



Nauru Bulletin

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Nauru in solidarity with Israel

His Excellency President Baron Waqa made his first official visit to the State of Israel with renewed bonds of friendship and solidarity with Israel and its people.

The President and his delegation were welcomed in the capital Jerusalem by Israeli President Reuven Rivlin on 11 June and later received by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu the following day, 12 June.

“We support Israel and we will continue to support Israel. As long as we protect our existence, in a time when climate change is affecting the whole world, I know that with God’s help our friendship will continue to prosper even under such circumstances,” President Waqa said during his meeting with President Rivlin.

The welcome is one of genuine friendship as Nauru stands strong in its support for Israel in international fora especially in Israel’s bid for a seat on the UN Security Council. President Waqa said Nauru will work to encourage neighbouring friends of the Pacific islands to support Israel, highlighting that Nauru’s Ambassador



President Baron Waqa meets Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu during official visit to Israel

[Photo Mark Neiman/GPO]

to the UN. Marlene Moses has a clear mandate to always support Israel.

In his meeting with PM Netanyahu President Waqa said “peace and freedom is what the world longed for in Israel and with its neighbours, and Nauru is no different when it comes to this notion.”

“We come to learn from your success stories and hopefully it can be replicated in our country. The biggest threat that we face is climate change and we look

forward to working and partnering with Israel on multiple fronts to look for ways of mitigation, including capacity and institutional building, not only to my country Nauru, but to the peoples of the South Pacific.”

Israel has offered Nauru technical assistance and capacity building in various development projects including water and sewage management with a range of other projects to be developed over time.

Nauru has been allocated 20 scholarships in the framework of the activities of the international aid agency MASHAV in various fields. Additional costs associated with the scholarships such as airfares will be borne by the Nauru Government.

The health sector is a priority area which Israel will also offer assistance through the provision of expert and medical supplies.

President Waqa extended an invitation to Mr Netanyahu to partner with Nauru and the Forum Island Countries at this year’s Pacific Island leaders’ summit in Samoa and again in 2018 when Nauru is host, as well as engage in the upcoming climate conference in Bonn, Germany.

Nauru signs Australia MOU for education assistance

Nauru and Australia signed an education direct funding agreement that will see Australia commit \$1.675 million to the program.

His Excellency Acting President David Adeang and Deputy Australian High Commissioner Dan Heldon signed the agreement on 7 June in the Cabinet Room.

The Nauru Education Program is a priority outcome under the Aid Investment Plan (AIP) and the Aid Partnership Agreement (APA) both of which agree on priority areas for investment such as improving quality and access to early years, primary and secondary education; to create a proactive and continually improving education system; improved learning outcomes for all students; and a sustainable and high quality workforce to meet future education needs.



Acting President David Adeang signs education direct funding agreement with Deputy Australian High Commissioner Dan Heldon

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Education MOU positive boost

...from pg 1

Under the program both governments agree to pursue significant measurable progress towards the achievement of improved education outcomes in 2020.

Ultimately the AIP provides fundamental support to the implementation of the Education Strategic Plan as well as guide the implementation of the NSDS with key objectives to increase student attendance rates; improve teacher attendance and punctuality; improve enrolment, completion and transition rates of students; improve learning outcomes of all students; increase level of literacy and numeracy in each sector; build and sustain a skilled workforce; provide and maintain safe, healthy and welcoming learning facilities; and sustain the implementation of recently developed modern and relevant curriculum.

The education sector program is aligned with the Nauru Government's National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS) 2005-2025 which commits to providing quality education through an improved curriculum and high standard of education as well as to prioritise teacher training and refurbished schools•

Trade ministers sign PACER Plus



Minister Adeang (fourth from left) in Tonga with regional trade ministers to sign the free trade agreement PACER Plus

Nauru and nine other countries signed PACER Plus in Tonga paving the way for free trade in the region, on 14 June.

Trade ministers for the Forum Island Countries signed the agreement and Nauru's Minister for Finance Hon David Adeang, MP, signed the deal on behalf of Nauru.

The region-wide free trade agreement is a new kind of agreement that links development to trade to boost island economies.

Key areas include trade in goods, trade in services, development and economic cooperation, and labour mobility. Among other advantages the agreement will create a long term forum for greater cooperation among countries in the Pacific region.

Last month (May) NZ Prime Minister Bill English wrote to President Waqa congratulating the President for Nauru's "substantive conclusion of PACER Plus" highlighting the uniqueness of the agreement which recognises the aspirations of Pacific economies.

Nauru, the Marshall Islands, Kiribati and Tuvalu do not have to begin tariff liberalisation until ten years after the agreement enters into force.

Australia, New Zealand, Tonga, Niue, Nauru, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Kiribati, Tuvalu and Cook Islands were at the signing ceremony in Nuku'alofa.

Fiji, Vanuatu and Papua New Guinea did not sign the agreement, and the Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands and Palau reportedly had transport issues getting to Tonga•

Budget 2017-18

The Nauru Parliament conducted two sitting days on 30 May and 1 June whereby a number of statements were tabled including the government's annual budget for 2017-18 which is built around the theme Fifty years of Independence.

Minister for Finance Hon David Adeang, MP, delivered a balanced budget with a small surplus, noting that modest economic growth is expected over the next two years.

In handing down the budget Minister Adeang told parliament it provides for \$129.7 million in revenues and \$129.6 million in expenditures.

Nauru's development partners are expected to inject \$28.8 million during the year.

Significant expense measures include the 50th Independence Day anniversary celebrations with \$3.3 million set aside for the celebrations including hosting regional meetings and entertainment and official celebration funding for the year.

Minister Adeang said that despite a down turn in the economy, the Government does not plan on introducing any new taxes during the year to maintain services or fund the 50th anniversary celebrations.

The Government remains committed to provide for future generations and includes \$10.1 million towards the Nauru Trust Fund bringing total contributions to the fund to approximately \$70 million by the end of next year.

The Nauru Community Housing Scheme is allocated \$5.5 million and a further \$1.0 million towards the port project; \$500k to complete the learning village phase 2 project, and \$1.2 million for the school toilet maintenance program.

The budget is aided by a slight increase in fisheries revenues to \$43.4 million from licensing and fishing days, while customs earnings are expected to remain the same at \$17.1 million.

Total income tax is forecast to decrease \$6.5 million owing to the reduction in the expatriate workforce associated with construction of the Regional Processing Centres (RPC) and related facilities on the island.

The uncertainty on the number of refugees to be resettled in the United States is factored in with an expected decrease in government revenue from \$38.1 million this year to \$25.4 million in 2017/18.

"This budget also implements major reforms in public financial management consistent with international financial management best-practice," Minister Adeang said.

A recent IMF recommendation to adopt a Fiscal Cash Buffer is reflected in this budget with \$3.0 million provided towards establishing a buffer equivalent to two months of spending (approximately \$19.0 million per month).

"This budget maintains fiscal responsibility in an environment of economic contraction.

"It provides for a fitting celebration of our 50th year anniversary and manages to lock in significant proportions of the budget for future investment in the community.

"It is consistent with the Government's ongoing fiscal strategy and shows continuing resolve to both the people of Nauru and our development partners," Minister Adeang said•

President Waqa meets Thai PM

His Excellency President Baron Waqa met with Thailand's Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha to discuss a range of cooperation measures, this week 15 June.

The discussions centred on a range of cooperation areas including Thailand's interest in forging cooperation in fisheries and the purchase of phosphate.



President Waqa meets Thai Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha

Thailand acknowledged Nauru's needs in the fields of agriculture and medical fields with several Nauruan patients undergoing medical treatment at Bangkok Hospital.

President Waqa expressed interest in closer cooperation in capacity building through training in areas such as agriculture and aviation notably in pilot and aircraft engineering.

In the meeting President Waqa said to PM Chan-o-cha that Nauru offers its friendship and support for Thailand in avenues considered necessary including Thailand's candidature to various international agencies.

The details of the various cooperation avenues are being discussed at officials level.

India, Pacific on sustainable development

Leaders from India and the Pacific came together to discuss climate change and challenges of sustainable development at the inauguration of the India-Pacific Islands Conference on Sustainable development, on 25 May in Suva Fiji.

The conference was hosted by the Indian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in conjunction with The Energy Resources Institute (TERI), an energy, environment and sustainable development research institute based in New Delhi, India.



President Waqa with India's State Minister External Affairs General V.K. Singh

The conference was officially inaugurated by the acting Prime Minister of Fiji Mr Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum.

During the conference President Baron Waqa said although the Pacific islands have enjoyed varying levels of success with sustainable development, most islands are still struggling and Nauru is no different in facing these challenges.

"While all our countries have enjoyed progress and development in various forms and to varying degrees of success, most of us however, continue to struggle with the quest of attaining true sustainable development... Nauru, being a small island state, is no exception and faces all of these challenges if not more," President Waqa said.

His Excellency reiterated that the single most serious threat to Nauru is climate change.

"The ocean, which has long been a source of sustenance for our people and an intrinsic part of our culture and identity, is now increasingly turning against us bringing more frequent and more severe threats such as tsunamis, coastal erosion, coral bleaching, saltwater intrusion and other climate-induced phenomena," President Waqa said.

His Excellency said Nauru's biggest challenge is land rehabilitation and called on development partners for assistance in rehabilitation efforts.

"Hence, we will be looking to our friends and partners in the region and internationally to assist us in our efforts. I take this opportunity to call on my friends sitting among us today as well as our development partners, and most especially our good friend India, to come to our aid. We, in turn, offer our own help in whatever shape or form we can provide to those who may need it," President Waqa said.

During the meeting Nauru signed several Memoranda of Understanding to deepen co-operation across a variety of fields including the establishment of Centers of Excellence in Information Technology, youth development and cooperation between broadcasting agencies.

The conference saw the participation of 500 government delegates from 14 Pacific island countries, including multilateral and bilateral institutions and corporate organisations.

Tune in to the
Discussion Desk

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FM105.1
or download the App
radionauru.nr:8000/live

Nauru port a priority at UNESCAP

President Baron Waqa underscored the port development as Nauru's most important undertaking, at the seventy-third session of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), in Bangkok on 19 May 2017.

At the opening of His Excellency's statement he acknowledged the state mourning for King Bhumibol Adulyadej as "one of the greatest men in Thailand and indeed world history."

"After a century of development associated with phosphate mining, our port infrastructure is no longer able to cater for our population and its expanded infrastructure.

"Our proposed new port will be able to berth large cargo ships and bulk carriers with great efficiency, whereas it isn't possible to do this with the existing mooring system," President Waqa said.

The Nauru Government is working closely with bilateral and multilateral partners such as the Asian Development Bank (ADB), Australia and the United States as well as traditional partners.

"The Pacific and Asia are two regions connected by geography and through the migration of people in the region over several millennia.

"The issues we face are interconnected especially when we articulate things on a global scale, and I refer to the biggest challenge we all face today which is climate change.

"It affects us all – it affects our weather, it affects our water supply, it affects our plants and animals, it affects the movement and spawning of our fish stocks, and it affects our economic development and trade," President Waqa said.

The session is held under the theme 'Regional cooperation for sustainable energy', and places particular emphasis on how greater economic cooperation and integration in the region can help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

Apart from the need of a developed port, President Waqa highlighted that Nauru has developmental challenges in just about all sectors; while some are being realised such as improving telecommunications and connectivity which in turn has advanced and progressed local businesses through the use of smartphones.

President Waqa also highlighted the government's issuance of another telecommunications license for a second foreign operator to commence operations this year.

"In partnership with the ADB, the World bank and with Kiribati and the Federated States of Micronesia, we are progressing well to have our submarine cable established by 2019.

"This will open up new opportunities for business growth including improvement in services such as education and telemedicine."

Nauru's national carrier Nauru Airlines has also made air travel more accessible with reliable services for Nauruans as well as neighbouring islands connecting the islands to Australia and beyond, including a proposed reestablishment of the Guam route.

President Waqa highlighted other priority areas for Nauru's development including human resources and up-skilling the workforce, renewable energy, climate proofing, and free trade agreement in PACER Plus that was signed in Tonga on 14 June.

ESCAP's new theme study proposes an energy transition - a shift to low carbon, non-polluting energy generation and increased energy efficiency that brings the benefits of modern energy to all.

Discussions on the NSDS

The Discussion Desk topic on 7 June centred on the 20 year National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS) and the upcoming review, both of which look at the economic, social and infrastructure sectors.

Director for Planning with the Planning and Aid Division (P.A.D) Finance Department John Limen and Social Sector Planner Branessa Tsiode underscored the importance of the national plan in the development of a country especially in its ongoing need to adapt to the changes in the economic, social and infrastructure environments.

*Director for Planning
John Limen and Social
Sector Planner Branessa
Tsiode dissect the National
Sustainable Development
Strategy (NSDS) on the
Discussion Desk*



This year will be the second review conducted for the NSDS to ensure the plan still meets the changing times and needs of a country as the economic, social and infrastructure environments change.

One obvious change in Nauru's circumstances and economic upturn is the re-introduction of the regional processing centre.

In preparation and lead up to the public consultations expected in July, the P.A.D has conducted internal stocktakes of departments that include interviews of government department in relation to progress and achievements of their milestones.

Of note is the high turnover of staff rendering a lack of knowledge and understanding of the NSDS milestones within departments and other sectors resulting in diminished responsibility of the goals which are evident in the slow level of achievement for those milestones.

The outcomes from public consultations will be reflected in the revised NSDS as ordinary Nauruans discuss and decide what they perceive as necessary changes for the betterment of Nauru moving forward.

Mr Limen says donor partners use the NSDS to ascertain where and how much assistance their countries and organisations can assist Nauru with.

Mrs Tsiode explains that sometimes milestones can be difficult to achieve. Key performance indicators are used to assess whether incentives, for instance, have made a difference to performance.

Mr Limen says the aims of the NSDS and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) or commonly known as the 2030 Agenda which sets out development plans for 2015 to 2030, are intertwined.

Taking over from the MDGs, the SDGs is a more comprehensive and universal plan which Nauru uses as a guiding document for the NSDS.

Mr Limen and Mrs Tsiode said it is important that Nauru's national plan is closely linked to the SDG, making for easier or convenient access of expertise and financial support from bigger countries and donor agencies.

For more information on the NSDS and the 2017 review, see the P.A.D office at the government offices in Yaren District.

The Courts Act 1972 on DDesk

The Courts Act of 1972 was recently discussed on the local radio show Discussion desk – a program that talks about policy issues.

Special guests Court Registrar Mr Filimone Jitoko and Acting Deputy Registrar Raelytta Daoe described their roles in the Nauru Court and the important functions of the different courts.

Mr Jitoko explained that the office of Registrar has three main functions firstly as administrative head of the department and works cooperatively with the deputy registrar on a daily basis with the court staff.

*Registrar of the Courts
Filimone Jitoko and
Acting Deputy Registrar
Raelytta Daoe. Jitoko spoke
to Discussion Desk about
the Courts Act 1972*



The registrar also performs a specialist role as the master of the court which allows the registrar to sit as a judge in chambers and other minor matters that will help in the management of cases before they come to the Supreme Court.

A third role of the registrar as taxing officer is in charge of assessing the costs of court cases ensuring fairness to clients.

Mr Jitoko briefly explained the court structure in Nauru detailing that the District Court operates alongside the Family Court which is followed by the Supreme Court also known as the court of appeal and finally followed by the High Court of Australia.

Ms Raelytta Daoe explained the differences between a magistrate and a lay magistrate in that the former oversees cases without the assistance of other magistrates whereas lay magistrates will always review cases in the presence of two additional lay magistrates.

Ms Daoe said it is the jurisdiction of the District Court to review civil cases with claims under \$3000. Cases exceeding that amount will be heard by a magistrate in the Supreme Court. Cases with an imprisonment period of more than three years are heard in the Supreme Court.

Examples of minor cases that can be heard in the District Court include stealing, common assault and serious assault. Serious offences such as robbery are referred to the Supreme Court.

Unlike the general description of clerks, court clerks pay a vital role in running the administrative operations of the three different sections of the court.

These sections include the criminal section of the District Court, civil section which encompasses the three courts and the new tier of appeals included in the Nauru judiciary system dedicated to refugee appeals. All clerks report to the registrar of the courts.

Importantly recent amendments to the Courts Act allowed the appointment of a second magistrate to share in the workload given the number of backlogged cases before the court. Mr Jitoko says that it is challenging for one magistrate to deliberate over a large number of cases.

The Courts Act 1972 can be found at www.naurugov.nr and find the RONLaw link.

Tune in to Discussion Desk every Wednesday 9.30am on FM105.1 or download the app radionauru.nr:8000/live •

National tsunami plan to finalise

The Nauru tsunami plan is being finalised following national stakeholder consultations with expert assistance from regional organisations in the field of disaster risk management and climate change, 6 June.

Secretary for the National Disaster Risk Management (NDRM) office Roy Harris in partnership the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) represented by Noa Tokavou and Rajendra Prasad from UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) facilitated the discussions with national stakeholders to develop a warning threat criterion and to identify key areas of responsibility for each entity in the event of a tsunami.

The consultation objectives include agreement on threat levels; agreement on tsunami warning communication flow; and to compile agency roles and responsibilities on preparedness, response and recovery.

The Nauru tsunami plan was first developed in 2012 with changes made in 2014 when the Pacific Tsunami Warning Centre (PTWC) in Hawaii took a backseat role by placing countries at the forefront in terms of deciding their own warning threats, emergency processes and evacuation procedures.

Mr Harris said the initial plan for a population evacuation to a central location has since been revised and realised that any higher ground is advisable for evacuation and assembly points.

The evacuation procedure and assembly points for schools however have been identified to avoid displacing school children. The Nauru Police will assist in school evacuations.

Mr Prasad said according to experts it's believed Nauru is under low threat compared to other countries in the Pacific region however, depending on sea tide the effects could potentially be hazardous.

"The worst case scenario a tsunami can bring up to three metre waves into Nauru," Mr Prasad said.

He advises that evacuation to ten metres above sea level is considerably safe.

According to Mr Prasad the closest earthquake source for Nauru is the Vanuatu-New Hebrides trench in the northern Vanuatu-eastern Solomon Islands with the minimum time of two and a half hours for the effects of tsunami to be felt Nauru.

"But (Nauru) would have already lost half an hour in terms of PTWC digesting information and able to provide advisory and NES taking action. So people would still have two hours even less to move."

Manager for telecommunications provider Digicel Francis Thomsen advised that a single text message to 13,000 phones can be sent within seven minutes, keeping in mind that some phones may have limited capabilities to receive text messaging and line congestion in times of emergency with the influx of users. A priority list will be identified to receive the warnings uninterrupted given the possibility of phone line congestion.

The Nauru tsunami plan is being finalised by the NES office before presentation to Cabinet for endorsement then implementation. Emergency officers will undertake a week long intensive training in tsunami preparedness in Fiji in the coming weeks •

Introducing the Nauru Judiciary

Get to know your government departments.

A new office will feature in this space each publication.

The Nauru Judiciary is headed by a Chief Justice, currently acting CJ Mohammed Shafiullah Khan. The judiciary plays a vital role in regulating and enforcing Nauru's laws through its three instrumentalities namely the District, Family, and Supreme Court.

Acting Chief Justice - Mohammed Shafiullah Khan

Judge - Jane Elizabeth Crulci

Registrar of the Supreme Court - Filimone Jitoko

Resident Magistrate - Penijamini Lomaloma

Acting Deputy Registrar - Raelytta Daoc

Administrative Officer - Merhonda Tannang

Clerk of Court - Laurie Tebouwa, Kara Halstead

Family Liaison Officer - Jezza Agadio



Seated - Judge Jane Crulci and Registrar Filimone Jitoko and staff

Judge's Associates - Daniel McCabe, Esther Pearson

Court orderly - Paul Harris

Law librarian - Siolita Ephraim

Personal Assistant - Winnie Tsitsi

Assistant clerks of court - Babrishka Adam, Joetta Ika, Gaze Adam

Student intern - Hartson Detabene

Addressing climate change

Nauru is the smallest island republic and geographically located a fair distance from developed countries yet is one of the disadvantaged when it comes to the effects of climate change.

With a population of just over 10 thousand, most Nauruans have little knowledge of what greenhouse gas emissions are or just beginning to understand what climate change is.

Those in the know strive to support efforts to call on the international community to pull back on gas emissions.

On the international platform, the Nauru Government has been a champion in calling for urgent action to help small island states and holding developed nations to account in their destruction of the environment and to curb gas emissions and use of fossil fuel. Other Pacific leaders join that voice to protect their islands.

Nauru will attend COP 23 (Conference of Parties) in Bonn Germany with renewed calls for action and to once again voice that urgency.

In his statement at last year's high level segment of COP22 in Morocco, President Waqa said the most vulnerable are at risk.

"Addressing climate change is a multi-generational challenge that will require our sustained effort over the course of decades.

"It is inevitable that other important priorities will compete for our attention, and at times, a country may veer off course.

"Therefore, it is incumbent on us – when we gather here as Leaders – to provide the political direction necessary to see that the critical work we do here continues to move forward with urgency."

At the signing of the Paris Agreement in April 2016 President Waqa said the "Pacific is ready to lead."

"We have put forward ambitious contributions, and if developed countries mobilize the required means of implementation, we are prepared to do more.

"Making the transition to renewable energy is a particular priority, which will also bring far-reaching sustainable development co-benefits."

But President Waqa says the PSIDS "cannot do it alone," and called on countries to step up.

"Our (PSIDS) total emissions are miniscule. All countries must step up with much more ambitious efforts, with heightened responsibility on the biggest historical emitters."

The stakes are high for the PSIDS who are already feeling the dangerous and catastrophic effects of climate impacts.

Nauru and many of its neighbouring islands are making steps to address climate change. PSIDS are exposed to extreme weather patterns which are exacerbated by climate change.

Although small steps the Nauru Government with help from donor partners are installing solar panels at the government buildings, hospital, and schools to offset power consumption derived from diesel powered fuel generators.

The Republic of China (Taiwan) has made positive strides in addressing climate change and has taken the lead in Nauru by installing solar panels on roof tops and solar street lighting around the island as well as introduction and donation of solar products for household use•

The Nauru Bulletin is a fortnightly publication of the Government of the Republic of Nauru.

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