



January 26, 2022

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden,

We, the undersigned organizations, request that you release a statement of acknowledgement on the unfortunate events that have happened in the Kingdom of Tonga, and urge your administration to assist in providing humanitarian aid for its relief and recovery efforts. Furthermore, Tonga has been witnessing rising sea levels and land erosion, and villages were already at risk long before these events took place, so we urge you to make the climate crisis a top priority this year, and take significant action to address it.

On January 15, 2022, the Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai volcano erupted and was followed by a tsunami that activated waves up to fifteen meters high, causing an unprecedented disaster to the island groups of Tongatapu, Ha'apai, Eua, and surrounding islands of the archipelago. To date, three people have died and villages, schools, churches, businesses, and all agriculture were destroyed. Families who lived along the coastlines were forced to flee inland for safety and have no home to return to. For many, they have lost their only source of income as all crops and fisheries have been ruined. In addition, the volcanic ash damaged freshwater resources and there is cause for concern that people will have respiratory problems, especially for those with underlying conditions. There is no question that such devastating impacts are a result of climate change.

Some communications were recently restored and Tongan Americans have been in touch with their families abroad, while others are still waiting to hear if their loved ones are alive and safe. The Tongan American diaspora have important ties to their families in Tonga, as they work hard to send remittances quite frequently to support their families and essentially help to keep the economy afloat. However, the pandemic has caused financial hardship for the diaspora here as many have lost family members to COVID-19, in addition to being frontline workers, taking care of their elders, and living in multigenerational households.

As Tonga is in its emergency response phase and continues to be extremely vulnerable to climate change, the road to recovery will be a long-term process to rebuild its infrastructure and restore hope in the Tongan people. Food, water, personal protective equipment, and other essential necessities will be a continuous need in the coming months ahead. We urge your administration to release a statement to ease some of the fear and anxiety Tongan Americans are experiencing, and take part in providing aid for Tonga's relief and recovery efforts. We stand ready to work with you and provide support from the Tongan American community.

Sincerely,

Empowering Pacific Islander Communities
Motivating Action Leadership Opportunity
Vakatasi Foundation
College of San Mateo
National Council of Asian Pacific Americans

18 Million Rising
9to5
A1 Care
AAPI Equity Alliance
AAPI Utah Democratic Caucus
AAPIs for Civic Empowerment Education Fund
Affirming Pacific Islander
APACEvotes
API Equality-LA
API Forward Movement
APIA Scholars
APIENC
Aragon High School Polynesian Club
Asian American Bar Association of New York
Asian American Psychological Association (AAPA)
Asian American Resource Center at Pomona College
Asian Americans Advancing Justice | Chicago
Asian Americans United
Asian Law Alliance
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO
Asian Pacific Environmental Network
Asian Pacific Institute on Gender Based Violence (API-GBV)
Asian Pacific Islander Caucus, American Public Health Association
Asian Pacific Islander Initiative
Asian Pacific Islander Political Alliance (API PA)
Asian Pacific Islander Students Association at Wesley Theological Seminary
Asian Pacific Partners for Empowerment, Advocacy and Leadership (APPEAL)
Asian Prisoner Support Committee

Asian Solidarity Collective
Asian Youth Center
Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO)
AZ AANHPI for Equity
Azul
Banyan Coaching and Consulting
Black Pasifika Alliance
Black Women for Wellness
CA Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative
CAAAPV: ORGANIZING ASIAN COMMUNITIES
California Latinas for Reproductive Justice
California Pacific Conference of the United Methodist Church
Can't Stop! Won't Stop!
Consulting Center for Southeast Asians
Central Valley Pacific Islander Alliance
Chinese for Affirmative Action
Chinese Progressive Association
Chinese-American Planning Council
COFA Alliance National Network of Washington
College of San Mateo Mana Learning Community
DRUM - Desis Rising Up & Moving
Embassy of the Republic of the Marshall Islands to the United States, Washington D.C.
Famili Pe Taha
Filipino Advocates for Justice
FulaBula
George Washington University Hawaii Club
Grassroots Asians Rising
Greater Ontario Democratic Club
GW Hawai'i Club
GW Ohana (Hawai'i Club of the George Washington University)
HANA Center
Hawai'i Alliance for Community-Based Economic Development
Hidden Leaf Foundation
Hmong Innovating Politics
Inland Empire United
Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity
Island Liaison, Inc.
Japanese American Citizens League, Philadelphia Chapter
Japanese American Citizens League, San Diego Chapter
JP Design Company
Kainga Music
Katipunan Filipinx Program at College of San Mateo
Khmer Girls in Action
Kuata Performing Arts
KUTTURAN CHAMORU FOUNDATION
LE GaFa: Leadership and Education through Gagana Fa'a Samoa
LEAD Filipino
LEAP (Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics)

Little Tokyo Service Center
Los Angeles Worm Farm Collective
Mana College of San Mateo
Mana Program - MiraCosta College
MANA Protection Services
MDA
Mekong NYC
Mixteco Indigena Community Organizing Project
MP Associates
Muslim Delegates
NaFFAA
Nana's Wish
National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA)
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF)
National CAPACD- National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development
National Korean American Service & Education Consortium (NAKASEC)
National Pacific Islander Education Network
National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance (NQAPIA)
Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Alliance
New Mexico Asian Family Center
Oakland Pacific Islander Network
Oakland Unified School District - Office of Equity
OCA - Asian Pacific American Advocates
OCA Asian Pacific Advocates of Greater Seattle
OCA Greater Chicago
OPAWL
Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance (OCAPICA)
P6 Family Services
PacBiz: Assoc. of Pacific Islander Businesses & Professionals
Pacific Asian Counseling Services
Pacific Island Ethnic Art Museum
Pacific Islander Festival Association
Pacific Islander Health Partnership
Pacific Islander Student Association - PISA UCR
Pacific Islands' Student Association of UCLA
Pacific Seas Restaurant
Pasifika Inland Empire Coalition for Empowerment (PIECE)
Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center
Pi Delta Psi Foundation
Pilipino Workers Center or Southern California
Pitzer College IGLAS
Project Change (College of San Mateo)
Project-Respect
Providence Youth Student Movement
Puente Program at College of San Mateo
Rawmana Heritage
Reach Out
Rising Voices

Robert Redford Conservancy for So. Cal Sustainability at Pitzer College
Rugby Club of MiraCosta College - Men's and Women's
Ryerson University, Toronto, Ontario, Canada
Samoan Community Development Center
San Diego State University Pacific Islander Student Association
San Mateo County College District
San Mateo County Scholarship Foundation
Santa Ana United Methodist Church
SCPICRT: Southern California Pacific Islander Covid-19 Response Team
Search to Involve Pilipino Americans (SIPA)
Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund (SALDEF)
Sogorea Te Land Trust, Oceania: Pacific Islands Studies Research Working Group at the Department of Native American Studies at the University of California, Davis
San Francisco Tongans Rise Up
SOUTH ASIAN NETWORK, INC
South Asian Americans Leading Together
South Bay APALA
South Bay Youth Changemakers
Southeast Asian Freedom Network
Tanera'i i Ni'a Tahitian Cultural Center
Tualanga United Methodist Church Sacramento
Team Tonga Music
The Chapter House
The Ethnic Studies Education Pathways Project
The Hawai'i's Daughters Guild of California
The Young S.A.M.O.A.
The Young Serving All Mankind Our Alofa SAMOA
TOFA (To'utupu'o e 'Otu Felenite Association)
Tonga Research Association- USA Chapter
Tongan Mission - California/Nevada United Methodist Tongan Churches
UC Riverside
UC San Diego Pacific Islander Student Association
UCLA Pacific Islander Education and Retention
UCR Pacific Islander Student Association
United Methodist Church
UPIHC Utah Pacific Islander Health Coalition
US Council of Muslim Organizations
UT-Austin Student Government City Relations Agency
Utah Pacific Islander Health Coalition
UTOPIA WASHINGTON
Vakatasi Pasefika Student Organization
VAYLA New Orleans
VietLead
Vietnamese American Organization
Waimanalo Health Center
We Are Oceania Western
Wind Foundation