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**Tonga's Delegates Advocate for Gender Equality and Poverty Measurement at CSW68:
Minister Lord Vaea and Acting CEO Mrs. 'Akanesi Polotu Paunga Lead Engagement in
High-Level Side Events at the Sixty-Eighth Session on Commission on the Status of Women
(CSW68).**

Negotiations continue on the second week of CSW68, on the Agreed Conclusions of *'Accelerating the Achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by addressing poverty and strengthening institutions and financing with a gender perspective.'* In parallel, Tonga's Head of Delegation Lord Vaea, Minister of Internal Affairs for the Kingdom of Tonga, represented Tonga at a series of high-level side events and one of which was focusing on women mediating across humanitarian, peace, and development efforts. In collaboration with UN Women and strategic partners, Lord Vaea emphasized the crucial role of women mediators in advancing and sustaining peace. His remarks underscored the importance of strategic partnerships with women mediators' networks to enhance collective capacity in achieving peace and inclusive security. Lord Vaea's active engagement reflects Tonga's steadfast commitment to advocating for gender equality and sustainable development on the global stage.

In his opening remarks, Lord Vaea emphasized the importance of strategic partnerships with women mediators' networks to advance sustaining peace. He stressed, *"To realize our aspirations for peace and ensure inclusive security, strategic partnerships with women mediators' networks can enhance our collective capacity."*

Acting CEO, Mrs. ‘Akanesi Polotu Paunga represents Tonga at Side Event Panel, Innovating Poverty Measurement for Inclusion: Leadership from the Pacific at CSW68.

“As Tonga was the first country in the Pacific to conduct household-level and individual-level assessment of multidimensional poverty officially, it has provided us information and data that can be used not only by our ministry but also by our stakeholders...and that data use should be timely and intentional including for reporting...” Mrs. ‘Akanesi Polotu Paunga

Mrs. ‘Akanesi Polotu Paunga, Acting CEO of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, represented Tonga at a panel discussion on innovating poverty measurement for inclusion. Mrs. Paunga showcased Tonga's pioneering efforts in conducting household-level and individual-level assessments of multidimensional poverty. She emphasized the importance of intentional data collection and dissemination to support gender mainstreaming across all government sectors. Mrs. Paunga's participation demonstrates Tonga's leadership in addressing poverty and promoting gender equality.

Lord Vaea's Active Participation at CSW68 Side Events

Lord Vaea actively participated in several high-level side events, emphasizing Tonga's unwavering commitment to advancing gender equality. Alongside Tonga's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Va'inga Tone, Lord Vaea contributed to discussions at notable events, including:

1. UNICEF: Focusing on rendering adolescent girls more visible in official statistics through comprehensive data collection and dissemination.
2. UNDRR, UNFPA, UN Women, Australia, Norway, the Philippines: Launching a gender action plan to support the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030.
3. UN Women: Addressing the financing of social protection and care systems to promote human rights, gender equality, and poverty reduction.

Lord Vaea's active engagement underscores Tonga's ongoing efforts to advocate for gender equality, social justice, and sustainable development on the global stage. The Kingdom of Tonga remains steadfast in leveraging international platforms to promote these crucial initiatives.

ENDS

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UNCSW68 Session

Kingdom of Tonga Delegation for the UNCSW68 Session

From the Capital:

1. Hon Minister for Internal Affairs, Lord Vaea
2. Acting CEO for Internal Affairs, Polotu Paunga
3. Principal Programme Officer, Makelesi Kioa
4. Gender Advisor, 'Uieta Kaufusi

From the Kingdom of Tonga Permanent Representative to the UN

1. Ambassador Va'inga Tone
2. First Secretary, Jeanette Vea
3. Second Secretary, Darlene Vaea
4. NGO & Youth Representative, Elizabeth Kite