



REMARKS BY THE ACTING PRIME MINISTER,
HON. TUALA TEVAGA IOSEFO PONIFASIO
ON THE OCCASION OF THE CROWNING OF THE
MISS UNIVERSE SAMOA - MS. HAYLANI PEARL KURUPPU
20TH SEPTEMBER 2024, ORATOR HOTEL AT 4:30PM

Ladies and gentlemen,

Today marks the dawn of a new chapter in the history of pageantry for our nation. We gather here to celebrate and crown our Miss Universe Samoa, who will have the honor of representing our beautiful country at the 73rd Miss Universe competition, to be held in Mexico City on November 16, 2024.

The Miss Universe competition is globally recognized as one of the top three international pageants. With its empowering motto, “Beautifully Confident,” the Miss Universe pageant aims to provide a platform where adult women from around the world can challenge themselves, express their voices, and be heard on the global stage. It is a movement that advocates for a future shaped by women—women with the courage to defy limits, curiosity to make groundbreaking discoveries, and audacity to continuously push the boundaries of possibility. These women become advocates for social causes, shouldering the responsibility of serving as role models with integrity and purpose.

For over 30 years, Samoa has been absent from the Miss Universe platform. Today, it is time for our talented, intelligent, and vibrant 'Tama'ita'i Samoa to once again shine on the global stage. As we continue our efforts to promote Samoa as a premier tourist destination, this pageant is yet another significant initiative driven by our dynamic private sector.

The government of Samoa is fully committed to promoting the important role of women in our society. This commitment is not just words but is demonstrated through our policies and actions. We actively support women’s involvement at all levels, including in Parliament and high-level leadership roles. By doing so, we affirm our dedication to the principles of equality and inclusion. We believe in the invaluable contributions of women to the progress and development of our society, and this commitment is woven into the fabric of our national vision for the future. "Pathway to the development of Samoa.

I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to Manaia Events for spearheading this effort. It takes vision, dedication, and courage to bring Samoa back onto the world stage, and your hard work and commitment are truly commendable. This is a testament to the power of partnerships between the private sector, local organizations, and national efforts to elevate Samoa's presence globally.

Special recognition goes to Ms. Haylani Pearl Kuruppu, our Miss Universe Samoa. Ms. Kuruppu has already made us proud on the international stage, having represented Samoa and the Pacific at the Miss Global Pageant in Cambodia in 2023. We all shared in the pride and excitement when Samoa was announced as one of the top two finalists. Millions around the world cheered for you then, and millions more will stand behind you as you step onto the Miss Universe stage. Your journey is not just one of personal achievement, but one that inspires hope and pride in the hearts of Samoans everywhere.

As you prepare to compete in Mexico, remember that you carry with you not only the dreams of young Samoan women but also the rich cultural heritage of our nation. You embody the grace, strength, and resilience of our people. Through your presence on the Miss Universe stage, you are representing more than beauty; you are representing the values of courage, determination, and unity that define Samoa.

Your dedication and service to Samoa have been commendable, and we pray for God's continued protection and guidance as you undertake this momentous journey. We trust that you will inspire not only those in Samoa but also women around the world, showing them that no matter where they come from, their voices can be heard, their talents recognized, and their dreams realized.

Once again, I extend my sincere thanks to Manaia Events, Vodafone Samoa, Fiji Airways, and everyone who has played a role in preparing our Miss Universe Samoa, Ms. Haylani Pearl Kuruppu, for her upcoming competition in Mexico City.

God bless Haylanni and the Team Miss Universe Samoa.

Fa'afetai tele lava. Thank you.