



# Nauru Bulletin

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## President Adeang visits Fiji's Prime Minister

### Heads of State agree to focus on regional challenges

His Excellency President David W.R Adeang was in Fiji last week for official meetings with the government for discussions centering on a series of issues of common interests especially in addressing the challenges of the region.

President Adeang and the Prime Minister of Fiji Sitiveni Rabuka engaged in a bilateral meeting and discussed the pressing issues of the region and the importance of a united front in addressing the region's development challenges.

PM Rabuka acknowledged the history that Nauru stood by Fiji during its hard times when others stood back, and says given Fiji's past actions, repairing relationships affects the region overall and going forward is dependent on how firmly the region believes in the Pacific Way and reiterated his vision for an Ocean of Peace.

The two leaders discussed areas of development and cooperation that could work for both their people.

Fiji's Acting President and Acting Chief Justice His Honour Salesi Temo also met with President Adeang and discussed similar issues.

President Adeang says while the security interests of countries beyond the region are important, the focus should be on building the Pacific and focusing on its developmental challenges.

A country cannot achieve bigger ambitious targets individually, but collectively addressing an issue together is achievable.

Employment and labour mobility are shared interests of Nauru and Fiji given the number of Fiji citizens employed in Nauru's health and education sector.

His Honour Temo agrees and supports President Adeang's view to focus attention on building the Pacific region first and foremost.



*President Adeang and Fiji's Prime Minister Rabuka engaged in a bilateral meeting in Suva*

## SG Waqa sees a prosperous future for the region

The new secretary general of the Pacific Islands Forum sees a stronger bond of the PIF nations, working more closely together, collaboratively, and with development partners, based on sincerity and mutual respect.

Former Nauru president, Baron Waqa took over from outgoing SG Henry Puna on Monday 3 June.

"I hope for a region of peace, harmony, and unity, where we truly are on one heart, mind, and accord, where we promote stability and security, with a culture of love and respect.

Mr Waqa comes with a wealth of experience having been a member of the Nauru Parliament since 2003 until 2019; and as president for six years during which he was very vocal in advocating for climate action and financial support for the Pacific.

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“We will stand strong and firm together, and we will be an exemplary model of solidarity, support, and partnership,” he said.

“Our responsibility and obligation for each other’s safety, security and well-being will be emphasised.”

As SG Mr Waqa hopes in some way to raise the recognition and status of the region as a friendly, reliable partner, and an active participant globally, in particular major issues that affect the region such as climate change.

“I hope to engage development partners more fully with broader scope of projects and programmes that are flexible and sensitive to the specific needs, nature, and competencies of individual countries. This will be true empowerment giving island states full ownership of all developmental activities.”

SG Waqa also acknowledges the importance of non-traditional development partners.

“They are a great source of support as long as they are genuine and fully committed to the true development of the region and not use the opportunity to push through their own foreign interest and agenda.”

Additionally, Mr Waqa would like to see the PIF nations working more closely together to solve common challenges such as transportation, skills sharing and labour mobility in other island nations in addition to Australia and New Zealand.

As chair of the 2018 PIF leaders summit held in Nauru, leaders endorsed the joint communique, the Boe Declaration, a security commitment for member countries which Mr Waqa says needs to be brought to life and start working on strategies for implementation.

He believes extra effort is required to promote the concerns and issues highlighted in the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent.

SG Waqa underscores fast-moving security issues coming to the fore and the need for Forum countries to mobilise and share resources to address them.

These include drug related crimes, including manufacturing, trafficking, and selling are on the rise in many of PIF member states, he says.

Providing a high level of service and professionalism at the Secretariat are vital, SG Waqa says and suggests in-house staff training to sharpen and refine competencies and work values.



*A former member of the Nauru Parliament, Baron Waqa first entered politics in 2003, and served as president from 2013 to 2019*

*[Picture: PIF]*

During his two terms as president of Nauru Mr Waqa says his government was blessed to have been able to normalise and then “grow the economy to its highest level in our entire history”.

Of note is the establishment of the future fund - Intergenerational Trust Fund, and public and private sector growth, notably in the airline and fisheries sectors, and contributions to renewable energy initiatives.

The port development project, secured during the Waqa administration, remains the biggest project to date.

Mr Waqa chaired the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) from 2013 to 2014 and the Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) as well as vice president of the 70th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), and chair of PIF when Nauru hosted the 49th PIF leaders summit from 2018 to 2019.

In 2019 he received the BrandLaureate Hall of Fame lifetime achievement award, granted by the Asia Pacific Brands Foundation (APBF), in recognition of his work and leadership on climate change in his role as AOSIS chair; and the Order of Brilliant Jade by the ROC Taiwan. In 2016 he received the Order of the Grand Officer of the Star of Italy.

A teacher by profession having undertaken his training at Nasinu Teachers College in Fiji, then attained a Bachelor of Education at the University of the South Pacific, and a Master of Educational Policy and Administration at Monash University, Australia.

## Budget supplementary and supply bill

At the sitting of the Nauru Parliament on 11 June, the President and Minister for Finance David Adeang tabled the Supplementary Appropriation Bill #3, 2023-24 of \$9 million revenue, and equally for expenditure leaving a surplus balance of \$81,000.

This supplementary provides for the shift in the operational status of the Regional Processing Centre from Enduring Capability to active state as new asylum seeker arrivals recommence.

At the time of the sitting, 101 asylum seekers were on island and already going through the processing of their status.

Other expenditure includes, but not limited to, operational expenses, overseas medical referrals, and the associated cost of reinstating the use of government vehicles by public servants.

The President also tabled the Supply Bill 2024 for \$79,385,425.00.

When a budget has not been passed and certified by 10 June, Article 61.1 of the Nauru Constitution allows the Cabinet to recommend to Parliament a Supply Bill to authorise the withdrawal of money from the Treasury fund for the purpose of meeting expenditure necessary to carry on the functions of the government of the Republic of Nauru in the new financial year.

Once enacted the Supply Bill will expire on 30 September 2024, or on the passing of the Appropriation Bill 2024-25, whichever is earlier.

“The amount made available under this Supply Bill and available for the first quarter of the new financial year will be one quarter of the total appropriation for 2023-2024. Each department and head of expenditure? [1.40] of expenditure will receive an allocation based on individual operational requirements.”

The government expects that the new budget process will be completed early in the new financial year and the government will then present an appropriation bill for 2024-2025.

## President Adeang meets PIF SG Waqa

President David Adeang and the newly installed Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) Baron Waqa met for the first time since SG Waqa took office earlier this month.

The event is a historic one in many ways given that Nauru was one of the founding members of the PIF and it is the first time that a Nauruan who is also a former president, is the secretary general of the Forum. It is also President Adeang's first visit to the PIF secretariat as president.

President Adeang looks forward to SG Waqa's continued service in the region and in addressing issues such as debanking which poses a challenge for smaller economies such as Nauru. The President says while it is the responsibility of leaders to engage with the rule-makers not to discriminate against smaller economies, he sought the assistance of the PIF to engage with those who make the rules that govern banking services.

Later that evening on behalf of the President, the Nauru High Commission hosted a welcome dinner to congratulate Baron Waqa.

“This is not only a momentous occasion for Nauru but also for the entire Micronesian region, which he so admirably represents,” President Adeang said.

“Mr Waqa's journey to this esteemed role is a testament to his unwavering dedication, profound wisdom, and unyielding commitment to the Pacific Island nations.

“His leadership as president of Nauru has been exemplary, and his contributions to the development and unity of our region have been nothing short of extraordinary.”

The President says Mr Waqa's vision and leadership will be pivotal in steering the Forum to greater heights.

“Under his stewardship we look forward to strengthening our collective resolve to address critical issues such as climate change, sustainable development, economic resilience, and regional security.”

Mr Waqa's appointment is also a profound reminder of the importance of representation and inclusivity within the Pacific Forum, bringing to the fore the voices of all Pacific nations regardless of their size.

SG Waqa says he is honoured to be the first Nauruan to hold the role for secretary general of the PIF and thankful for the confidence and opportunity to represent Nauru and subregional Micronesia at the highest level.

“It is an occasion that represents half a century of growth in our contemporary Pacific history as a Blue Pacific Continent.”



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PIF Secretary General Waqa receives a gift from the Nauruan USP students in Fiji

He said his time as president of Nauru allowed him to develop resilience in the face of significant adversity.

“It forced me to be more resourceful with our limited comparative resources and capacities. It demonstrated to me the importance of strategic foresight and clarity of vision and it reassured me of the unwavering conviction and commitment I have to my country and my region.”

Mr Waqa says he comes to the SG role after his brief time out of politics and government decision-making, “a more complete leader”.

“My vision for the region is for peace, harmony, unity and solidarity.

“To unlock the true potential of Pacific regionalism we must, we must all equally participate and contribute to this journey,” SG Waqa said.

Diplomats from the offices of Micronesian countries with residence in Fiji also attended the event.

## Outcomes of the Nauru

### intergenerational trust fund meeting

President David Adeang presented to Parliament the outcomes of the meeting of the Nauru Intergenerational Trust Fund committee and the fund’s value at the end of May sitting above \$347 million.

The fund, managed by Mercer International, is invested in a diversified investment portfolio.

President Adeang says the timing of the revenue stream fluctuates for the Fund with a large portion in July each year.

“Private Equity Funds valuations now use March 2024 values plus the USD contributions since then (May), using the May 2024 Reserve Bank exchange rate.

“The March 2024 revaluation added USD436 million to private equity, but exchange rate changes during May largely offset the gain,” the President said.

Current world events also affect performance in the investment markets and interest rates. At the committee meeting held in Canberra in May, members unanimously approved a 12-month extension for fund administrator, BDO, and auditors, Mazars.

Taiwan also informed the meeting it would cease any further contributions due to Nauru’s current geopolitical alignment but made no decision to the existing contributions.

President Adeang says Taiwan’s contributions to date form a legacy of this Nauru success story.

“Their contributions to date form a legacy of this Nauru success story.”

Since the meeting, New Zealand and Australia paid their 2023-24 contributions with Australia making a prepayment of part of its contribution.

The government continues to seek additional suitable partners to join Nauru’s success story and maximise its future Fund value.

The committee next meets in Sydney in August to review the full year trading results.




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## President Adeang delivers statement on Department of Multicultural Affairs

President David Adeang updated the Parliament of the 101 asylum seeker transferees currently on island with the majority having already lodged their applications for refugee status.

The Department of Multicultural Affairs' (DMA) Nauru Refugee Status Determination (RSD) process has conducted 43 RSD interviews in the first week of June with another 43 to be conducted in the coming weeks.

The DMA works closely with Australia's Department of Home Affairs in achieving expedited outcomes for the transferees on Nauru.

The DMA's Alternative Pathways Program (APP) saw 710 Nauruans graduate in May. A total of 811 Nauruans completed APP training this financial year in various disciplines such as carpentry, plumbing, electrical, baking, sewing, and small engine repair to name a few.

In the coming financial year the APP aims to maintain its momentum and incorporate training initiatives with TVET, University of the South Pacific (USP), Australia Pacific Training Coalition (APTC), and with the Fiji National University both on island and on campus education.

Nineteen graduates from the current APP have been identified as suitable candidates for higher level courses, clearly demonstrates the government's ongoing commitment to capacity building the people of Nauru.

## Minister Aingimea reports on red zone relocation housing

Minister for the Nauru Maritime and Port Authority (NMPA) Lionel Aingimea delivered his statement to Parliament in June, regarding the ongoing red zone relocation housing construction, for families impacted by the port development project.



*Port commenced operations in 2022, but full completion of the construction is still in progress*

*[Picture: China Comms Construction]*

Originally intended to coincide with the new port's completion in December 2023, the project sought to build 75 new houses for the displaced families.

However, due to delays the project has only seen 11 houses completed and handed over, with another two finished construction and awaiting connection to the main electricity grid.

Minister Aingimea says the delays are due to the unavailability of funding and resources. The government initially spent \$7.4 million on materials and labour up until September 2022 when funding was exhausted.

While in the past additional resources from the NMPA and Taiwan temporarily filled the gaps, those resources are exhausted also. Completion of the houses is pushed into late 2024 however remains unlikely as it is subject to the availability of funding.

The Minister says that for now the NMPA will continue providing temporary rental housing across the island at a cost of \$2.8 million. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has partially reimbursed these expenses, but some claims remain yet to be processed.

The ongoing housing construction projects will remain limited in scope until new funds are allocated to cover costs.

The government is expected to review proposals for additional construction costs in the coming weeks.

### ROAD SAFETY MEASURES



#### Buckle up

Wear your seat belt at all times. Wear a helmet when driving a motorcycle.



#### Observe the speed limit

Speed limit: 50kph  
Driving past schools, churches and hospital: 20kph.



#### Pedestrian crossing

Drivers should slow down at traffic stops and give way to pedestrians at a zebra crossing.



#### Never drink and drive

Have a designated driver if you plan to drink. Don't operate a vehicle when you're intoxicated.

Carry your driver's licence and ensure your vehicle is registered and roadworthy.



## Nauru post financial reform and developments

Minister for the Nauru Postal Service Asterio Appi delivered his ministerial statement to Parliament, updating the house on the postal services' plans and financial developments, 11 June.

Minister Appi says since he and the new board took up the portfolio in November 2023, Nauru Post was in "serious financial distress."

Despite the company being the government's exclusive procurement and logistics agency, the company was encumbered with financial debts, and was heavily reliant upon subsidies provided by the government through the treasury which sustained its operations.

The responsibility of formulating a sound plan to ensure the financial sustainability of Nauru Post fell on the new management. Through months of work and discussions, the management team has developed a "clearer roadmap" towards Nauru Post's steady financial recovery.

The Minister says through a series of reviews of the company's operational functions, a number of ineffective and costly contracts were dismantled. New sustainable policies and financial systems have been introduced in February 2024.

Minister Appi went on to highlight six new initiatives which Nauru Post hopes to see come into fruition in the coming months, which he says will "streamline its operations, boost its profitability," for logistics and supply management.

Nauru Post, through its Australian subsidiary Nauru Post PTY LTD, currently facilitates online shopping for Nauruans with direct parcel delivery via their frigate service. This new venture aims to reduce freight costs from Brisbane to Nauru, benefiting businesses in Nauru.

On island, the Minister indicated Nauru Post's commitment to significantly boosting warehouse storage capacity. Nauru Post intends to do this by investing in new infrastructure refurbishments, strengthening safety standards, modernising warehouse equipment, upgrading the fleet and staff capacity building.

The post's support services who provide primary garage services to the public has recruited expat staff. Through the programme a number of heavy vehicles which were left unrepaired have been revived.

For its retail outlets the post is expanding product lines which include general merchandise, stationery, souvenirs and implementing a new point-of-sale system. This will tighten inventory control, reduce losses, and boost revenue.

Minister Appi said efforts to revitalise the philatelic bureau are currently underway.

Investing in a consultancy to review their philatelic business plan, including introducing new stamps and products, the review will look into the possibility of selling online and reaching a global market.

To further boost philatelic sales, a dedicated outlet is planned for the civic centre in the coming months. These initiatives aim to unlock new revenue streams for Nauru Post through its philatelic and express mail services.

## Minister Aingimea ministerial statement on DFAT

Minister for the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Lionel Aingimea delivered his ministerial statement to Parliament on the department's recent diplomatic engagements, 11 June.



**UN Resident Coordinator Jaap Hierden pays courtesy call to Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Lionel Aingimea.**

*[Picture: UN Micro Coordinator]*

Minister Aingimea first acknowledged his meeting with the United Nations' Resident Coordinator for Micronesia Jaap Van Hierden.

Discussions centred on enhancing the role of the UN in creating more impactful outcomes in Nauru, through its agencies such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

From 12-19 April the Minister met with newly accredited ambassadors from Cuba, Korea, Indonesia, Japan, the Netherlands and Cyprus.

Notably the discussions with the Cuban, Japanese and Indonesian ambassadors respectively, touched on opportunities to increase cooperation in both sports and medical fields, support key infrastructure projects, and make available scholarship opportunities to Nauruan students.

Special envoys from Serbia and Japan also met with Minister Aingimea on 3 and 15 May, reaffirming their country's continued support and diplomatic cooperation on both bilateral and international fronts.

## Nauru National Emergency Services signs MOU with the Pacific Community

Nauru National Emergency Services (NES) is committed to strengthening emergency response and recovery capabilities and protecting the livelihoods of people in the face of emergencies and disasters.

With that objective, NES through the Disaster Risk Management unit signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Pacific Community (SPC) to collaborate on the implementations of project activities in Nauru guided by the Building Safety Resilience Project (BSRP) and Nauru Country Implementation Plan which are focused on strengthening Nauru's disaster risk governance and enhancing preparedness, response and recovery.

The MOU agreement was signed on 10 May by the NES Secretary Barassi Botelanga and SPC Deputy Director General for Science and Capability Paula Vivili through virtual exchange.

The Building Safety and Resilience in the Pacific (BSRP) project, funded by the European Union is dedicated to building resilience to disaster and climate change for communities, governments and countries across the Pacific region.

Mr Botelanga stated other initiatives NES has committed to including the training and exercises by which NES visits the schools in Nauru and perform tsunami and fire evacuation drills; and interagency coordination which included a fire evacuation drill within the communities in collaboration with the Department of Multicultural Affairs and the Nauru Police Force.



**Emergency responders continue training and exercises to enhance preparedness and recovery**

*[Picture: Nauru Police Force]*

## Women's minister updates parliament on WASDA's progress

Minister for Women and Social Development Affairs (WASDA) Charmaine Scotty updated Parliament on the outcomes of the Second Micronesian Ministers for Women Conference (MMWC) hosted in Nauru in April.



**WASDA Minister Scotty with SPC Principal Strategic Lead Mereseini Rakuita at the 2nd MMWC**

The MMWC, chaired by Minister Scotty, featured presentations from regional organisations on issues impacting women's lives; the 'An Towepo Declaration' was also endorsed by all heads of delegations at the conclusion of the conference.

Minister Scotty says the declaration "lays out an exciting and ambitious pathway towards gender equality in Micronesia" and supports the preparations for the 15th Triennial Conference of Pacific Women to be held next month in the Marshall Islands.

The Minister told Parliament that WASDA has taken the lead with discussions currently underway with the Pacific Community (SPC) on the "skeletal framework to present to the Triennial on implementation and of the An Towepo Declaration".

Among the key priorities of the MMWC were the deliberations and preparations for national Beijing Report to implement the Beijing Platform for Action (BPA) in the Pacific.

Such preparations included national consultations hosted by WASDA throughout the week with key stakeholders, faith-based organisations and the communities to gather input, updates and reviews on the progress and challenges since the adoption of the BPA in 1995.

## Minister Scotty announces the ratification of world heritage convention

Internal Affairs Minister Charmaine Scotty announced in Parliament that the Nauru government has officially ratified the convention on the protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage.

Nauru has officially transmitted the ratification document to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and join the member states of UNESCO in their goal to “safeguard the planet’s most valuable cultural and natural treasures for as long as possible”.

Minister Scotty adds that Nauru has also previously ratified the Convention of protecting the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) which focuses on safeguarding cultural heritages that are intangible such as songs and folklore. The ICH and the World Heritage Convention (WHC) protect subjects matters that are closely related.

Nauru’s ratification of the WHC will ensure the “preservation of our country’s rich culture and heritage sites” such as the Moqua caves, remnants of World War II and other sites of cultural significance.

The Minister is positive that this ratification will not only aid the preservation of cultural and natural treasures but also serve as an educational resource for research and knowledge regarding tangible and intangible cultural heritage in Nauru to help both local citizens and foreign visitors understand and appreciate the diversity of it.



**Emergency responders continue training and exercises to enhance preparedness and recovery**

*[Picture: Nauru Police Force]*

## Minister Jeremiah signs MOU with the Cuba’s environment ministry

The Minister for Environmental Management and Agriculture Jesse Jeremiah told the June Parliament of his participation during the presidential visit to the Republic of Cuba with His Excellency President David Adeang in May.



**Minister Jeremiah signs Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of the government of Nauru**

Minister Jeremiah, on behalf of the government of Nauru, co-signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Cuba’s Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment on 31st May.

“The MOU will enable Nauru to tap into their wealth of expertise and training opportunities in the area of environment, contributing to the implementation of Nauru’s Integrated Environment Policy.”

Such efforts of the Cuban Environment Ministry are the reforestation and rehabilitation programs, and the successful operationalised Environment Fund.

The Minister says an Environment Fund is “a model we aspire to emulate through the Environmental Management and Climate Change Act,” an establishment of such in Nauru will help the people understand and realise the adaptation priorities and importance of conserving the environment for future generations.



## Minister Jeremiah updates parliament on UXO operations

The collaboration and cooperation between Nauru Emergency Services (NES), Nauru Police Force (NPF), the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and allied partners resulted in the safe disposal of unexploded ordnances (UXO) on 30 May.

Minister for National Emergency Services (NES) Jesse Jeremiah told parliament of the successful operations and commended the efforts of all personnel involved ensuring the safety and security of the nation.

The UXOs comprise three 100 pound units and some smaller munitions.

“We are committed to building resilience in our communities ensuring effective coordination among response agencies, and safeguarding the well-being of our citizens in times of crisis.

“In addition to the efforts in disposing of explosive remnants of war, our NES Disaster Risk Management initiatives continue to focus on enhancing our preparedness, response, and recovery capabilities in the face of emergencies and disasters,” the Minister said.

NES Disaster Risk Management unit plays a crucial role in capacity needs mapping and country capacity strengthening by assessing, identifying, and addressing the capacity gaps.

The unit is currently working with the Pacific Community (SPC) on the Building Safety Resilience Project (BSRP) to be rolled out later this year.



*National Emergency Services and Nauru Police Force worked closely with the Australian Defence Force and international allied partners on the Operation Render Safe in Nauru*

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