



5th February, 2018 **The Government of Tonga, cognizant of the fact that it enjoys diplomatic and friendly relations with both the Governments of Australia and the People’s Republic of China, would like to comment on the article published by The Australian dated January 29, 2018 by Anthony Klan titled ‘Pacific nations drowning in Chinese debt’ and state for the record that:-**

1. The Government of Tonga is exceedingly grateful and very appreciative of all aid funds conceded either by loan or grant to Tonga by the Government of the People’s Republic of China and the Government of Australia.

2. In the wake of the riots in 2006, the Government of Tonga had no choice but to welcome the assistance offered promptly by the People’s Republic of China with the rebuilding of the Nuku’alofa Central Business District (CBD), in our road to recovery.

Tonga’s achievements to date, in the areas of national development is much rendered to China’s responsive programme of Economic and Technical Cooperation, have focused on Key Priority areas and Key Infrastructure. Tonga has therefore benefitted remarkably from the assistance provided by China. The diplomatic relations between the Government of the People’s Republic of China and the Government of the Kingdom of Tonga will continue to remain strong.

The Kingdom of Tonga continues to value deeply and mutually its friendly and strong ties and cordial relations with both the Government of Australia and the Government of the People’s Republic of China.

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