



**STATEMENT BY THE HONOURABLE PRIME MINISTER TUILAEPA LUPESOLIAI
SAILELE MALIELEGAOI AT THE LAUNCH OF THE SOLAR ARRAY FALEATA RACE
COURSE MONDAY SEPTEMBER 1, 2014**

NZ Foreign Minister Hon Murray McCully, EU Commissioner Mr Piebalgs, Honourable leaders and representatives of small island developing states, distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is an honour to be here today to celebrate the completion of this solar array at the Apia race course. Today, we are not just inaugurating a power plant; we are celebrating a landmark event with the launch of the Apia race course solar plant; the largest single solar array in the Pacific. This plant will feed 2.2 MegaWatts to the national grid.

The Government of Samoa would not have had the resources and capabilities on its own to build this solar array were it not for the support of the Government of New Zealand and the European Union through a renewable energy partnership. I would like on behalf of our government to express our gratitude to New Zealand and the European Union for their pivotal role in initiating the Renewable Energy Partnership that made possible the delivery of this Solar Array project and other renewable energy projects in construction or in planning phase.

Samoa is blessed with abundant sunshine, good running rivers and prevailing trade winds. These resources provide a good base from which we can derive sustainable and renewable energy. The support of partners like New Zealand and the EU makes it possible to harness these renewable resources sustainably. Maximizing the use of indigenous, clean and plentiful renewable energy resources requires a structured, holistic approach that takes into account medium and long-term needs and impacts including the requisite institutional and human capacity requirements to support the technology.

We have set for ourselves challenging goals for our renewable energy use as articulated in Samoa's Energy Sector plan. By 2016 we anticipate a reduction in the use of fossil fuels by 10%, balanced by a 10% increase in the supply of renewable energy. We have set an ambitious interim target of 100% Renewable Energy in terms of power generation (electricity) by 2017. The task will not be easy. However with the support through partnerships and collaboration with our communities to enhance awareness of the benefits and impacts of renewable energy, the target is within reach.

I sincerely hope that this partnership between Samoa, New Zealand and the European Union will also prove useful and appropriate for the renewable energy delivery models being considered by other small island states. For Samoa this solar array and other renewable energy projects under construction and in the pipeline reinforce the importance of strong and enduring partnerships in delivering and sustaining development in this vital sector for small island states.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the New Zealand High Commissioner, the European Union resident representative and their respective offices as well as all the people who worked hard to complete the Solar Array project we are launching today. Thank you

