

**KOE HOKO ATU PE ENI AE FAKATOKANGA KIHE FONONGA'ANGA.
'OKAPAU 'OKU PEHE PEE 'AE FUA FATONGIA HE MAHINA 'E 4,
FEFE KA TOO ATU KIHE IKA MOANA.**

“ACCOUNTABILITY CRISIS IN AID HOUSING REALLOCATIONS: A TEST OF CONSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY IN TONGA”

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The recent actions by Tonga's Deputy Prime Minister (DPM), Hon. Dr. Taniela L. Fusimalohi, regarding the reassignment or removal of aid-funded housing allocations initially designated under former Prime Minister Siaosi Sovaleni's administration, raise:

‘SIGNIFICANT CONSTITUTIONAL, ETHICAL, AND GOVERNANCE CONCERNS’

These developments are especially troubling given that the current government has repeatedly accused the former administration of bypassing proper parliamentary procedures —

PARTICULARLY IN FAILING TO PRESENT EXECUTIVE ORDER PLANS TO PARLIAMENT.

Yet, in this case, a major decision affecting VULNERABLE TONGANS (SI'I KAKAI TUKUHAUSIA MO FAINGATA'IA) appears to have been executed without DUE PROCESS OR TRANSPARENCY.

CONSTITUTIONAL IMPLICATIONS

According to Clause 51(1) of the Constitution of Tonga, the Cabinet holds collective responsibility to the Legislative Assembly for the executive functions of the Government. This clause emphasizes that no single Cabinet member should act independently on matters of significant national interest, especially those involving resource allocation or the welfare of disaster-affected communities.



If the DPM unilaterally altered housing allocations without Cabinet consensus or proper documentation, this action could be seen as a breach of the principle of collective responsibility. Furthermore, it casts doubt on whether Cabinet itself approved the decision, or if it was allowed to proceed without proper scrutiny.

In either case, it represents a breakdown in governance that UNDERMINES THE TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY expected from an administration that claims to put the people of Tonga first (KO FEE 'ATA-KI-TU'A MOE MU'OMU'A 'OE SI'I FOFONGA 'OE KAKAI MASIVA).

GOVERNANCE AND AID DISTRIBUTION CONCERNS

Aid-funded housing, especially for those affected by catastrophic events like the Hunga Tonga–Hunga Ha‘apai volcanic eruption and tsunami, must be distributed with fairness, documentation, and compassion. The removal or reassignment of such housing should follow formal channels, including documentation, Cabinet approval, and public communication.

This episode also exposes a disconnect between public rhetoric and executive conduct. The current government has made strong public claims about CORRECTING THE FAILURES OF THE PAST — yet, actions like this show potential POLICY INCONSISTENCY and raise fears about LONG-TERM ACCOUNTABILITY EROSION.

CONCLUSION

If indeed the DPM acted without full Cabinet agreement and without presenting the executive order plan to Parliament, this may reflect a violation of both constitutional and ethical standards. Moreover, if the Cabinet approved the action without demanding full documentation or explanation, it becomes a collective failure.

Either way, such decisions must not be allowed to proceed unchecked, especially when they affect vulnerable families who depend on government integrity. The government must clarify whether due process was followed, rectify any oversight, and recommit to transparent, lawful governance that serves all Tongans fairly.

“SERVING THE PEOPLE FIRST MEANS FOLLOWING THE LAW FIRST”

