



Australian Government

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

## News, speeches and media

# Emergency humanitarian assistance to Tonga - Joint Statement from FRANZ

1 February 2022

**Category** Development

France, Australia and New Zealand reiterate their solidarity with the Kingdom of Tonga, which have been hit hard following the eruption of the Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai volcano on 15 January 2022. In response to the scale of the disaster, the three countries immediately activated the FRANZ mechanism, currently chaired by France, which enables them to coordinate their emergency action in the event of a natural disaster in the South Pacific.

The government and people of Tonga have rallied in the face of these twin natural disasters. They have done much to respond in challenging circumstances. In response to the needs expressed by the Government of Tonga, the FRANZ partners swiftly deployed maritime and air assets to support the Tongan response, deploying reconnaissance flights and delivering emergency assistance by air and sea. The emergency assistance has included drinking water, food, emergency shelters, electricity generation and desalination equipment, telecommunications equipment, medical equipment and hygiene kits, as well as technology for underwater and hydrographic assessment of port accessibility.

This solidarity is being deployed at the request of the Tongan authorities and in liaison with the National Emergency Management Office (NEMO) of Tonga, which is leading the response on the ground. Assistance is being delivered in compliance with COVID-19 restrictions applicable in Tonga, involving contactless unloading of relief supplies.

France, Australia and New Zealand are coordinating their efforts to assist Tonga along with other regional and international partners and organisations. We support intra-regional coordination as an effective way to build the resilience of our Pacific partners.

Against a backdrop of increasingly intense natural disasters due to climate change, France, Australia and New Zealand are determined to continue consolidating the FRANZ mechanism so as to be able to respond swiftly, effectively and in coordination with affected countries. In doing so, they will continue to support local leadership in crisis management.

<https://www.dfat.gov.au/news/media-release/emergency-humanitarian-assistance-tonga-joint-statement-franz>