



Foreign Affairs & Trade Bulletin

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

January-March 2014

Second UN Plenary Mission to Samoa in preparation for the upcoming SIDS conference 2014

The United Nations Planning Mission arrived in Samoa on Sunday 26th January 2014 on their second expedition to meet with Government on arrangements for the UN International Conference on SIDS, which will be hosted here in Samoa from the 28th August - 4th September 2014.

The Mission was headed by H.E. Mr. Hongbo Wu, Under-Secretary General of the United Nations for the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. He is also the Secretary-General of the Conference.

The Primary purpose of the mission is to follow-up on the progress of Samoa's preparations for the Conference and to ensure that all aspects of the Conference requirements are covered and addressed.



This is the first time Samoa and the whole Pacific Region will host an international conference of this magnitude, which will involve 193 member countries of the United Nations and its observer countries and organizations. Mr. Wu returned to NY the following Wednesday while the remaining members of the planning mission continued meetings with the National Task Force in specific and technical arrangements for the conference before they headed back on Saturday 01st February 2014.

H.E. Mr Hongbo Wu leading the United Nations Planning Mission together with SIDS Co-ordinator Faalavaau Perina Sila and members of the National Task Force

Political, Protocol and International Relations Division

Presentation of Credentials:

The following Ambassadors travelled to Samoa to present their credentials to His Highness Tui Atua Tamasese Efi, Head of State of Samoa:

- ♦ H.E. Mrs. Susan Kim Langford, Australian High Commissioner, 18th February 2014.
- ♦ H.E. Mr. Yosef Livne, Ambassador of Israel,



*Presentation of Credentials: His Highness, Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Efi, Masiifo Filifilia Efi and the Australian High Commissioner, H.E. Mrs. Susan Langford.
Photo by: Newsline*



*Presentation of Credentials: Masiifo Filifilia Efi, His Highness, Tui Atua Tamasese Efi, the Ambassador of Israel, H.E. Mr. Yosef Livne and his wife, Mrs. Norma Livne.
Photo by: Samoa Observer*

Farewell visit

H.E. Mrs. Marion W. Krupski, Ambassador of Switzerland was in Samoa from 19th to 20th March 2014 for her farewell visit.

Visiting VIPs

- ♦ Mr. Hongbu Wu, Under-Secretary to the 2nd United Nations Planning Mission for SIDS preparations, 26th -29th January 2014. Accompanied by United Nations staff for the 2nd UN Mission on SIDS preparations
- ♦ H.E. Mr. Arie Cornells Van Der Wiel, Ambassador for the Netherlands, 26th - 29th January, 2014

The Ambassador of the Netherlands, H.E. Mr. Arie Cornells Van Der Wiel announced that a gift of €50,000 from the Dutch Government would be given to the Government of Samoa. The monetary donation is to assist the Government of Samoa in the preparation for the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States that will be held from 1st - 4th September 2014 in Apia, Samoa.



Prime Minister of Samoa, Hon. Tuilaepa Lupe-soliai Saillele Malielegaoui with the Ambassador for the Netherlands, H.E. Mr. Arie Cornells Van Der Wiel

- ♦ H.E. Mr. Verghese Mathews, Ambassador of Singapore, 23rd to 28th February 2014.
- ♦ Mr. Shinya Mizutani, (LEC Industries), Japan, 5th to 8th February 2014.
- ♦ Judge Jin-hyun Park, (Korea), 13th-15th

TCMSP Steering Committee Special Meeting, 15 Jan 2014

The TCMSP Steering Committee held a Special Meeting on 15 January 2014, to endorse the findings of the report undertaken by Agrihort Consult Limited on the Review of the *National Export Strategy (NES) 2008-2012*. The three specific objectives for the Review were:

1. Review and update the NES document
2. Assess the relevancy of the NES document
3. Identify & address gaps given what has been planned and implemented

The NES was endorsed in 2008 with its vision; "Export sector to be a major contributor to sustain-

able economic growth by 2012" which complements with the national vision as contained in the Strategy for the Development of Samoa (SDS).

The NES document highlighted export as a national issue and the decline in exports as a national problem. The review of the NES therefore, contributes to strengthening this position and pushing aggressively for the immediate establishment of the NEA (National Export Authority) as the coordinator, enabler and catalyst to reverse the decline in agricultural-based exports and to increase total exports.

The report findings recommend the immediate need to set up a NEA by the end of 2014 and to be private sector determined and driven. Priority will lie on an assessment of the service sector to identify the key contributors to export. In addition, there are plans to mobilize the churches in Samoa to actively take up exports as an income generating activity.

Members in attendance were given the opportunity to comment on the report before finalization and submission.

Consultation with Business of Salafai Association on PICTA TIS and PACER Plus in Savaii

On 13th March 2014, the Trade Division of the Ministry conducted an awareness workshop on the Pacific Island Countries Trade Agreement Trade in Services (PICTA TIS) and on the progress of negotiations regarding the Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations (PACER) Plus to members of the Business of Salafai Association. The workshop was held at the Small Business Enterprise Centre Conference Room at Salelologa, Savaii.

The purpose of the workshop was to promote understanding on Samoa's services commitment under PICTA, and the opportunities the agreement provided for local service providers to operate in other forum island economies. In addition, the workshop aimed to provide association members with an update on the PACER Plus negotiations and to gauge their feedback

regarding Samoa's position in areas such as labour mobility, customs procedures, rules of origin and technical barriers to trade.

The Association members were very interested on the trade-related work of the ministry and the opportunities envisioned by these two agreements. It was also an opportunity for the Ministry to hear the constraints members faced with internal trade such as disproportionate costs for transportation of taro from Savaii to Upolu and the criteria for accessing government schemes. The Ministry intends to conduct similar awareness programmes in Savaii to ensure that business community are familiar with the opportunities presented by the trade agreements Samoa is engaged in or a signatory of.

The Ministry was joined by senior officials from the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour.



MFAT & MCIL Officials hosting members of Business of Salafai Association

News from Samoa High Commission in Wellington

Official Signing of Diplomatic Relations between the Cook Islands and Samoa, 30th August 2013

The official signing of diplomatic relations between Samoa and the Cook Islands took place in Auckland on 30th August 2013. The agreement will assist in strengthening relations between Samoa and the Cook Islands allowing for both Polynesian nations to work closely together in areas of common interest and of mutual benefit both at a regional and international level. The agreement was signed by the Prime Ministers of both nations, Samoan Prime Minister, Hon Tuilaepa Lufesoliai Sailele Malielegaoi and Prime Minister of the Cook Islands, Hon Henry Puna. The signing was followed by a reception hosted by the Cook Islands High Commission and was attended by prominent members of the New Zealand Cook Islands and Samoan communities.

Third Polynesian Leaders Group Meeting, Auckland.

The Polynesian Leaders Group (PLG) met in Auckland on 30th August 2013. This was the third official meeting for the Group and it was an opportunity for leaders to discuss issues to advance the interests of Polynesia. The leaders were wel-

comed by outgoing chair, Hon Henry Puna, before the President of French Polynesia Hon Gaston Flosse was unanimously elected as the new chair for 2013-2014. Issues which were discussed included mobility, renewable energy and other new initiatives raised by members. The event was closed by Prime Minister Tuilaepa Lufesoliai Sailele Malielegaoi who thanked the current chair of the PLG, Hon Flosse, for his leadership and facilitation of the meeting. The High Commissioner was a member of Samoa's Delegation to the PLG Meeting.

Samoa Tourism Authority, Road Show Wellington 27th August 2013

The Samoa High Commissioner and staff attended the Samoa Tourism Authority Seminar which was held at the James Cook Hotel on 27th August 2013. The Seminar was part of a road show to promote Samoa's tourism industry in New Zealand which began in Auckland and Wellington as the final destination. The Seminar was coordinated by Mr Fasitau Ula of our Consulate Office in Auckland and he gave an overview presentation of the tourism sector in Samoa. This was followed by presentations from representatives of established hotels in Samoa which included Aggie Greys, Seabreeze, Tanoa Tusitala Hotel and some of the

new hotel businesses such as Return to Paradise Hotel. The Seminar was well received by the hoteliers and travel agents from the Wellington Region that were all in full attendance and there was much positive feedback at the end of the seminar. High Commissioner Leasi Papalii Scanlan closed the Seminar and commended the organisers for their hard work in hosting a successful event and he highlighted the opportunities that were available in Samoa for business and investors.

Samoa Provincial Rugby Tournament, Palmerston North

During his August visit, Prime Minister Hon Tuilaepa Lufesoliai Sailele Malielegaoi encouraged the High Commission to support initiatives that develop Samoan provincial rugby players. Therefore when approached to support the first New Zealand Samoa provincial rugby tournament, the office responded by donating a Trophy for the annual competition. The 2013 tournament took place in Palmerston North on 2nd November and was officially opened by the High Commissioner H.E Leasi Papalii Scanlan. Teams from Wanganui, Horowhenua and Palmerston North were competing for the top prize.

Continued on page 3...

News from Samoa High Commission in Wellington (continued)



H.E. Leasi Papalii Scanlan with players and members of the tournament executive

2nd Round of Negotiations for the Double Tax Agreement between Samoa and New Zealand

In the absence (for medical reasons) of the CEO of our Ministry for Revenue Mrs Pitoula Lusua Sefo, the High Commissioner led Samoa's delegation in the 2nd round of Negotiations for the establishment of a Double Tax Agreement between Samoa and New Zealand. Members of the delegation included the Deputy CEO from the Ministry for Revenue, Ms Avalisa Viali, the Assistant CEO for the Legal Division, Mr Komisi Koria, and Assistant CEO for the Policy Division, Ms Tu'i Fa'asili. The negotiations were successfully completed on 6th November 2013 with a signing of the text during a dinner hosted by the New Zealand Department of Inland Revenue. Terms of the agreement have been tabled with the respective Cabinets in order for both parties to finalise internal procedures. It is expected that the agreement will be signed early next year. The double tax agreement is expected to increase investment between New Zealand and Samoa.



H.E. Leasi Papalii Scanlan with Chief Negotiator from Department of Inland Revenue Mrs Carmel Peters and Staff of the Ministry for Revenue Samoa and Department of Inland Revenue

Graduation Dinner for Samoan Scholarship Students from Victoria University, 7th November 2013

The High Commissioner hosted a dinner at the James Cook Hotel for the three graduating scholarship students attending Victoria University. The evening was an informal celebration to recognise their hard work and dedication. During dinner, the High Commissioner commended the graduands for their achievements which will help to benefit the public and private sector in Samoa. The High Commission places an important emphasis in the progress of all Samoan scholarship students to ensure that graduating students return to work in Samoa. It is expected that a further eight students are set to graduate in early May 2014.



H.E. Leasi Papalii Scanlan and Mrs Joyce Scanlan with High Commission staff and Students (Ms Lisa Viali, Ms Fa'afoga Auva'a, Ms Leativa Okesene)

Buy Samoa Made Trade Show, Auckland 14-16 November 2013

The Samoa Trade Office in Auckland headed by Commissioner Fonoti Dr Lafitai Fuatai in conjunction with the Samoa Association of Manufacturers and Exporters (SAME) Committee hosted the second *Buy Samoa Made Trade Show* in Mangere, Auckland. The aim of the trade show was to highlight and promote the best of Samoa's export products. A cocktail evening showcasing the best of Samoan creativity and entertainment was opened by the Deputy Prime Minister Hon Fonotoe Nuafesili Pierre Laufo. The event included a fashion show by Mena as well as a fire knife performance from the Siva Afi crew. The evening provided an opportunity for participants and potential investors to view and experience products offered by Samoan Businesses - fashion designers, art and craft makers and food and beverages businesses. The *Buy Samoa Made Trade Show* took place from Thursday 14th to Saturday 16th November 2013. The High Commissioner and Mrs. Scanlan were invited to attend and support the Trade Show.



H.E. Leasi Papalii Scanlan and Mrs Joyce Scanlan, Fonoti Dr Lafitai Fuatai and participants.

Celebration of the Signing of Diplomatic Relations between Poland and Samoa, Auckland 17th November 2013

Diplomatic Relations between Samoa and Poland were officially signed by our Permanent Representative to New York Ambassador Aliioaiga Feturi Elisaia and Ambassador Mr Witold Sobkow PR of the Republic of Poland on 8th March 2013 in New York. This marked the beginning of diplomatic relations between the two governments and aims to find opportunities to collaborate both regionally and internationally. To celebrate the signing, an event co-hosted by the Embassy of Poland and the Samoa High Commission was held in Auckland on 17th November. The Ambassador-designate of Poland to Samoa H.E. Mrs Beata Stoczynska and High Commissioner Leasi both gave moving remarks during the event which was well attended by the Polish and Samoan community in Auckland.



From Left: Spouse of Ambassador and H.E. Mrs Beata Stoczynska and H.E. Mr Leasi Papalii Scanlan and Mrs Joyce Scanlan

Scholarship News

Two Samoan students currently sponsored by the government of Samoa have now been confirmed to receive gold medal awards from the University of the South Pacific in Fiji.

Ms Jenny Bennett-Tu'i'onetoa will be receiving the following awards:

- ◆ Gold Medal and Prize for the most outstanding Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Education graduate in the Faculty of Arts, Law and Education.
- ◆ Gold Medal and Prize for the most outstanding graduate with a major in Literature & Language.

Ms Ruth Ueselani will be receiving the following award:

- ◆ Gold Medal and Prize for the most outstanding MBA graduate. (joint award)

News from Samoa Mission in Japan

Presentation of Credentials to the President of the Republic of the Philippines **8 January 2014, Manila, Philippines**

The Ambassador of Samoa to Japan, H.E. Leiautaua Dr. Kilifoti Eteuati travelled to the Philippines to present his Letters of Credence to H.E. Benigno S. Aquino III, President of the Republic of the Philippines.

The Presentation of Credentials Ceremony took place on 8th January 2014 at the Rizal Hall Malacañan Palace in Manila, Philippines. Ambassador Eteuati is now the non-resident Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Independent State of Samoa to the Republic of the Philippines.



The Ambassador of Samoa to Japan, H.E. Leiautaua Dr. Kilifoti Eteuati presents his Letters of Credence to the President of the Philippines, H.E. Benigno S. Aquino III

Samoa Embassy in Japan donates water tanks and machinery parts for virgin coconut and fetau oil production in Samoa

The Embassy of Samoa in Tokyo continues to actively participate in the Asia Pacific Ladies Friendship Society's (ALFS) fundraising events which involve an Annual Bazaar and Golf tournament. Proceeds of the fundraising are shared among participating Asia-Pacific Embassies to donate to charitable work, in respective countries, that encourages and supports the well-being and

welfare of women and children.

The Samoa Embassy's 2013 share was used to buy six (6) water tanks for the Samoan fine mat weavers in Savaii and machinery parts for the production of the virgin coconut oil and fetau oil. This assistance was channeled through the Women in Business Development Group in Samoa which also monitored these projects.

This is the third donation from the ALFS (since the Samoa Embassy became a member in 2010) which has assisted community projects in Samoa. The first donation helped fund the public awareness campaign in the early set-up phase of the Samoa Cancer Society. The second donation was used to buy 25 Singer sewing machines to assist the Satalo village's sewing project monitored by the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development.

This is part of the Samoa Embassy staff outreach and direct interaction with the Japanese community in a concerted effort to raise Samoa's very low profile in Japan, and does not involve the government of Japan. This assistance will be provided every year for approved projects in Samoa.

Johoku Shinkin Bank in Japan donates "Love Commons" gift to the Primary Schools in Samoa

At the beginning of 2014, the Johoku Shinkin Bank in Japan sent a consignment of 1000 quality exercise books and 3000 pencils to the Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture in Apia, for the school children of Samoa. This generous gift was the result of consultations between the Johoku Shinkin Bank and staff members of the Embassy of Samoa in Tokyo.

Two years ago, the Johoku Shinkin Bank management decided to support children overseas through a project called "Love Commons Japan" providing assistance to institutions which deal with the educational, health and social welfare of children in

developing countries.

The school children of Samoa were amongst the first beneficiaries of this gift from the Johoku Shinkin Bank. Ambassador Eteuati sincerely thanked the President and Management of the Bank for the kind donation to Samoa's school children.

This is another outcome of the Samoa Embassy outreach to the Japanese community, not involving the Japanese government. The continuation of this assistance depends on its efficient and equitable handling by the educational authorities in Samoa.

Samoa Embassy and Samoan Community in Japan host Manu Samoa Team

The Manu Samoa 7s rugby team competed in the HSBC Sevens Tournament that was held in Tokyo, Japan on 22nd and 23rd March 2014.

After the tournament, the Embassy of Samoa and Samoan community in Japan hosted a farewell dinner for the Manu Samoa management and team before they departed for Hong Kong the next day. Head Coach Viliamu Punivalu thanked the Embassy and Samoan community for their generous hospitality and tremendous support for the Manu Samoa particularly during the Manu Samoa games.



Manu Samoa Rugby Sevens Team in Tokyo, Japan – 23 March 2014

Publisher:
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