



Foreign Affairs & Trade Bulletin

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

July to September 2015

Trade Division

Pacific Island Countries Trade Agreement (PICTA) Review 31st August – 4th September 2015

The Pacific Island Forum Secretariat (PIFS), through the Economic Governance Program under the Hub and Spokes II initiative contracted the services of Regional Trade Adviser, Dr. Samuel Scott and National Trade Adviser Mr. Stephen Musubire, to undertake a review of the Pacific Island Countries Trade Agreement (PICTA). The objective of the review is to take stock of the progress as well as challenges encountered by the key stakeholders and implementing agencies since the entry into force of the agreement in 2003. The review also looked at an analysis of export/import data to see whether trade is actually occurring under PICTA and to assess the capacity of implementing agencies as well as recommending ways to improve such services. The final report is expected to provide concrete recommendations on how Samoa could overcome the challenges and further benefit from trading under PICTA. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade coordinated in country consultations with key stakeholders to facilitate and assist the consultant in this important undertaking from the 31st August – 4th Sep-

tember 2015. A validation workshop to present the findings and recommendations from this review will be undertaken in November 2015 with all the key stakeholders consulted before the report is finalized.



PICTA Review Team

11th Intersessional Meeting for PACER Plus 4th – 7th August 2015

Officials from 14 Pacific island Countries (PICs) assembled at the Tanoa Tusitala Hotel in Apia for the 11th Intersessional meeting for PACER Plus negotiations. The meeting made considerable

progress with the conclusion of negotiations on Development Assistance, Investment and Legal & institutional Provisions. The announcement from Australia regarding improvements in its Seasonal Worker Programme has favourably addressed the long standing requests by PICs to remove caps, expand the coverage and include all PICs under PACER Plus. The PICs have agreed in principle to the Labour Mobility arrangement provided that New Zealand improves its Recognized Seasonal Employer and Christchurch Rebuild schemes. With regards to Trade in Goods and Trade in Services, Parties have agreed to table the first round of market access offers for discussion and Samoa has compiled its initial offers based on WTO Services Schedule, PICTA Commitments, EPA market access offers as well as national consultations and will present these at the next intersessional meeting.

In noting the substantive progress made in the negotiations, it is hoped that the Parties exercise the necessary flexibility to facilitate the rapid conclusion of PACER Plus at the latest, by September 2016, and enter into force in early 2017. Australia will host the 12th Intersessional meeting and associated workshops in Melbourne from 5-9 October 2015.

Samoa Embassy in Wellington

Double Tax Agreement Signed in Apia 8 July 2015

Prime Minister John Key during his visit to Samoa 8th July 2015 signed a double-tax agreement with his counterpart Prime Minister Tuilaepa Lupe-soliai Sailele Malielegaoi. The DTA was first raised by the High Commissioner Leasi Papalii Scanlan in 2012 to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Hon Bill English with the intention to increase trade and investment between New Zealand and Samoa and reduce tax obligations for both countries during these exchanges. After much negotiation with the Inland Revenue Department of New Zealand, the Double Tax Agreement was finally signed during an announcement yesterday the day of the historical match between the Manu Samoa and All Blacks. The double-tax agreement will help reduce tax barriers to two-way trade and investment by preventing cross-border income being taxed twice. Mr Key said it would help further trade relationships between the two countries and acknowledged it would be particularly beneficial for Samoa. "New Zealand is Samoa's second largest trading partner. The agreement will provide a platform for increased trade and investment between our two countries - and will help assist the economic development of our Pacific Island neighbour." The new tax agreement will come into effect later this year once all internal procedures for both countries have been finalised



Prime Minister Key and Prime Minister Tuilaepa after the signing of the double tax agreement

8th Annual Conference for New Zealand Recognised Seasonal Employment in Samoa Thursday 16th July 2015

The High Commissioner attended the 8th New Zealand-RSE Employers Conference which was held in Apia from 9-11 July 2015. The first time the annual meeting has been hosted outside of New Zealand. Opening the conference with a well-received address by Prime Minister Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi who had extended the hosting invitation to the RSE Employers during last year's Conference in Wellington. Prime Minister Tuilaepa shared in his address that RSE Scheme will continue to provide a solid foundation for continuous development of a strong and productive relationship between the labour receiving

countries and their respective horticultural industries, and the Pacific island sending countries and Government agencies. The Prime Minister also spoke of Samoa's experiences with the RSE Scheme. "With this Conference taking place in Samoa, this will provide you and the New Zealand Government the opportunity to view tangible examples of how our seasonal workers utilize their hard-earned income, to improve their lives and their communities through improved infrastructure such as schools and church facilities. From Samoa's perspective, the Scheme is an answer to the ills of labour shortage for your industries, while at the same time enabling Pacific workers to enter, work and earn in New Zealand." New Zealand's Minister of Immigration, Michael Woodhouse, also addressed the conference and touched on the financial gains of the workers as a result of the employment programme. Forty-five million from RSE Workers have made it back home to the islands. Other important developments in the last year include an increase from 8000 to 9000 for the cap on workers as well as the landmark inclusion of Fiji following democratic elections. The invaluable role by countries such as Samoa to the continued success of the employment programme is important to note, Mr Woodhouse also noted that there are greater numbers of workers returning to New Zealand each season, and highlighted an Employers Survey that showed almost all RSE Employers believed that the benefits of the Scheme far outweighed the costs. The NZ-RSE Employers Con-

ference, attended by close to 200 participants, was held at the TATTE Convention Centre at Sogi, with the programme including a special day dedicated to visiting rural communities in Aleipata, Falealili, Lefaga and communities in Savaii.



Prime Minister Tuilaepa with Minister of Immigration and RSE Hon Woodhouse

Prime Minister Tuilaepa attends Annual Pip Fruit Conference Wellington

The Prime Minister of Samoa Hon Tuilaepa Lupe-soliai Sialele Malielegaoi was in Wellington last week as guest speaker for the Annual Pip Fruit Conference. The Conference was discussing the challenges of balancing the industry's demand for labour, while meeting the Government's requirements of using New Zealand workers first. Pip Fruit Inc is an industry association that represents close to 5,500 New Zealand commercial fruit growers and vegetable growers which provides around 50,000 jobs and exporting to more than 120 countries. The New Zealand Pip Fruit Inc and Horticulture New Zealand is valued at more than 5 billion. The Prime Minister in his address stated that because of the rapid growth of the industry, it will require a larger labour force for harvesting and Samoa and other Pacific countries are able to provide this assistance. The Recognised Seasonal Employment (RSE) held its 8th Annual Conference in Samoa in July this year and it opened discussion for workers from the Pacific Islands, to help with

planting, picking, packing and pruning in the horticulture and viticulture industries. There are more than 1000 seasonal workers that come from Samoa and Prime Minister Tuilaepa Sialele Malielegaoi said the "scheme allowed workers to earn more money that were able to build new homes, improve their old foles, some bought taxis and operator businesses, others have improved the education of their children, there have been community projects that have been built from money contributed by those who came, and other have been able to be the usual possessions of modern day living - a television, a car, a refrigerator, a washing machine." The Prime Minister was accompanied by the High Commissioner Leasi Papalii Scanlan, Mr Aiono Mose Pouvi Sua, CEO, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Ms Vaosa Epa, CEO, Ministry of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.



Prime Minister Tuilaepa addresses the Pip Fruit Conference

Pacific Police Train the Trainers Course, Royal New Zealand Police College, Porirua New Zealand

High Commissioner Leasi attended the official closing of the Pacific Police Train the Trainers Course at the Royal New Zealand Police College in Porirua on Friday, 25 September 2015. The two week course introduces police officers to upskilling and deliver 'fit for purpose' training in the

context of Partnership for Pacific Policing Programme (3P). The High Commissioner congratulated the police officers and presented the Certificates to the police officers who attended the course from Kiribati, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Is, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and Samoa. Three Samoan police officers completed the course and were pleased to be part of this important programme..



High Commissioner Leasi with the Police Officers from Samoa

Tauvaga Lauga Aoga Tulaga Lua Aukilani 2015

Na tatalaaloai'a e le Afioga i le Komesinaia Leasi Papalii Scanlan le Tauvaga Lauga a Aoga Tulaga Lua ile Gagana Samoa a i Aukilani ile Aso 29 Iulai 2015. O le Afiogaia Leasi ole fa'atamā lea ole faalapotopotoga ale FAGASA i Niusila. Safa'atumulia le faamoemoe ma safaatasia le tele o alo ma fa-nauaemaise lelagolagosua a tamali'i ma tulafale o lo'oalala ma papa'a'aoitotonu o Niu Silanei. O le autu o le tauvagaileneitausagaia "Tautuaneimosou Taaao Manuia". Sasaunua le Afiogaia Leasi ile taua ole olatautu ai Aiga, Ekalesia, Nuu ma le Atunuu e fai lea ma tupuaga o manuia. O le faamoemoe ma le aano o iatavagaileneitausagaia saga faaolaolaina ma faamausaliina pea le Gagana Samoa auatupulagatalavou o loo aumau i Niu Sila. Uatalaiainafoi e le Afiogaia Alii Palemia le aveaa ole FAGASA ma se tasi o fa'alapotopotoga ole auuailalo ole Komisi a le Gagana Samoa o lo'o faamautu i Samoa.

Samoa Embassy in Tokyo

Johoku Shinkin Bank in Japan plans to donate the third "Love Commons" gift to Primary Schools in Samoa

The Johoku Shinkin Bank in Japan will be sending a donation containing 1,000 exercise books and 3,000 pencils for the school children of Samoa in early 2016. This is the 3rd consecutive year this Bank has given stationery donations to Samoa under its "Love Commons" program for selected developing countries. This year's donation for Samoa would also include clothes.

At a meeting with the General Manager, Communication Development Division and three other senior executives of the Johoku Shinkin Bank on 24th September 2015, Ambassador Faalavaau conveyed the government of Samoa's deep appreciation to the Bank for the 3rd donation, which would be valuable contributions to teaching resources in Samoa's education sector when the new academic year starts in February next year. The Embassy will continue to work with the Bank executives on the logistics of the consignment so they would arrive in Samoa in time.

This donation and like the previous two consignments, is the result of ongoing consultations and close working relationship the Embassy of Samoa in Japan has with some members of the Japanese business community and it does not involve the Government of Japan.



L-R: Iyo-san, Ambassador's secretary; Rapture Pagaialii, Counsellor, Mr. Sakamaki, General Manager, Communication Development Division of the Johoku Shinkin Bank, Ambassador Faalavaau, and senior staff members of the Bank

Japan's Prime Minister, Honourable Shinzo Abe hosts dinner reception for Female Ambassadors in Tokyo

On 24 August 2015, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe hosted a dinner reception for the female Ambassadors in Japan in the wings of the World Conference on Women (WAW), the 2nd such conference to be hosted by Japan. Women empowerment and gender equality is one of the priority areas for Prime Minister Abe's government. Each Ambassador was

invited to say a few words on recent initiatives in their countries to promote women empowerment and gender equality.

Ambassador Faalavaau focused her comments on the recent enactment by Parliament of a constitutional amendment that would ensure ten percent women representation in Samoa's Parliament, to be executed in the next general election in 2016. She also highlighted the important role of women in implementing public-private partnerships for national economic growth as well as in community and grass roots development.

Of the 19 female Ambassadors in Tokyo, 13 were present at the dinner reception. Also present was Honourable Haruko Arimura, Japanese Minister for Women Empowerment.



Prime Minister Abe (centre), Minister Arimura (left of Mr Abe) with 13 of the 19 female Ambassadors to Japan

Embassy of Samoa and Samoan community in Japan attend the Pacific Roots Fest in Yokohama, Japan, 7-9 August 2015

The Embassy of Samoa in Tokyo, Japan participated in the Pacific Roots FEST 2015, an outdoor music and cultural festival to promote cultural awareness of the Pacific region, which was held from 7 to 9 August 2015 in Yokohama, Kanagawa Prefecture, Japan. The Festival was held in conjunction with Japan's largest outdoor Hawaiian festival, Aloha Yokohama 2015. Both events drew more than 10,000 visitors over the three days. Ambassador Faalavaau and staff of the Embassy participated in the festival for the first time and set up a booth to display, sample and promote Samoan products and handicrafts with a view to ascertaining trade and investment interest in our products. The Samoan nonu juice and canned palusami received positive feedback. It was also an opportunity to provide more information on Samoa as a tourist destination, the travel routes to Samoa and to finding nice spots in Samoa to spend a holiday. In collaboration with the Embassy, the Samoan Nippon Community in Japan performed various cultural dances.



The staff of the Embassy and members of the Samoan Nippon Community in Japan at the Pacific Roots Fest in Yokohama

Japan donates fire-fighting trucks to Samoa

The Samoa Fire and Emergency Services Authority (SFESA) received 4 fire-fighting trucks, valued at USD 77,171 from the Society for Promotion of Japanese Diplomacy (SPJD) to support the Authority's capabilities to respond to fire emergencies in the country. Following regular consultations and discussions with the Embassy of Samoa in Japan and with funding support from Japan's Grant As-

sistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects provided through the Embassy of Japan in Samoa, the four emergency vehicles arrived in Samoa on 4th July. A handing over ceremony took place at the SFESA office on 17 July 2015. This is the second donation of reconditioned emergency vehicles to be donated to SFESA by The Society. Pipeline projects that have been discussed between the Embassy of Samoa in Japan and SPJD include ambulances and other medical items for the health sector as well as a mobile library for the education sector.



Handing over ceremony at the SFESA headquarters. (Photo courtesy of: Talamua Media and Publications Ltd).

Samoa Mission to the UN in New York

Prime Minister addresses the Security Council, 30 July 2015

The Prime Minister, Honourable Tuilaepa Lupe-soliai Sailele Malielegaoi, addressed the Security Council on 30 July 2015 during an Open debate on the Peace and Security Challenges facing Small Island Developing States (SIDS). The debate was an opportunity to highlight specific challenges and vulnerabilities in the context of international peace and security, and to exchange views with Council members and other Members on how to effectively respond to these challenges.

The Open Debate was chaired by H.E. Murray McCully, New Zealand's Foreign Minister and the briefers included Samoa's Prime Minister, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, H.E. Ms. Portia Simpson Miller, Prime Minister of Jamaica, and H.E. Mr. Jean-Paul Adam, Minister of Finance of Seychelles. The text of the Prime Minister's address is available for viewing on the Ministry website.

Parliamentary Speakers from around the world and focused on the theme of peace, democracy and development seen through the parliamentary lens. The Conference was part of a series of high-level meetings leading up to the UN Sustainable Development Summit.



The Speaker was accompanied by his spouse, Mrs. Heather Tupea Schmidt.

United Nations Sustainable Development Summit 2015 and UNGA 70th session

The Prime Minister headed Samoa's delegation to the United Nations 70th session and attended the United Nations Summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda which convened on 25 September to 27 September 2015. His Holiness Pope Francis delivered an address to the General Assembly immediately before the adoption of the Post-2015 development agenda and the Prime Minister delivered his address on 26 September 2015.

The Prime Minister participated in a number of meetings and side events related to the Sustainable development summit and the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway. Samoa also deposited its Instrument of Ratification to the **Minamata Convention on Mercury** on 24 September 2015 during the Special High-level event on the promotion of environmental protection through the early entry into force and effective implementation".

The Prime Minister delivered Samoa's National Statement at the General Debate of the UN General

Assembly on 30 September 2015. The full text of the statement is available for download on the Ministry website.

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Throughout the UNGA high-level segment, the Prime Minister participated and delivered remarks at the following events:

- ◆ AOSIS Ministerial Meeting, 24 September 2015
- ◆ Special High-level event entitled, "The Minamata Convention on Mercury: Promoting environmental protection through early entry into force and effective implementation", 24 September 2015
- ◆ High-level Roundtable on South-South Cooperation hosted by the President of the People's Republic of China, H.E. Mr. Xi Jinping, 26 September 2015
- ◆ Global Leaders Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: A Commitment to Action, 27 September 2015
- ◆ SIDS Lighthouses Initiative: Renewable Energy & the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, co-hosted by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of New Zealand and Director-General of IRENA, 27 September 2015
- ◆ SIDS Resilience Meeting hosted by the Prime Minister of Barbados, 28 September 2015
- ◆ Oceans 14: Implementing the SAMOA Pathway and SDG14 by SIDS through Public-private partnerships, Hosted by The Netherlands and OHRLLS, 28 September 2015
- ◆ Promotion of the Ratification of the Crimes of Aggression under the Rome Statute, hosted by Prime Minister Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi and Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Liechtenstein and Uganda, 29 September 2015
- ◆ Making it happen: Transitioning from MDGs to SDGs in Asia the Pacific, high-level event co-hosted by ESCAP-ADB-UNDP, 29 September 2015
- ◆ SIDS Dock launching Ceremony, 30 September 2015



Hon. Tuilaepa Lupe-soliai Sailele Malielegaoi addressing the Security Council, UN Photo/Amanda Voisard

4th World Conference of Speakers of Parliament, 31 August to 1 September 2015

The Speaker of Parliament, Honourable Laauliole-malieta Leuatea Schmidt, visited New York to participate in the 4th World Conference of Speakers of Parliament which took place at the United Nations Headquarters from 31 August to 1 September 2015. The Conference brought together

ber 2015

- ◆ Pacific Island Forum Leaders Meeting with Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, 1 October 2015



Samoa deposits its Instrument of Ratification to the Minamata Convention on Mercury, 25 September 2015



Prime Minister and Good Lady attend President Obama and Michelle's reception in honour of the UNGA 70th session, 28 September 2015



Prime Minister addresses the UN General Assembly during the General Debate of the 70th session, 30 September 2015, Photo credit: UN Photo

Political, International Relations and Protocol Division

Visiting VIPs

- ◆ Delegation from Guangdong: Official visit for bilateral meetings: 29-31 July 2015.
- ◆ H.E. Mr. Qi Xuchun, Vice Chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Committee (CPPCC), accompanied by 15 member delegation, 16-18 August 2015.
- ◆ H.E. Ms. Rosaura Leonara Rueda, Ambassador of Mexico, Opening of Honorary Consul Office, 8-11 July 2015.

Ministers that attended the Commonwealth Youth Minister's Meeting (CYMM) and Commonwealth Youth Games:

- ◆ Hon. Jimson Fiau Tanaganda, Minister of Solomon Islands
- ◆ Hon. Laisenia Tuitukou, Minister of Fiji
- ◆ Hon. Toara Daniel, Minister of Vanuatu
- ◆ Hon. Dr. Saia Piukala, Minister of Tonga

Farewell Visits

- ◆ H.E. Fernando Escalona, Ambassador of Argentina, 13-15 August 2015.
- ◆ H.E. Ms. Virginia Benavidez, Ambassador of the Philippines, 26-28 August, 2015

Delegation from Shenzhen. Signing of Sister City Agreement with Apia. 30 August- 1 September 2015.

Shenzhen, a major city in southern China has established city relations with Apia. A delegation led by Mr. Zhu Tingfeng, Deputy Secretary of the Municipal government, met with the Prime Minister, Hon. Tuilaepa Lufesoliali Malielegaoi to sign sister city agreement between the two cities. This is the first sister city agreement Apia has signed with an overseas city. The establishment of relations of the two cities will provide a platform for cultural, tourism, trade and investment links between the two cities.

Shenzhen with a population of 13 million is one of the largest cities in China with a large manufacturing base. It hosts some of the biggest technology companies in the world, such as Huawei and ZTE. In 2014, Shenzhen replaced Hong Kong to become China's most competitive city based on livability, business advantages and sustainability.

It is also an important city in the implementation of China's belt and road initiatives announced by President Xi Jinping in 2013, to build trade investment and financial cooperation as well as cultural exchanges between Asia-Pacific, Europe and Africa.



(L to R) H.E. Tapusalaia Terry Toomata, Ambassador of Samoa to China, H.E. Mr. Zhu Tingfeng, Deputy Secretary, Prime Minister, Hon. Tuilaepa Lufesoliali Malielegaoi and Mr. Liu Yang of the Embassy of China. Photo by: Savali News

Presentation of Credentials:

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

- ◆ H.E. Dato Lim Kim Ambassador of Malaysia, 23rd July 2015.
- ◆ H.E. Ms. Ntombizodwa M. Lallie, Ambassador of South Africa, 28th of July 2015.

- ◆ H.E. Mr. Wang Xuefeng, Ambassador for the People's Republic of China, 15th of September 2015.



Presentation of Credentials: His Highness, Tui Atua Tamasese Efi, Her Highness, Masiofo Filifilia Tamasese, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China, H.E. Mr. Wang Xuefeng and spouse, Madame Tong Xin Photo by: Savali News



Presentation of Credentials: His Highness, Tui Atua Tamasese Efi (Centre), the Ambassador of Malaysia, H.E. Dato Lim Kim and her official Photo by: MFAT

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