



# Foreign Affairs & Trade Bulletin

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

October - December 2015

## Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, 27 – 29 November 2015, Valletta, Malta



Commonwealth Leaders

The Honourable Prime Minister participated in the CHOGM which was convened under the theme “The Commonwealth: Adding Global Value” with the aim of addressing issues of common concern and effecting tangible benefits to the peoples of the Commonwealth.

Top on the agenda was the issue of climate change which culminated in the Leaders’ Declaration on Climate Change. Also discussed were the issues of peace and security especially the fight against extremism and terrorism. To this end Leaders welcomed the establishment of the Commonwealth Countering Violent Extremism Unit.

CHOGM also welcomed the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on financing. The conservation and sustainable use of oceans, seas and marine resources was highlighted as was the issue of migration. The vulnerability of small states which comprise 31 of the 53 members states of the Commonwealth was emphasised especially with respect to climate change. Commonwealth Leaders also elected the Rt. Hon Patricia Scotland QC as the new Secretary-General from 1 April 2016.

## COP21 Leaders’ Event, 30 November 2015, Paris, France

Prime Minister Tuilaepa Lufesoliai Sailele Malielegaoi led Samoa’s delegation to the United Nations 2015 Paris Climate Conference which commenced with the Leaders’ Event on 30 November 2015.

Addressing the leaders of the world present at the Event, Prime Minister Tuilaepa’s message was simple. The outcome of Paris through a legally binding and universal international climate change agreement should keep global warming levels preferably below 1.5 degrees celsius. The continuing existence of low lying islands in the Pacific is in grave doubt without this.



Prime Minister Tuilaepa Lufesoliai Sailele Malielegaoi led Samoa’s delegation to the United Nations 2015 Paris Climate Conference

## WTO Ministerial Conference, Nairobi Kenya December 2015



Samoa Delegation L-R: Henry Tunupopo, Nella Levy, Afioga Soalo Mene (Associate Minister Commerce, Industry & Labour) and Pulotu Lyndon Chiu Lin

The Tenth Ministerial Conference was the first WTO conference held on the African Continent. As a result, the development dimension of the Doha Development Agenda was the central pillar of the elements that were discussed in the Nairobi package. Leading up to this Ministerial, WTO members had been working hard, *continued page 2.*

Prime Minister Tuilaepa referred to the negligible contribution of SIDS to the causes of climate change yet the same countries are at the frontline of its devastating impacts. Nevertheless, in recognition of national and international ambitious actions, Samoa has committed through its Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) to reduce green house gas emissions from the electricity sector through the adoption of a 100% renewable energy target by 2025. The achievement of this ambitious target, of course, requires durable and successful partnerships.

At the United Nations’ Secretary General, Ban Ki Moon’s High Level Meeting on Climate Resilience, also in Paris on 30th November 2015, Prime Minister Tuilaepa further highlighted the importance of ‘resilience’ for SIDS and provided concrete examples of important projects and initiatives implemented by the Pacific region to enhance resilience and strengthen adaptation in the context of sustainable development.

## Audience with His Holiness Pope Francis, 3 December 2015, Holy See

The Prime Minister of Samoa, Honourable Tuilaepa Lufesoliai Sailele Malielegaoi, met with His Holiness Pope Francis, at the Vatican on 3 December 2015. This was the first audience of the Prime Minister with His Holiness Pope Francis since he began his papacy on 13 March 2013. Prime Minister Tuilaepa shared with His Holiness *continued pg 2*

**Audience with His Holiness Pope Francis,  
3 December 2015, Holy See**

Continued from page 1...Some aspects of Samoa's social and economic situation, the valued contribution of the Catholic Church in various sectors of Samoan society including education; the impact of climate change on Samoa and associated environmental problems; as well as the importance of a positive outcome of the Paris Conference for small island states.



*Prime Minister of Samoa and His Holiness Pope Francis*

Following the Papal audience, Prime Minister Tuilaepa also met with the Secretary of State of the Holy See, His Eminence Cardinal Secretary of State Pietro Parolin.

**Meeting with the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs**

While in Rome, Prime Minister Tuilaepa met with the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Honourable Paolo Gentiloni, on Friday 4 December 2015 at the premises of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

Amongst issues included in their cordial exchange, Prime Minister Tuilaepa shared Samoa's climate change concerns and goals for COP21, our interest in sports particularly rugby, religion, Samoa's FAO permanent representation, Samoa's Honorary Consul General in Rome and the seasonal working schemes in Australia and New Zealand.

Honourable Gentiloni referred to their favourable consideration of Samoa's requests on matters relating to Samoa's Honorary Consul General Office in Rome; Italy's candidacy for the UN Security Council; and a bilateral interest to collaborate with Samoa in the future.

**Ambassador of Samoa to Italy presents his credentials to FAO**

His Excellency Fatumanava III Dr. Paolelei Luteru, Ambassador of Samoa to Italy, presented his Letter of Credence to the FAO Director General Jose Graziano da Silva as Samoa's Permanent Representative to FAO. Ambassador Luteru, who is based in Brussels, has subsequently appointed Samoa's Honorary Consul General in Rome, Papalii Giovanni Caffarelli, as the Alternate Permanent Representative. Papalii becomes the first ever FAO delegate from a Pacific Island country to

be based in Rome.



*photo courtesy of FAO*

Further, Samoa is the 3rd Pacific Island Country to have a Permanent Representative to FAO, joining Fiji and Tonga with permanent representation in Brussels and London, respectively.

The ceremony was held in the margins of the 153rd session of the FAO Council and was attended by the the Minister of Agricultural, Honourable Le Mamea Ropati Mualia; and Mr Leota Pelesa of the Ministry of Agriculture.

With permanent representation in Brussels and a Rome-based delegate, Samoa's presence and active participation in the work of FAO, is expected.

**Meeting with Representatives of the Order of Malta**



*Prime Minister Tuilaepa and H.E. Geoffrey D Gamble*

Prime Minister Tuilaepa held a courtesy meeting with H.E. Geoffrey D. Gamble, Member of the Council of the Sovereign Order of Malta, and representatives, while in Rome. Prime Minister Tuilaepa shared with the Order the history of Samoa and the road to independence under colonial administration and several aspects of Samoa's strategic economic objectives, religion, health, education, and culture.

The Order of Malta is a non-denominational global institution operating medical, social and humanitarian projects in over 120 countries through more than five hundred hospitals around the world. Malteser International is the international humanitarian relief agency of the Sovereign Order of Malta which has provided relief to people worldwide affected by poverty, disease, conflict and disaster.

The objective of the meeting was to initiate discussions on potential future cooperation.

**4th France – Oceania Summit, 26 November 2015, Paris, France**

Prime Minister Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi attended the 4th France – Oceania Summit hosted by the President of France, François Hollande, and also took the opportunity to discuss further collaboration between Samoa and France as well as the wider Pacific region.

The Declaration of the 4th France-Oceania Summit focussed on climate change and sustainable development. Specifically, the Pacific Leaders highlighted the fact that the Pacific Island Countries are among the most vulnerable in the world and that the impact of climate change threatens their territorial integrity, food security, water health, infrastructure, livelihoods economies and broadly their populations and ecosystems.

The Leaders called for the outcome of the 21st Conference of Parties (COP 21) in Paris, to be a legally binding agreement, which would include key elements that are critical to the Pacific countries such as keeping greenhouse gas emission to below 1.5 degree, inclusion of loss and damage, building resilience against climate change impacts as well as direct access to funding for adaptation and mitigation in relation to the effects of climate change.

The Summit noted France's confirmation that the French Global Environment Facility (FGEF/FFEM), in partnership with the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), will launch a project on climate change resilience in 2016. In order to support SPREP more effectively, France will also assign a new seconded expert to Apia in 2016.

On Sustainable Development, the Leaders recognised the framework for implementing poverty elimination and sustainable development actions, including the SAMOA Pathway. Leaders further recognised the importance of integrated approaches, cooperation, capacity building, information sharing in ocean management, in particular. The Leaders recognized the value of further strengthening the relationship between Oceania and France and the French territories of Oceania through regular dialogue and meetings, including the organisation of the 5th France-Oceania Summit. The commitment to hold biennial high-level talks between France and the Pacific Islands Forum Chair was acknowledged.

**WTO Ministerial Conference,  
Nairobi Kenya December 2015**

*Continued from pg 1*

although neglected two deadlines to reach key deliverables in the Ministerial mandate from the Bali Package in 2013. Amongst these key



issues, the Agreement on Trade Facilitation made some considerable progress in the period, and Samoa has notified the WTO on its readiness to roll out some of the components of this agreement at the national level.

Because of the varied interests of the Developed and Developing members of the WTO, reaching consensus on key issues has been a real challenge. There were various submissions by different groupings, including the ACP, G-90, LDCs etc on elements where expectations were high for outcomes from the meeting. Some of these LDCs issues include the Duty Free Quota Free access, the services waiver for LDC services exports and preferential rules of origin. The issue of the prohibition of fisheries subsidies to IUU fishing and over-fishing was also a key concern for Samoa as outlined in the ACP and Peru proposals submitted to the WTO.

By the end of the meeting, the decision remained to continue the regular work of the WTO as well as the negotiations to continue on the elements endorsed in the Ministerial Declaration. The Fisheries subsidies and development aspects of the Special Differential treatment proposals were not included, however issues of importance to Samoa and the Pacific WTO countries such as preferential Rules of Origin and preferential treatment in LDC Services are on the table. The reaffirmation of the work of Small and Vulnerable Economies by members of the WTO is a notable mention considering some members had fought to remove any reference to SVEs in the work going forward.

Samoa's delegation was headed by Mene So'alo, Associate Minister for Commerce, Industry and Labour. So'alo spoke about the Samoa's progress post WTO accession, the significance of Aid for Trade and in particular Enhanced Integrated Framework to Samoa's trade portfolio, and called on WTO members to continue the work of the Doha, to maintain development at its core and positive consideration of issues that are real to Samoa, and the Pacific.

**Third Meeting of the Two Samoas' Economic Integration Initiative, 17-18 December 2015**



**Officials from American Samoa and Samoa. Utulei Am. Samoa**

Public and Private sector stakeholders representing the two Samoas met in American Samoa in mid-December for the Third Meeting of

the Two Samoas' Economic Integration Initiative. The key objective of the two-day meeting was to advance with the discussions on the work plan and steps forward for the development of a Trade and Investment Agreement that will benefit the two countries in the future. The Meeting was co-chaired by Fuiavailili Keniseli Lafaele, Director of American Samoa's Department of Commerce (DOC) and Peseta Margaret Malua, Chief Executive Officer of Samoa's Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour.

The five key areas of discussion agreed upon for continued cooperation and to be explored further in a Trade Agreement are: Trade in Goods, Fisheries, Trade in Services, Investment, and the Institutional Framework of the prospective Initiative. The meeting concluded with the adoption of an Outcomes Document highlighting the main issues to be addressed and the work that the special joint working committees will undertake and finalize before the next talks. The Fourth Meeting of the Two Samoas' Economic Integration Initiative is tentatively scheduled to take place in the first quarter of 2016.

**Emerging Global and Regional Trade Issues for the Commonwealth Pacific Region 12-13 November, 2015.**

Samoa was represented at the meeting on Emerging Global and Regional Trade Issues for the Commonwealth Pacific Region co-hosted by the Tongan Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Commonwealth Secretariat in Nukualofa.



The objective of this two-day meeting was to build understanding of emerging trade-related developments facing the Pacific region and discuss policy options on how to address them. Emerging issues like Global Value Chain, Regionalism, Trade Facilitation and sensitive topics in the region like Climate Change, Fisheries and Trade (WTO) were some of the issues deliberated in the forum. Resource people and experts from key international and regional organizations were invited to present at the forum and contribute in the discussions.

The meeting highlighted a number of encouraging options to help address the many trade challenges faced by the Pacific. For instance, pushing for strong sub-regional cooperation to help address issues of common interest like transporting of goods; to identify key products to better integrate the region into the Global Value Chain; push for the Forum Fisheries Agency to also look at opportunities in deep sea fishing and mining; drive for a new global

agreement in climate change; WTO members in the region to help support the conclusion of outstanding DDA issues in the next WTO Ministerial meeting.

**PACER Plus Update**

A lot has happened since our last update on PACER Plus negotiations. The Pacific Island Countries (PICs) and Australia and New Zealand engaged in two intersessional meetings negotiating the remaining text of the agreement and market access offers.

The twelve intersessional meeting held in Melbourne, Australia from 6-9 October 2015 gave the opportunity to the Parties who were ready to table initial market access offers for goods, services, movement of natural persons and investment, with Samoa amongst the group to present their offers. Samoa tabled its offers after months of consultations with its private sector and relevant stakeholders building from the work already undertaken when it acceded to the World Trade Organisation.

The thirteenth intersessional meeting was held at the Tanoa International Hotel in Nadi, Fiji, 7-10 December 2015. This was held after the fifth non-state actors dialogue jointly organised by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and the Office of the Chief Trade Adviser. The dialogue was attended by members of the private sector, civil society and trade officials from forum island countries discussing the content of the PACER Plus agreement. Mr Savave Sapolu of the Samoa Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Collin Stringer of the Samoa Association of Manufacturers and Exporters and Mr Henry Tunupopo of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade were representatives from Samoa to the dialogue.

Negotiations and discussions at the 13<sup>th</sup> ISM focussed on remaining issues in the Rules of Origin chapter, temporary movement of natural persons and institutional provisions and exceptions. Other chapters that have not been closed are being set aside until all parties have tabled their market access offers. Negotiators have been urged to redouble efforts to ensure the deadline set by the Forum Leaders and Trade Ministers of June 2016 is achievable. As such, a few more parties were able to table their initial offers with the remaining ones to be expected in the next intersessional meeting. The fourteenth intersessional meeting for PACER Plus negotiations is scheduled to take place in Brisbane, Australia in early March 2016.



**5th Non State Actors (NSA) dialogue workshop on Pacer Plus, Tanoa Hotel, Nadi Fiji**

## Political, International Relations and Protocol 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. Mr. Marcus Sangiampongsa, Ambassador of Thailand, 15<sup>th</sup> of October 2015.
- ♦ H.E. Mr. Par Ahlberger, Ambassador of Sweden, 29<sup>th</sup> of October 2015

### VIP visits

- ♦ Mayor of Huizhou and delegation- sign MOUS for sister city relations: 12-14 November 2015
- ♦ High Level delegation from Wallis and Futuna- talks for cable connection: 11 November 2015
- ♦ H.E. Isauro Torres, Ambassador of Chile, 24-28 November 2015.



*Spouse of the Ambassador: Mrs. Pahlberger, Ambassador of Sweden: H.E. Mr. Par Pahlberger, His Highness, Tui Atua Tamasese Efi, Masiofo Filifilia Tamasese and children of the Ambassador*  
Photo credit: PIRPD



*Ambassador of Thailand, H.E. Mr. Marcus Sangiampongsa, His Highness, Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Efi and Masiofo Filifilia Tamasese*

Photo credit: PIRPD

## Scholarships, Training and Bilateral Division

### SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEES FOR 2016

#### INTAKE

The End of Year Reception hosted by the Prime Minister, Hon Tuilaepa Lufesoliai Sailele Malielegaoi in collaboration with the Offices of the Australian High Commission and the New Zealand High Commission for new Samoan scholarship students was held on Friday, 8<sup>th</sup> January 2016 at 10.00am at the NUS-Fale, Le Papaigalagala NUS Campus.

The purpose of the event is to congratulate new awardees and to acknowledge their hard-work and efforts in securing scholarship awards provided through funding assistance by the Governments of Australia and New Zealand for tertiary level studies at overseas Institutions in 2016.

#### Pre-departure briefings

Prior to departure for studies, the Scholarships Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade with the offices of Australian High Commission and New Zealand High Commission conducted briefings for new scholarship students. The briefing for students who will study in Fiji was held on 17 December 2015. Those heading to New Zealand and Australia were briefed on 21 December 2015 and 6 January 2016 respectively. The briefings ensure that new students (and parents) are aware and are well-informed of the scholarship conditions/requirements, Government expectations and all topical matters and issues to avoid as much as possible any disruption but to assist students to adapt easily in their new study and living environment.

For the 2016 scholarship intake, the Governments of Australia, New Zealand, and Samoa will collectively sponsor close to 90 new students. We wish them well in their studies

### Targeted scholarship awards

2016 is the second year of a three year targeted trial programme which started in 2015. The Government of Samoa together with the Governments of Australia and New Zealand embarked on placing greater emphasis on national key priority areas for the Government of Samoa, particularly the critical workforce shortages in the Education and Health sectors. The trial programme allows closer alignment of scholarship awards to Samoa's Health and Education workforce critical priority needs. A total of 22 awards from New Zealand and Australia have been targeted within the NUS Foundation and FOE programmes. Eight awards were made available to health sector, while a further fourteen awards were allocated to the Education sector for students who wish to pursue studies in teaching in the Mathematics and Science fields.

#### Scholarship Awards funded by the Government of Australia (32 awards in total)

##### Study in Australia

- ♦ 12 awardees to various institutions
- ♦ 8 Foundation students from NUS
- ♦ 4 Open Category awardees (includes in-service and private sector/civil society)

##### Study in the Region

- ♦ 20 awardees at either USP Fiji or FNU
- ♦ 15 Foundation students from NUS
- ♦ 2 Faculty of Education Foundation students from NUS
- ♦ 3 Open Category awardees

#### Scholarship Awards funded by the Government of New Zealand (53 awards in total)

##### Study in New Zealand

- ♦ 45 awards tot various institutions
- ♦ 25 Foundation students from NUS
- ♦ 12 Open Category awardees
- ♦ 7 awards for APTC graduates to pursue

higher

- ♦ qualifications
  - ♦ 1 Faculty of Education student from NUS
- Study in the Region
- ♦ 6 awardees at either USP Fiji or FNU
  - ♦ 5 Foundation students from NUS
  - ♦ 1 Faculty of Education Foundation students from
  - ♦ NUS

#### Scholarship Awards funded by the Government of Samoa (6 awards in total)

##### Study in the Region

- ♦ 1 Foundation student at USP Fiji (for students whose citizenship status rendered them ineligible for sponsorship by the Governments of Australia and New Zealand)
- ♦ Distance and Flexible Learning (on-line studies) 5 awards

Other development partners and international agencies have also played a pivotal role in providing valuable scholarship and training opportunities, reinforcing the key development priority areas of Government. This includes the Government of China, Government of Japan, WHO, Commonwealth Secretariat, USP, Victoria University of Wellington, European Union and other ad hoc scholarship offers received over the years. The Government of Samoa as recipient of such important awards acknowledges the opportunities provided to build the capacity and strengthen the skills base and knowledge of Samoa's human resource in efforts to develop and enhance a cadre of able leaders for tomorrow.

Those interested in furthering their education must continue to look out for scholarship opportunities which are advertised in the PSC circular ([www.psc.gov.ws](http://www.psc.gov.ws)), MFAT website ([www.mfat.gov.ws](http://www.mfat.gov.ws)), and local newspapers each

## New Posting to Missions

### Wellington

Ms. Belinda Filo-Tafuna'i will be the new Counsellor in the High Commission in Wellington. Ms. Tafuna'i will replace Mr. Hele Matatia who has been the Counsellor since 2011. Ms. Tafuna'i's appointment will commence 2016.

### China

Ms. Dorothy Ah Ching Meredith has been appointed as the First Secretary in the Samoa Embassy in China. She replaces Mr. Louis Ofele whom has returned to Samoa after serving five years in the post

### Student Counsellor

Ms. Aida Savea is now the new Student Counsellor in Suva Fiji. Ms. Savea has been appointed to replace Ms. Matilda Bartley who was the former Student counsellor and now returning to Samoa.