



PRESS RELEASE

United Nations Special Representative of Secretary-General on Disaster Risk Reduction Visits Tonga

Nuku'alofa (19 October 2023) – The United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction (SRSR UNDRR), Mami Mizutori arrived in the Kingdom of Tonga today as part of her official mission to meet on disaster risk reduction efforts in the Pacific region and hold events to mark World Tsunami Awareness Day.

During her visit, over the course of five days, Ms Mizutori will engage in a series of meetings and events aimed at strengthening disaster risk reduction and resilience-building initiatives in Tonga. She is scheduled to meet with high-level government officials, representative from civil society organizations, and local communities to learn about Tonga's efforts to mitigate the impact of disasters and growing climate risk. This includes marking World Tsunami Awareness Day, an international campaign to raise awareness about reducing tsunami-related risks and enhance community preparedness.

Tonga, like many small island nations in the Pacific, is extremely vulnerable to a range of disaster risk, including cyclones, earthquakes, tsunamis, and volcanic activity. The SRSR's visit aims to showcase leading disaster resilience efforts in Tonga in safeguarding lives and livelihoods, identify challenges, solutions and strengthen collaboration.

The visit of Ms Mizutori underscores the United Nations' commitment to supporting Tonga and Pacific Island nations in the face of rapidly rising climate and disaster risk. This visit is a part of her broader efforts to promote the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the region.

"We are honored to host SRSR UNDRR in Tonga", said Mafua-'i-Vai'utukakau Maka, director of National Disaster Risk Management Office. "This visit presents an invaluable opportunity to showcase our ongoing efforts in disaster risk reduction and to collaborate closely with the United Nations in our shared commitment to ensuring a safer and more resilient future for our people."

The visit will also provide a platform for sharing best practices, exchanging knowledge, and identify areas where the United Nations can further support Tonga in its disaster risk reduction and preparedness endeavors.

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