A Workshop that was held today – Thursday, 29th October 2015 that was opened by the CEO of the Ministry of Meterology, Energy, Information, Disaster Management, Environment, Climate Change and Communication (MEIDECC), Mr. Paula P. Ma’u.

The workshop is co-jointly organized by the Department of Energy under MEIDECC and the Ministry of Finance and National Planning (MFNP). The workshop is being conducted under the auspices of the European Union and the European Development Fund (EDF 11). It is a very important exercise for Tonga as the outcomes of the workshop which will be in the form of a “New or Revised Plan” together with the accompanying “Monitoring Matrix” which is the proposed facility that will leverage or trigger the release of the next proposed tranche of budget support funds under EDF 11 which is an indicative total of EUR 2.5 million for the current fiscal year. Apart from the above it is also intended to undertake the mainstreaming and harmonizing of the action plan at the national level integrating it into key Government planning and budgetary processes.

The REEEP was the three (3) year plan that was established as the Implementation Plan, to mobilise the intentions and objectives of the Tonga Energy Roadmap (TERM). The REEEP was put in place in May, 2013 following earlier deliberations of the stakeholders. It will be coming to an end by next year, 2016. This exercise is very timely and we are thankful to the European Union under the European Development Fund (EDF 11) for taking up this important role to assist the Government of Tonga to put in place a revised implementation plan to take us and the TERM to 2020. We have now progressed half of the way and it is indeed fitting that we come together to take stock of our achievements and note there have been delays and put in place measures to achieve the intentions and objective of the TERM.

Specifically on the EDF 11, funding is proposed again to be in the form of a budget support programme. It is basically, an aid modality designed as a means of ensuring effectiveness in aid assistance delivery and ultimately achieving sustainable results. It involves; i) dialogue, ii) financial transfers to the national treasury account, iii) performance assessment based on sector agreed targets and iv) capacity development, based on partnership and mutual accountability. Under EDF 11 the Government of Tonga has secured a total of EUR 11.1 Million with EUR 10.0 Million aimed for budget support and EUR 1.1 Million set aside for support measures. The overall objective of the assistance is basically to improve socio-economic
development and provide sustainable living conditions for all Tongans and also contributing to an environmentally sustainable and low carbon development path. Its specific objective is basically to achieve sustainable energy services to improve the overall efficiency of the energy sector and to increase the share of renewable energy whilst minimizing adverse environmental effects and ensuring climate resilience. The budget support of the EU to the Kingdom of Tonga under the EDF11 (2016-2020) as outlined above will focus on strengthening the energy sector. The performance indicators proposed to assess the project include:

1. Increase in the share of renewable energy in electricity generation.
   Increase percentage of renewable energy in overall electricity production to 20% by 2020. The current baseline figure is at 4% in 2014;

2. Improvement in energy efficiency.
   This particular indicator entails improved rates of fuel consumption in relation to its overall generation which consequently ensures the optimisation of generation efficiency. The baseline is 4.04 kWh/L in 2015 and the target is to achieve 4.12 kWh/L achieved by 2019/2020. The above Performance indicators are intended to measure the achievements of the energy sector reform and as such demonstrate the Government of Tonga’s willingness and ability to implement the reform and to improve along the implementation process. The indicators is designed to consider the accomplishments over a period of four years of the EDF 11, so it is to anticipate the possible achievements during this period and to describe targets which can be used as a valid guidance for monitoring purposes.

With the assistance that has been made available by the European Union to mobilize the TERM, it is envisaged that it will certainly lead to the realization of achieving its desired visions and intentions.