**FINAL STATEMENT BY THE SOLICITOR GENERAL, MR. SIONE FINAU SISIFA**

**AT ADOPTION OF UNIVERSAL PERIODIC WORKING GROUP’S REPORT ON TONGA’S REVIEW**

**Friday 19 January 2018**

**Palais de Nationes, Geneva, Switzerland**

**Mr President**, Your Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates.

May I begin my brief final remarks before the UPR Working Group, by expressing the Tongan delegation’s deep appreciation and sincere thanks to the Secretariat and the Distinguished Member Countries for the work that has been undertaken in considering and reviewing Tonga’s 3rd Universal Periodic Report.

In the last five days, we have witnessed first-hand the time, dedicated efforts and kind assistance that all Distinguished Delegates commit to reviewing the human rights of Member States.

The Tongan delegation was indeed humbled that 45 States took the effort and time to prepare interventions and recommendations to assist Tonga in its path to afford greater human rights to our people and to ensure that the Kingdom remains in compliance and committed to its obligations of the United Nations Human Rights Charter.

In relation to the preparation of the Working Group’s report, I would like to thank the Distinguished Delegates of Angola, Slovenia and United Arab Emirates – as members of the troika States who facilitated and assisted in our review.

Mr. President, Tonga has taken on board the valuable recommendations offered by our fellow Members States. May I assure you that despite the challenges that Tonga faces as a small and under-resourced Pacific Island State, that we pledge to putting our best efforts forward in implementation of the recommendations that Tonga has supported.

In relation to 58 of the recommendations which we have deferred to our Capital, we will respond to these shortly but we would ask you to respectfully note that this is to ensure that we receive our Government’s support, prioritization and timeframes to ratification of those core human rights treaties that Tonga has not yet ratified. Rest assured that Tonga remains strongly committed to its mandate on Human Rights for all.

**Mr President**, I thank you and all distinguished delegates for your time. On behalf of our Head of State, His Majesty, King Tupou VI, the Prime Minister, his Government and the people of Tonga, may I wish you all abundant strength and good will in all your deliberations.

Malo ‘aupito mo e tu’a ‘ofa atu.