'ali'ali 'a e Polisi Tonga mo e Va'a Transnational Crime 'i he 'ulu'i 'ofisi 'o e Potungaue Polisi, 'a'ahi ki ha 'Apiako Lotoloto 'a e Pule'anga, 'a'ahi ki he feitu'u 'e langa ai 'o e Hala Fakakavakava Fanga'uta (Fanga'uta Lagoon Bridge Site) mo e Faama 'a e Nishi Trading, pea pehe ki ha faka'eke'eke makehe mo e Kautaha Fakamafola Fakafonua 'a Tonga. 'E faka'osi 'aki 'a e 'a'ahi ha talitali mo ma'u me'atokoni efiafi 'e he Pule'anga Tonga.

- NGATA'ANGA -