



FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE BULLETIN

Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade

July— September 2017

Pacific Island Forum Leaders Meeting 4th –8th September 2017

The Forty-Eighth Pacific Islands Forum was held in Apia, Samoa from the 4th –8th September 2017 and was attended by Heads of States, Governments, and Territories from Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, French Polynesia, Republic of Kiribati, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Republic of Nauru, New Caledonia, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. The Republic of Palau was represented by their Vice President, the Republic of Fiji was represented by the Minister for Defence and National Security, New Zealand by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Niue by the Minister for Social Services.

The theme for the 2017 Forum Leaders meeting was “The Blue Pacific– Our Sea of islands– Our security through sustainable development, management and conservation”.

Over 600 participants attended the four day regional conference which included Forum leaders’ dialogues with Associate Member, Observers, Forum Dialogue Partners, CROPHeads, Civil Society and private sector. This year’s format for the dialogues was changed to allow for more inclusive and constructive engagement with the Pacific Forum leaders. The Forum Leaders Retreat was held at Taumeasina Island Resort on the 8th September 2017. Several side events were held in the margins of the Forum meetings.



Pacific Island Forum Leaders group photo (Source: PIFS website)

United Nations General Assembly 72nd Session



Prime Minister, Hon. Tuila'epa Sailele Malielegaoi

Samoa’s Prime Minister, Hon Tuila’epa Sailele Malielegaoi led Samoa’s delegation to the 72nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly. Other members of the delegation from Apia included MFAT’s Chief Executive Officer Ms Peseta Noumea Simi and Assistant Chief Executive Officer, Ms Francella Strickland – Simonet.

The Prime Minister delivered Samoa’s national statement on 21st September 2017 which included inter alia reference to the volatile situation in the Korean Peninsula, impacts of Climate Change, the overarching theme of the Pacific Islands Forum meeting – Blue Pacific – refugees and migrants, peacekeeping and the need for effective implementation of the SAMOA Pathway

In the margins of the UNGA general debate, the Prime Minister held bilateral meetings with representatives from Indonesia and Maldives. The Honorable Prime Minister held bilaterals at the Mission office with a number of delegations on various issues from election campaigns to possible partnerships. Samoa’s delegation participated in other events during the High Level week of the United Nations General Assembly.

Iwaki City visits Samoa to build momentum towards the Rugby World Cup 2019 and Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games

As part of Japan’s hosting responsibilities for the Rugby World Cup 2019 and Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, Iwaki City in the Fukushima Prefecture was assigned to host Samoa’s Olympic team and the Manu Samoa Rugby team during the preliminary training camps for each event.

A twelve-member delegation from the city of Iwaki, Fukushima Prefecture in Japan visited Samoa from 16-21 August 2017 to meet with the Samoa Rugby Union (SRU) and launch an international exchange program between Iwaki City and Samoa to promote friendly relations, cultural appreciation and to build momentum for the Rugby World Cup 2019 and Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.

The Ministry facilitated the visit of the delegation comprised of senior officials of the Iwaki City Government who head the Culture and Sports Department, the spouse of the Honorary Consul of Samoa in Japan, and five students and teacher of Taira Commercial High School. The Iwaki City officials met with officials of the SRU to discuss hosting preparations and tour the SRU Headquarters and High Performance Unit.



Samoa to accede to the Interim EPA

In November 2016, Samoa formally communicated interest to the European Union (EU), Papua New Guinea (PNG) and Fiji to accede to the Interim Economic Partnership Agreement (iEPA). The iEPA is the trade arrangement that the EU, PNG and Fiji signed to ensure no market access disruptions to PNG and Fiji exports to the EU.

At that time, negotiations continued for a regional comprehensive EPA with all other Pacific ACP states. Pacific ACP Leaders agreed in 2016 to suspend these negotiations for three years; and encouraged individual states to explore alternative arrangements to export to the EU. For Samoa, preferential market access to the EU under the EU ‘Everything But Arms’ scheme for LDCs expires in December 2018. Samoa joining the iEPA will ensure no market access disruptions for our exports including virgin coconut oil, nonu juice and fetau oil to the EU. At the same time, consideration is also being given to the impact of BREXIT on Samoa’s market access to the UK.

Following Samoa’s interest to accede to the iEPA, representatives of the EU Directorate General for Trade conducted a mission to Samoa on 10 – 13 July 2017 to discuss Samoa’s market access offer under the iEPA and the accession process. Samoa is the first ACP country to accede to an EPA. The mission was led by Mr Moustapha Magumu, Economic and Trade Affairs Manager and accompanied by Mr David Yim, Project Officer. A forum was held on the 11th July 2017 at the TATTE Convention Centre attended by private, public and civil society stakeholders, provided an opportunity to learn about trade and investment opportunities for Samoa in the EU market.

The mission also visited local factories, manufacturing companies and facilities, to see the potential of local producers and possible exports to the EU market.

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Samoa signs the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons 20th September 2017



Prime Minister, Hon Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi during signing of Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

The Treaty to ban Nuclear Weapons was opened for signature on 20 September 2017 and the Prime Minister signed the Treaty on behalf of the Government and the people of Samoa. Samoa is a Party to the South Pacific Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty and continues to advocate for the early realization of a world without nuclear weapons. The only absolute guarantee against the use and threat of nuclear weapons is through its total elimination.

Annual Meeting of the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders with the United Nations Secretary General- 22nd September 2017

Secretary-General Antonio Guterres met with Pacific Island Forum Leaders under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi. The PIF leaders reaffirmed their support to the UNSG reform to make the UN fit for purpose and more responsive to Member State's needs in an evolving world.



Pacific Island Forum Leaders at UNSG

Second Regular Session of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

The Executive Board of the UN Women of which Samoa is a member held its Second Regular Session in August 2017, focusing mainly on the UN-Women's Strategic Plan, 2018 - 2021. Deputy Permanent Representative, Ms Miriama Betham-Malielegaoi delivered Samoa's statement and shared with Board members the United Nations Human Rights Council Independent expert group that visited Samoa earlier this year whose mandate was to assess Samoa's performance on the issue of discrimination against women. According to the expert group, while there was evidence of success, there was still work to be done to achieve gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls including in areas such as changing the mind-set of the women and their

place in society as well as the inclusion of men and boys in discussions and actions that will address these issues.

Third Conference of the State Parties for the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)

The Third Conference of the States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty met in Geneva from 11th - 15th September 2017. Samoa was represented by the Mission's First Secretary Mr Dominic Misiolo Sofe who delivered Samoa's national statement reminding the world of the huge impact of irresponsible and illicit trade in conventional weapons especially if these weapons end up in the wrong hands causing chaos wreaking havoc in societies. Japan was elected by acclamation as the President for CPS4 and has indicated their interest in hosting the CSP4 in Japan 2018.

Passing of the Buck ceremony to mark the changeover of Pacific Islands Forum Chairmanship in New York 13 September 2017

The informal ceremony to mark the official change-over of the PIF Chairmanship took place during a luncheon event hosted by outgoing Chair, Ambassador Jane Chigiya of the Federated States of Micronesia. PIF Ambassadors and their staff were on hand to witness the transfer of the Chairmanship (through the symbolic passing of a laminated dollar note) from FSM to Samoa. This is the second time that Ambassador Elisaia has assumed the Chairmanship of the 14 Pacific Islands Forum countries with Mission to the United Nations. He was Chair of PIF Group in 2004/2005.

Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention

On the 21st of September, Samoa became the 179th State Party to deposit its Instrument of Accession to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC). On June 20th, 2017, the decision of the Cabinet of the Government of Samoa approving accession to the BTWC was issued by the Office of the Cabinet. The BTWC was the first multilateral disarmament treaty banning an entire category of weapons.

Taking forward the SAMOA Pathway



Minister of Health, Hon. Tuitama Leao Tuitama

Minister of Health, Honourable Tuitama Leao Talalelei Tuitama was invited by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social

Affairs (UNDESA) to speak on the topic "Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world - Taking forward The SAMOA Pathway" as part of the official sessions of the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) on sustainable development held at the United Nations in New York from 10 to 21 July 2017.

The Minister's remarks focused on Samoa's experience in addressing "non communicable diseases" (NCDs) and he also highlighted some of the Pacific region's approaches and frameworks to strengthen health systems by focusing in particular on primary health care and universal health coverage to help improve coverage, access and quality of care for NCD management in the region.

10 Years Anniversary for the Recognised Seasonal Employer Programme - 4th July 2017

On the 4th July 2017, Immigration New Zealand (INZ) joined with the Pacific leaders, horticulture and viticulture industry leaders to celebrate 10 years of the innovative and world-leading Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment premises in Wellington, New Zealand. The RSE scheme was established in 2007 and allows the horticulture and viticulture industries to recruit workers from overseas for seasonal work when there are not enough New Zealand workers to service these industrial sectors.

Over the last ten years, the scheme has grown not only in the number of participant employers and workers, but in economic benefits that have gone beyond New Zealand to the wider Pacific. Through the Strengthening Pacific Partnerships (SPP) programme, INZ, in conjunction with NZ Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT), provides tailored assistance to each country to support their people to participate in the scheme.

This includes training Pacific Government Officials, developing websites and databases, and providing information to market Pacific workers to employers here in New Zealand. Foreign Minister Gerry Brownlee during his remarks said that due to its success, the NZ Government approved NZ\$10 million for a five-year period to explore what other sectors of the economy RSE workers might contribute to.

He said, in particular, they would be looking at opportunities for Pacific women and developing prospects in semi-skilled, higher-income occupations. He stated the new funding was in addition to the NZ\$4.9 million for the training of Pacific workers in New Zealand which is part of an arrangement around the PACER Plus trade and development deal signed in June in Tonga. All the Ministers and officials from the Pacific States of Fiji, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Tonga and Vanuatu were present to join in the celebration of 10 years of this scheme which provides work for 10,500 workers. Samoa's

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Minister of Commerce, Industry & Labour of Samoa, Hon. Lautafi Selafi Fio Purcell receiving the commemoration plaque

Minister of Commerce, Industry and Labour, Hon. Lautafi Selafi Fio Purcell accompanied by the Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour, Mr Pulotu Lyndon Chu-Ling, the Samoa High Commissioner & Dean of the Diplomatic Corp, H.E Mr Leasi Papali'i T. Scanlan and representative(s) from the Samoa High Commission in Wellington and Samoa Consulate General Office in Auckland along with Samoa's Liaison Officer attended to witness the 10 years of the RSE scheme, this programme concluded with a two-day meeting in Blenheim.

Kupe Scholarship Awards Ceremony for Maori and Pacific – 20th July 2017

Education Minister Nikki Kaye congratulated 30 highly-accomplished Māori and Pasifika student teachers who have been awarded Kupe Scholarships. The special ceremony was held at the Grand Hall of Parliament House in Wellington, New Zealand on the 20th July 2017.



Samoa High Commissioner & Dean of the Diplomatic Corps with some of the Pacific recipients of the Kupe Scholarship 2017

The prestigious scholarship aims to attract Māori and Pasifika high achievers to the teaching profession and support them to become inspiring teachers and role models in early childhood, primary and secondary education. The Kupe Scholarships fund course fees and study allowances, and offer mentoring and recruitment support after graduation. More than 90 applications were received for the 30 available scholarships. Alongside the funding, each recipient also receives taonga keepsakes in the form of a stylised paddle 'hoe' or waka / vaka / va'a as a permanent recognition of their achievements. These were presented by Associate Education Minister Tim Macindoe. The Samoa High Commissioner and Dean of the Diplomatic Corp, H.E Leasi Papali'i T. Scanlan was present to witness this special ceremony and to congratulate the Pacific scholars on their important achievement.

Visit to the Wellington Chocolate Factory – 20th September 2017

The Samoa High Commissioner, his spouse and the Counsellor represented the Samoa High Commission during a visit of the Wellington Chocolate Factory on Friday 20th September 2017. The Wellington Chocolate Factory according to its co-owners Gabe and Rochelle has been in operation for the last three years.



Mrs Joyce Scanlan, Ms Rochelle and Mr Gabe Davidson (co-owners of Wellington Chocolate Factory) and the Samoa High Commissioner, H.E Papalii T Scanlan

Whilst the business started on a small scale it has gradually built its way to where it is now due to their commitment and love for the pure aroma of the bean to bar of chocolate. The cocoa beans are all organically sourced from four regions (Peru, Dominican Republic, Samoa and Bougainville) which are then roasted, cracked, conch and tempered using artisan methods to get that rich dark chocolate taste and aroma. The chocolate bars which come in an assortment of flavours are sold widely throughout New Zealand with exports to Australia. Wellington Chocolate Factory works closely with MAIDEN SAMOA to source these cocoa beans from the village farmers to their shop here in Wellington with the key intention that these supplies from the islands continue to increase going into the future.

Book Launch of "PALEMIA"- Wellington

The book was co-written with the University of Victoria's Dr. Peter Swain. The launch of the memoir of Samoa's most successful and longest-serving Prime Minister, Tuila'epa Lupesoliai Sa'ilele Malielegaoi "PALEMIA" was held at the Hunter Council Chamber, Victoria University Wellington on Monday 7th August 2017.

New Zealand's Prime Minister, Leuluai'iotumua Bill English and Dr. Mary English joined the Prime Minister Tuila'epa Lupesoliai Sa'ilele Malielegaoi for the launch along with Members of Parliament Chris Finlayson, Alfred Ngaro and Aupito William Sio. The Minister of Communications & Information Tech-

nology, Hon. Afamasaga Lepui'ai Rico Tupai, the Samoa High Commissioner and Dean of the Diplomatic Corp, H.E Leasi Papali'i T. Scanlan, the Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry of the Prime Minister & Cabinet, Agafili Shem Leo were also present to witness the launch which was well attended by representatives from the Diplomatic Corps, staff of the Samoa High Commission, staff of Victoria University of Wellington, students and the Samoa community.



Prime Minister during book signing, Victoria University of Wellington

For the last two years, Dr. Swain during his remarks spoke about how he worked closely with the Prime Minister to capture, in his own words, his life and political reign during which Samoa transitioned from the turbulent times of a newly independent state to one of unprecedented political stability and economic development. In his humorous manner, Prime Minister Tuila'epa retold how he thought a memoir should be written at the time of one's passing and thanked Dr. Swain for his commitment, timeless energy listening, co-writing and editing the memoir which we have come to witness its launch today. Pālemia was launched earlier in Samoa in June of this year with the launch in Auckland on Thursday 10th August 2017 at S.S.A.B's Store at the Samoa Fale in Mangere.

2017/2018 Scholarship Awards to China

A total of 21 Samoan citizens secured scholarship awards to study in China in September 2017. The China Bilateral Scholarship scheme is offered on an annual basis to Samoan nationals and administered through the joint efforts of the Bilateral Relations, Scholarships and Trainings Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) of the Government of Samoa and the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Apia. More than 60 Samoan scholars are currently studying at tertiary educational institutes in China in areas ranging from architecture, tourism management, IT, accounting, civil / environmental engineering, urban planning, applied chemistry, agriculture, environmental science, radio and television, marketing and others. The 2017 / 2018 scholarship students departed Samoa on 6 September 2017 to commence their studies in China.

Coconut Industry Development Programme for the Pacific

Samoa is a beneficiary of the European Union (EU) funded Coconut Industry Development
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for the Pacific Programme (CIDP) which is being managed by the Pacific Community (SPC).

The €3.5 million programme is to be implemented over 2 years with the overall objective to *reduce rural poverty through the increasing of smallholders' food production and their derived net income.*

The aim is to improve the competitiveness of small producers engaged in the coconut value chains, through a strengthened regional integration of related markets and the intensification of production. Project programmes are implemented at the regional level; and pilot projects in Samoa and Vanuatu.

A Pacific Coconut Value Chain Workshop was held in Nadi which aimed at developing a situation analysis of the coconut industry in the Pacific that will inform the prioritization and development of key activities of the Coconut Industry Development for the Pacific Community (CIDP). The workshop participants shared experiences and prioritised capacity needs in training and research; as well as discussion of investment opportunities in the sector. For Samoa's pilot projects, the CIDP Technical Advisory Group has approved in principle support for coconut development projects from four private applicants including a proposal for coconut replanting.



Pacific Coconut Value Chain Workshop participants, Nadi Fiji

UN Missions

Special procedures Group: UN Working Group on the Discrimination Against Women in Law and Practice.



L-R: Bernadette Arditi (Human Rights Officer), Kamala Chandrakirana, (Chairperson-Rapporteur) Eleonora Zietnikska, (Member) Hannah Wu (Human Rights Officer) (Source: Samoa Observer)

Samoa hosted its first Special Procedures country visit by the Working Group on the Issue of Discrimination against Women in Law and in Practice from 8-18 August 2017.

The objective for the Working Group was to gain first-hand understanding of issues related to preventing and combatting discrimination

against women, including efforts made and challenges remaining. The Working Group also gathered information on good practices, as requested by its mandate.

During their country visit, the Working Group met with national stakeholders, civil society and non-governmental organizations involved in all aspects related to preventing and combatting discrimination against women to discuss best practices as requested by its mandate. At the end of the country visit, the Working Group provided a debriefing to the national stakeholders to share preliminary findings. These findings will be submitted as a full report to the Human Rights Council in June 2018. This will contain recommendations to support the Government of Samoa's efforts in eliminating discrimination against women in law and practice.

Convention against Torture Initiative (CTI)

In collaboration with Dr Alice Edwards, Head of the Convention against Torture Initiative(CTI) and Ms Rebecca Minty, torture prevention expert; MFAT conducted a Pre-Mission Workshop on the Convention against Torture (CAT) on the 2nd October 2017, a week prior to when the official high-level CTI working mission were due to arrive in Samoa.



L-R: Rebecca Minty, Papali'elele Niko Lee Hang, H.E. Carsten Staur, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Denmark to the United Nations, and Marc Limon (Source: Rebecca Minty)

The objectives of the workshop were to raise awareness among Samoan authorities regarding UNCAT and OPCAT (optional-CAT) obligations to open the way for more focussed discussions during the CTI diplomatic visit. The participants were mainly from government with work related to the UNCAT and OPCAT and their implementations. Dialogue amongst participants included discussions on strengths and challenges in implementing UNCAT in Samoa, and elements of a post-ratification implementation roadmap.

On 12th October 2017, Samoa hosted the visiting Convention against Torture Initiative (CTI) working group from Geneva, led by H.E. Ambassador Carsten Staur of Denmark to the UN in Geneva, accompanied by Rebecca Minty, torture prevention expert, and Marc Limon, the executive director of the Universal Rights Group. In addition to meeting with government ministries, and the Samoan civil society, the CTI held a special meeting with the National Mechanism for Reporting and Follow-Up (NMFU) Taskforce in regards to anticipating and planning for Samoa's ratification of UNCAT and OPCAT. 31 countries have yet to ratify UNCAT, most of whom are Pacific islands and Caribbean countries. H.E. Ambassador Staur conveyed a vision whereby Samoa would assume a regional and global leadership role in leading the UNCAT movement in ratifi-

cation and for Samoa to set a lead example and framework that other small island states can follow.

Visiting VIPS

Secretary General PIFS – Dame Meg Taylor 30 July – 2 Aug 2017

Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum was in Samoa to attend the Pacific Power Associations' 26th Annual Conference hosted by the Electric Power Corporation on the 1st August 2017. The Secretary General also took this opportunity to meet with the Prime Minister to consult on preparations for the 48th Pacific Island Forum and related meetings.

Indonesia: H.E. Mr Oratmangun, Indonesian Senior Advisor on Strategic Issues to the Foreign Minister 13th – 15th August

A delegation from Indonesia visited Samoa from 13th -15th August 2017 to pay official courtesy calls with government officials and dignitaries. The Head of the Delegation was the Indonesian Senior Advisor on Strategic Issues to the Foreign Minister, H.E. Mr. Oratmangun accompanied by the Ambassador of Indonesia to Samoa, H.E. Tantowi Yahya. The visit was based on furthering Samoa-Indonesia bilateral relations such as trade and investment. The Indonesian delegation also attended the 48th Pacific Island Forum in September 2017.

Presentation of Credentials

1. Ambassador of the United States of America H.E. Scott Brown based in Wellington New Zealand was in Samoa from 26th – 30th July 2017 to present his credentials to the Head of State on the 27th of July 2017
2. Ambassador of Turkey: H.E. Ahmet Ergin based in Wellington New Zealand was in Samoa from 9th – 12th October 2017 to presented his credentials to the Head of State on 10th of October 2017
3. Ambassador of Chile: H.E. Mr. Rodrigo Espinosa Marty based in Wellington New Zealand was in Samoa from 11th -13th October 2017 to present his credentials to the Head of State on 12th of October 2017

Farewell Visits:

The following ambassadors visited Samoa for their farewell calls as they complete their terms as Ambassadors to Samoa:

United Kingdom: H.E. Jonathan Sinclair, accredited March 2015

Vietnam: H.E. Mr Nguyen Viet Dung, accredited February 2015