



# Nauru Bulletin

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## Parliament sitting 4 October

The speaker of parliament officially opened the parliament sitting on 4 October with the opening prayer followed by the opening speech by His Excellency President Baron Waqa, concluding with the second supplementary appropriation bill for the current financial year.

In his speech the president thanked the people of Nauru for a successful 50th anniversary year and highlighted the upcoming national event of Angam day and encouraged community participation.

The President mentioned the ban on Facebook being lifted but concerns remain on the use of social media and inappropriate content being uploaded to it. The President urged the public to be sensible and mindful of language and content being used on social media.

The usual matters of parliament of questions without notice time ensued followed by the presentation of ministerial statements.

President Waqa presented the first statement on the Pacific Islands Forum meeting report highlighting the events that took place over the course of the weeklong meeting of regional leaders and development partners, and concluded by thanking everyone for the effort in making the 49th meeting of Pacific leaders a success.

“I also acknowledge and thank everyone involved in particular, the land owners, Nauru Police Force, volunteers and sponsors for making the preparation possible and successful in every way,” President Waqa said.

Minister Aaron Cook then reported on the activities of the Nauru Rehabilitation Corporation (NRC) which has been tasked by the government to focus on its core function that is land rehabilitation.

“This role of NRC is absolutely critical to the future development of Nauru, which



without, sustainable development will be extremely difficult to achieve. Living space, land for development and for growing our own food, land for sports development, health and education, makes the future of the next generation an extremely challenging one if we do not make preparation today,” Minister Cook said.

The NRC is currently finishing the extraction of primary phosphate along the Ewa to Nibok access road, which is expected to be completed by the end of 2018, after which secondary mining will be carried out by Ronphos and NRC will then revert to its core function.

The Asian Development Bank has been engaged to develop the NRC business plan while the Pacific Community (SPC) is engaging a civil engineer to develop engineering solutions for land rehabilitation.

President Waqa reported on the G7 environment ministers’ meeting he attended in Halifax Canada, where His Excellency delivered the keynote address on urgent action and reduction opportunities on climate.

In his address President Waqa challenged the group of G7 ministers and international organisations to think differently about scale and to consider the special circumstances of small island states, such as Nauru,

highlighting the need to invest in small countries, like Nauru, that can make transformative impacts on clean energy.

Minister for the Port Authority Tawaki Kam presented the departments movements including the 5th annual general meeting of the Central Pacific Shipping Commission, held mid-October, shipping operations and the port development project.

Minister Kam reported that the Port Authority safely berthed the cargo ship Capitaine Quiros and fuel tanker Angel 17 on the moorings to ensure simultaneous discharge operations.

“This is the first for Nauru and this innovative approach has improved overall port efficiency,” Minister Kam said.

Mr Kam also reported that the expressions of interest from three international bidders for the construction work of the port development are currently being evaluated for technical and financial conformity. The tender award is expected to be announced in late October or early November.

Education minister Charmaine Scotty thanked her department, staff, students and parents for their part in performing traditional chants and singing at the Forum Education Minister’s meeting in May and the Pacific Islands forum in September.

Minister Scotty also thanked the New Zealand Defence Force for donating 38 desktop computers to the department as well as children’s books to the community library.

Under scholarships, the three students awarded the year nine scholarships will be placed at the Michelton State High School in Queensland at the commencement of 2019; while year eight RONSS scholarship students studying in Fiji will sit their exams in Fiji under the supervision of ministry staff.

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Minister Scotty also reported that the education website hosted under the government's main website will be updated as part of the education annual operational plan to enable the public to access information such as annual enrolments, scholarship scheme information, school policies, the Education Act, and calendar of events.

The minister also updated the House on the celebration of international events such as Literacy Day on 8 September, international day of non-violence on 2 October, and World Teacher's day on 5 October.

President Waqa then presented a report of his attendance at the 73rd United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on 26 September. Among the issues raised were the development challenges faced by Nauru and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), the importance of the UN in creating an environment where SIDS can flourish, and calls on the appointment of the special representative of the UN secretary general on climate and security, as well as calls to articulate the inclusion of the Republic of China (Taiwan) in the UN systems.

President Waqa also highlighted other events during the UNGA that included Nauru and Germany convening the first ever ministerial



*Nauru's Parliament House, Yaren district*

meeting of the Groups of Friends on climate and security; the third high level meeting on non-communicable diseases; a meeting of the Pacific Island Forum leaders with the UN secretary general; and a meeting with the foreign minister of the Russian Federation and foreign ministers of the Pacific SIDS (PSIDS) which President Waqa co-chaired.

Minister Kam then presented his report on the opening of the Nauru Community Sports Centre that was officially opened during the Pacific Islands forum by President Waqa and Australia's Foreign Minister Marise Payne.

President Waqa then presented his fourth statement to the House on the work of Cenpac Corporation whose services now expand to providing bandwidth services to the government and state-owned entities as well as selling white goods and electronics, providing support to the government's ICT department and a joint venture arrangement with the new telecom provider Acclinks.

Following on, President Waqa presented a report on the development of the Naoero Postal Services Corporation the highlight of which was the successful reduction of annual Universal Postal Union (UPU) membership fees down to 0.1 unit of the AU\$60,000 annual fee to approximately AUD\$600 for Nauru as well as other Small Island States that are UPU members.

The reduction in fees was a result of a request put forward by Assistant Minister Lionel Aingimea and Nauru Post Chairman Samuel Grundler at the UPU second extraordinary congress in Addis Ababa in early September.

Mr Aingimea then presented his trip report to Addis Ababa reiterating the successful reduction in member fees for Nauru.

Mr Aingimea thanked the delegates from Australia and New Zealand for their support for the proposal to amend UPU by-laws to enable the reduction of fees. All 135 members present agreed to the changes.

Nauru and 13 other SIDS will benefit from Nauru's hard work, including Tonga, Tuvalu, Kiribati, Solomon Islands, and Samoa in the Pacific.

Mr Aingimea said the second undertaking at the UPU was a request to forgive Nauru's past arrears. This requires substantive changes to UPU regulations and has been taken on board by the International Bureau of the UPU to be examined. Many other countries have also been sanctioned by the UPU for unpaid dues.

Assistant Minister Asterio Appi tabled a report on the fourth meeting of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentarians Forum on global health in the Philippines, under the theme 'Enhancing the role of parliamentarians in advancing universal health coverage'.

Mr Appi explained that the forum creates a platform for members of parliament to exchange ideas, build support networks, strengthen capacities and enhance and foster collaborations in ensuring sustainable actions for health in member countries is achieved.

Speaker of Parliament Cyril Buraman presented a report on the recently concluded Asian-Pacific Parliamentarians' Union (APPU) meeting outlining the success of the meeting under the theme 'Strengthening the stakeholders partnership and climate change resilience in the Asia Pacific region, disaster prevention, mitigation and renewable energy, peace and prosperity'.

Following the statements was the presentation of Bills by Minister David Adeang as minister for justice and border control, and finance. The first of five bills was the Legal Practitioners (Amendment) Bill 2017.

"To meet the Republic's international commitments and obligations, the Government has undertaken substantial and continuous reforms. As a consequence, some departments need in-house lawyers. Their work will be limited to the scope of the departments' work," Minister Adeang said.

Clause four omits and substitutes the current section 7A. The amendment is to procure a uniform approach for the appointment of government lawyers and for work largely to do with the recent legislative reforms such as the Domestic Violence and Family Protection Act 2017 and the Child Protection and Welfare Act 2016.

Provisions are further made for the minister to designate government lawyers' positions in the public service where necessary.

Minister Adeang next presented the Refugee Convention (Amendment) Bill 2018, which "limits the liability of the bona fide exercise of powers of the secretary for multicultural affairs."

The amendment adds the new clause 53 which allows the secretary for multicultural affairs, after carrying out his or her own investigation or inquiries to recognise any declaration, decision or record determining an asylum seeker under the laws of a foreign country to be: recognised as a refugee; given derivative status; or owed complementary protection.

The secretary may make a recommendation in writing to the secretary for justice and border control for the granting of temporary settlement visas similar to the visas granted to persons whom are determined by the secretary under this Act.

The third bill, Asylum Seekers (Regional Processing Centre) (Amendment) Bill 2018, is to amend the 2012 Act.

The amendment sets out to regulate the definition of 'protected

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persons' in the Act, to cover regional processing centre (RPC) visa holders and temporary settlement visa (TSV) holders that reside within the RPC.

“This means that the rights and obligations of ‘protected persons’ residing in the RPCs properly extend to all those who reside within it,” Minister Adeang said.

The Trusts Bill 2018 was necessary to ensure Nauru’s legal framework meets internationally required standards for the exchange of tax information.

In June 2016, Nauru became a signatory to the multilateral convention for mutual administrative assistance in tax matters, and as such Nauru agrees to be part of an international network for the exchange of tax information.

The bill addresses the two areas of, first, requiring that trusts located in Nauru be registered; and second, establishing obligations and effective penalties for the maintenance, for a minimum of five years, of reliable accounting records for trusts located in Nauru.

“Now this Bill will bring Nauru’s trust laws in line with similar registration and accounting obligations for Nauru partnerships and corporations, thereby providing a similar record keeping and reporting standard regardless of the legal arrangements that parties choose to organise their affairs,” Minister Adeang said.

The Commercial Operations and Services Fund Bill 2018 is in readiness for the Government of Nauru to take over commercial operations and services of the Regional Processing Centre (RPC) and settlements currently provided by Canstruct Services International.

When this happens the commercial operations and services will transfer to Eigigu Solutions Corporation, a subsidiary of Eigigu Holdings Corporation, which was specifically incorporated to take over the services from Canstruct.

Eigigu Solutions Corporation is currently working with Canstruct to transition the services. This process will be funded by the Australian government.

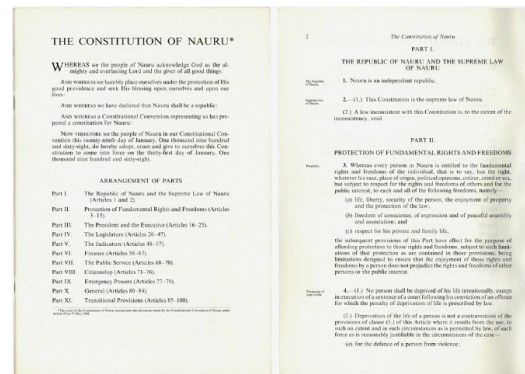
This new law provides for funds specifically for the operations of the RPC and settlements to be kept in a specific purpose fund as provided for in Article 58 of the Constitution of Nauru.

“It is prudent for the Government not to treat any monies for this purpose payable by Australia as part of the treasury fund. The money will not in the first instance belong to the Republic as a substantial portion of the money will be used for the operational expenses of the RPCs and settlements.

“On the other hand, if this money is to be deposited into the treasury fund, it will then require the parliament to appropriate the funds for the operational expenses.

“This is not a direct public expenditure for the purposes of the Government. It is a commercial operation which the Government has decided to take over. Furthermore, the mixing of any of these funds with the Treasury Fund will be counterproductive and put unnecessary strain on the Treasury and the normal operations of the Government.

“The objective of the Bill is to establish a specific purpose fund so that monies paid by Australia will be paid into this account. Its expenditure will be rigidly monitored and controlled without any implications on the Treasury Fund.



*The  
Constitution  
of Nauru*

“It will not require any appropriation as the Department of Multicultural Affairs and Eigigu Solutions Corporation in conjunction with the Department of Finance will ensure that the funds are made readily available to cater for the daily operations of the RPCs and settlements,” Minister Adeang said.

The minister concluded that it is anticipated that “none of the public funds would be directly involved in the running of the commercial operations and services.”

As finance minister, Mr Adeang presented the final bill for the sitting, the Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.2) 2018-19, with overall revenue estimates increased by \$6.02 million. Of this, the Nauru Regional Processing Centre Corporation (NRPCC) is expected to collect a further \$5 million “over and above the existing estimates for management fees from Canstruct.”

“Also due to a longstanding arrears in employment tax being settled we can include a further \$1.02 million in expected revenue from this source in this financial year.

“This additional revenue has provided the opportunity for the government to fund a further \$6 million of expenditure. These include increased capital expenditure on plant and equipment, social welfare expenditure on scholarships and welfare services and operational costs particularly in the area of police and foreign affairs,” Minister Adeang said.

For additional appropriation, Minister Adeang outlined the following: providing capital funding for a new government storage; purchase of laptop computer for the parliament; refurbishment of the paediatric ward; further public works spending by the department of infrastructure as well as the preservation of the fresh water cave Maqua cultural site, and additional funding for the demolition and removal of the old cantilever shore bins in Aiwo.

Other expenditure includes the expansion of foreign affairs for the establishment of a new permanent mission in Geneva and a new high commission to India in New Delhi, and payment for police allowances.

The budget also provides for a further seven scholarships for year nine students to study in Australia, and extra funding for the operation of the safe house under Women’s Affairs.

Minister Adeang announced the bill adheres to “responsible fiscal management by committing a further \$77,000” to building Nauru’s fiscal cash buffer. With the passing of the bill a surplus of \$222,000 for the year is expected.

Following debate on the bill, the adjournment debate was concluded and parliament adjourned at approximately 10pm•

## A win not just for Nauru at UPU

The David-and-Goliath-style struggle to achieve some equity in the Universal Postal Union's membership fees charged to small island developing states (SIDS) is a success.



*Assistant minister Lionel Aingimea (L) along with Nauru Post chairman Samuel Grundler were instrumental in UPU members' unanimous decision to reduce the annual membership fee from AU\$60,000 to AU\$600 for LDS and SIDS, an achievement affecting 14 member nations*

Assistant minister Hon Lionel Aingimea recounted Nauru's success in Ethiopia at the recent sitting of the Nauru parliament on 4 October.

With Nauru Post chairman Samuel Grundler, Mr Aingimea attended the Second Extraordinary Universal Postal Union (UPU) Congress held in Addis Ababa in Ethiopia from 3 to 7 September to make Nauru's interventions.

"The mission from His Excellency (President Waqa) was two-fold.

"One, to reduce the annual fee of AU\$60,000 that Nauru Post has to pay the UPU.

"And, two, for the UPU to forgive Nauru's past arrears, which is now in excess of AU\$2 million.

"The arrears is no fault of the Waqa government, but during the economic crisis Nauru experienced, certain dues were not paid and the UPU fee was one such due," Mr Aingimea explained.

Of the 192 UPU member countries, 135 attended the congress. From the Pacific were Nauru, Tonga and Fiji.

Part of UPU policy, adopted at the Beijing Congress in 1999, is to impose automatic sanctions on countries that fall into arrears in their membership payments. A large number of the countries sanctioned are SIDS.

Membership fees are based on 'contribution units', with a minimum contribution of 0.5 units. Nauru's contribution unit was 1.

Mr Aingimea described how the lobbying for Nauru's interventions began on landing at the Addis Ababa Bole international airport and continued ceaselessly at every opportunity in the run-up to his presentation to the congress on day two, and what happened next.

"Australia, seconded by New Zealand, proposed an amendment to the by-laws.

"All least developed states (LDS) and SIDS would fall under a special category which would mean that the dues they pay (would equate to) 0.01 units.

"In monetary terms, this is roughly US\$380 or AU\$600," Mr Aingimea said.

Throughout the evening, country representatives consulted their respective governments about the proposed amendment.

"The difficulty is that any change to the UPU by-laws needs all members present to agree.

"There were 135 members present and all had to agree," assistant minister Aingimea said.

The following morning the vote was taken and the amendment was unanimously accepted.

According to the assistant minister, 14 countries will benefit hugely from this amendment. In the Pacific, those countries are Nauru, Tonga, Solomon Islands, Samoa, Kiribati and Tuvalu.

The next challenge for Nauru Post is to succeed in having past UPU arrears forgiven; a complex and extensive task requiring amendments to UPU regulations and the UPU constitution.

"The issue of forgiveness of past arrears is now on the UPU congress floor and has been taken by the international bureau of the UPU to be examined and look for ways in how these debts could be forgiven," Mr Aingimea said.

As part of the response to Nauru's last intervention request to: assist Nauru by deputing an officer to set up and upgrade the Nauru Post to a modern post office and provide capacity building and training to our staff, Singapore Post vice-president Fiona Lim visited Nauru on 17 October to assist Nauru Post, and in February 2019, UPU's director-general Bishar Abdirahman Hussein will also visit Nauru.

Mr Aingimea thanked the postal representatives of Australia and New Zealand for their support, saying how ready the larger countries were to shoulder the burden of debt to lift it for LDS and SIDS.

He also thanked Nauru Post Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Sasikumar Paravanoor, who not only receives no remuneration for his role as CEO, but also performed all the ground work to support the intervention, and finally his mission partner Nauru Post chair Samuel Grundler for his persistent lobbying on behalf of Nauru.

In the meantime, Nauru Post's representatives will continue to raise the issue of debt forgiveness with the UPU•

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## Parliament sitting 14 August

The Nauru parliament convened a sitting on 14 August with the presentation of a number of ministerial statements and the Supplementary Appropriation (No.1) Bill 2018-19, which is made possible through an increase in fishing revenue and reimbursable costs associated with the transitioning work of the regional processing centre (RPC) operations. The bill would see a revised budget surplus of \$204,000.

His Excellency's opening statement reiterated a call for public and community efforts in clean ups and general island grooming in the lead up to Nauru's hosting of the 48th Pacific island leaders' forum in September.

Minister for Finance David Adeang told the House that a total windfall revenue of \$19.36 million was received by the government at the commencement of the financial year for the 2016 and 2017 Federated States of Micronesia Arrangement (FSMA) and fishing pooling days.

A further \$2.89 million has also been appropriated in this supplementary bill as reimbursable from Australian Border Force (ABF) as part of the transitioning work associated with the RPC operations.

Expenditure wise, a further \$1.5 million is provided to ministerial budgets to accommodate the Nauru housing scheme; \$350,000 to host the Oceania powerlifting championships; \$565,000 for the Chief Secretary's administration unit for expatriate house rentals and repairs and maintenance for all government vehicles.

For parliament, \$70,000 is earmarked for repairs and maintenance of the parliament building in the lead up to Nauru's hosting of the annual Asian-Pacific Parliamentarians' Union (APPU).

A further \$2.78 million is provided to replenish public debt funds that were used for other urgent government payments, including payments to Ronphos and Menen hotel that were not included in the original budget estimates.

"Replenishing of these amounts is necessary to enable government to meet its debt obligations," Minister Adeang said.

A further \$911,000 is budgeted for repair and maintenance as well as the renovation of the Civic Centre conference hall which were missed out in the original budget.

Recognising the old debt associated with the Bank of Nauru, a further \$1 million was provided for payment of the bank's liquidation, and a substantial amount of \$11.12 million allocated to the government fiscal cash buffer.

"This will further improve our liquidity position as it will increase the balance of our fiscal cash buffer relatively close to the minimum required benchmark of AUD\$17 million as recommended by the International Monetary Fund," Minister Adeang said.

The Nauru Regional Processing Centre Corporation (NRPCC) was also allocated \$2.89 million to enable the carrying out of preliminary works required for the transitioning of the RPC operations.

This amount is fully reimbursed by Australian Border Force under the spirit of the agreed memorandum of understanding between Australia and Nauru.

The department of infrastructure has been provided \$624,000 for payment of local contractors for undertaking various construction works around the island including road repairs and runway extension rail improvements.

Minister Adeang concluded this presentation of the supplementary

bill assuring the House that the government remains committed to its fiscal targets.

"The windfall fishing revenues and the additional reimbursable has increased the total revenue outlay by \$22.26 million and therefore, it enables government to fund the additional requested expenditures of \$22.22 million," Minister Adeang said.

The supplementary bill results in a revised budget surplus of \$204,000.

As minister for finance Mr Adeang presented the first ministerial statement on the Nauru superannuation fund. The super fund is re-introduced by the Waqa Government in July 2018 and is set up like the intergenerational trust fund (ITF) with fund return benchmark goals set at Australian CPI plus 3.5 per cent.

The starting basis is the mandatory contribution of five per cent from employer and five per cent from employee, with the government increasing staff salaries by five per cent to cover the commencement of the employee contributions. Retirement age is set at 55 years.

Ronphos Minister Aaron Cook reported that the mining company, in May, processed and sold 25,235 tonnes of phosphate ore, with an expected 10,000 tonnes to be loaded on 24 August and a further 25,000 tonne shipment scheduled for late September.

"Ronphos expects primary phosphate mining to be exhausted by the end of October with production solely from secondary mining by December 2018 [onwards]," Minister Cook said.

The company is also undertaking trials on secondary mining and additionally looking at a high priority for future investment - an improved dust management system.

Health minister Charmaine Scotty outlined the work being carried out by the different sections of the public health unit, with the non-communicable disease team, the diabetes clinic, the nutrition unit, stop smoking campaign, health promotion and primary health care.

The Pacific Eye Institute team that recently visited Nauru conducted over 300 eye assessments and performed 53 cataract surgeries.

Ninety five per cent of vacancies have been filled including key senior positions across the public health and RoN Hospital.

Minister Scotty acknowledged and congratulated Stacey Cain for graduation with a Masters in public health and Moralene Capelle for her Masters in health management.

Minister Scotty also thanked the Rotary Club of Nauru for the equipment donated to the hospital.



*Rotary Club of Nauru President Joanna Olsson (L) hands over donations-in-kind medical aids to RoN hospital staff*

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## Parliament sitting 14 August

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Rotary Nauru donated walking aides, commodes, hospital beds, mattresses and linen to the public health unit, emergency department, maternity ward and individuals in the community that were in genuine need of such items.

Minister for Port Authority of Nauru (PAN) Tawaki Kam updated the House on a number of port issues including the employment of the new CEO Bayden Johnson replacing Anton Jimwereiy who has been retained as advisor to the minister.

Minister Kam reported that the government has signed seven land portions in Aiwo and Denig for the port project. The tender award for the port development is expected to be announced in October.



*Demolition of the old port has begun in preparation for the commencement of construction of the new port facility*

In shipping operations the minister said three ships will be scheduled to arrive at the port in close succession in August and therefore coordination in discharge times would be of paramount importance.

President Baron Waqa presented an update on Nauru Post and its intention to seek a waiver of its arrears owed to the Universal Postal Union (UPU), and improvements to services including renewing its partnership with Australian airline Qantas to handle inbound and outbound mail.

Singapore Post has also offered a proposal for business collaboration on mail services; the arrangement is still under negotiations.

In July Nauru Post also received approximately \$107,000 from Australia Post towards outstanding terminal dues, with New Zealand and Fiji to follow suit.

Assistant Minister Lionel Aingimea presented his statement on the Republic's attendance of the 7th Ministerial Conference of the Bali process on people smuggling, trafficking in persons and related transnational crime, in Bali.

At the conference Nauru had several bilateral meetings and presented a statement promoting the efforts of Nauru in dealing with matters of irregular migration including Nauru's experiences with the Regional Processing Centre (RPC).

Minister David Adeang then presented a statement on the Intergenerational Trust Fund (ITF) which now has a total investment value exceeding \$100 million.

"This is a remarkable achievement for a fund in operation only since early 2016," Minister Adeang said.

The minister further thanked the contributors being the Asian Development Bank for the establishment support and initial contribution, and Australia, New Zealand and the Republic of China (Taiwan).

Minister Scotty went on to present a statement on Nauru's attendance at the Austronesian forum in Taiwan which promotes a broad range of issues from governance and democracy to promoting cultural and economic ties.

"The reactivation of the Austronesian Forum could not have occurred at a more opportune time as we in Nauru are ourselves undertaking to revive, strengthen and conserve our national traditions, cultural heritage, knowledge and skills in commemoration of our 50 years of independence," Minister Scotty said.

Sports minister Tawaki Kam gave an update on recent sporting activities such as the upcoming opening of the Nauru Community Sports Complex scheduled for early September and congratulated Jonah Harris, Nauru's sole athlete at the Micronesia Games held in Yap, for his two gold, two silver and a bronze medal in five sports.

President Waqa then presented a statement on his attendance at the sixth Global Environmental Fund (GEF) assembly in Vietnam in June.

The meeting which centres on addressing global environmental issues launched GEF 7 to which Nauru was allocated the total amount of US\$4 million to support and implement projects related to climate change and national sustainable development initiatives.

"I can officially announce that Nauru's priority to the fund will be in the area of land management-sustainability because it is both an adaptation and mitigation project that plays a critical role in the sustainable development of Nauru," President Waqa said.

His Excellency also had bilateral meetings with Vietnam's Prime Minister and President separately on issues of strengthening ties in various fields and promoting cooperation.

Assistant minister for education Vodrick Detsiogo presented a statement on his attendance at the Global Disability Summit in London in July.

Mr Detsiogo underscored that globally an estimated one billion people have a disability, of which 800 million live in developing countries.

"Inclusion of people with disability must be at the heart of all aid, development and humanitarian effort if we are to achieve the United Nations sustainable development goals by 2030.

"Without good quality, consistent data on disability, addressing the rights and needs of people is a challenge and they risk being left behind," Mr Detsiogo said.

President Waqa next presented on his attendance as chief guest at the Climate Action Pacific Partnership (CAPP) in Fiji in July that is part of a program of activities appointed under the Paris Agreement.

Pacific leaders along with representatives from Pacific business, Pacific civil society and the global investment community came together to discuss how to strengthen the region's resilience to the impacts of climate change and further reduce its already low carbon emissions.

The CAPP Conference also hosted the Pacific Leaders' Talanoa Dialogue – a process being undertaken by the global community in 2018 to help countries implement and enhance their national climate commitments.

"At the Talanoa Dialogue, I stated that Nauru wants to get to a world in which all our people can live in dignity. In the world,

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every Nauruan is provided with quality health care and good education,” President Waqa said.

Education Minister Charmaine Scotty updated the House on the highlights of events in the department.

These events include the completion of phase two of the learning village and the opening of the new USP campus in Yaren.

Nauru also successfully hosted the 11th Pacific Islands Forum Education ministers’ meeting (FEMM) with the theme of quality and relevance.

A production of the drama ‘Unravelling Nauru’s truth’ to commemorate Nauru’s 50th anniversary of independence was performed for the FEMM by Nauru Secondary School students with assistance from Nauru College and Yaren Primary School students.

The minister also reported that a review of the effectiveness of Australia-funded education investments since 2014 was undertaken, focusing on the four aid modalities of technical assistance, scholarships, infrastructure for education and a direct funding arrangement.

The minister also updated the House on the graduation of 15 University of New England students with associate degrees in teaching and diplomas in community welfare and wellbeing, and a masters in education leadership.

School principals also did leadership development in Kiribati and Fiji with a second to be done in the Marshalls and Solomon islands in term 3.

An assessment workshop was also trialled by the Pacific Community (SPC) for year 8 and 9 examinations; and the development of the year 7 and 10 creative arts curriculum was completed in June.

A donation of uniforms by Canstruct Services International was also acknowledged. These were presented to the secretary for education.

The 2018 mid-year exams for years 1-8 was cause for concern and disappointment.

“Some of the key findings as a result of the mid-term examination are: An average of 60 per cent of students sat the mid-year examination papers; except for English in year 8, less than 50 per cent of students that sat each paper at each year level passed the subject; in year 8, 54 per cent of students passed English, 14 per cent passed maths, 32 per cent passed science and 44 per cent passed social science; less than 20 per cent of all year 4 students passed each subject,” Minister Scotty said.

As minister for infrastructure, Tawaki Kam updated developments for the department and its continued work on improving roads, general clean up and disposal of derelict items, and upgrade of venues to be used for the Forum meeting in September.

President Waqa informed the House on his meeting with then prime minister of Australia Malcolm Turnbull in Australia and spoke on a number of issues including port development; renewable energy and the potential of enhancing solar energy through new technologies coming online, and through the interesting prospect of utilising seawater hydro systems.

At this same meeting the President agreed to Australia’s request to extend Canstruct’s contract in operating the RPC to April 2019.

Minister for home affairs Charmaine Scotty then presented a statement on the achievements and challenges of the department beginning with the improvement of the secretariat in the transferral of the country focal office for human rights from the justice department.

The clean and green program continues its commitment in keeping Nauru cleaner and greener with community clean-ups and beautification.

The department is also working with community through consultations to enhance knowledge with the new legislation on the Domestic Violence and Family Protection Act and Child Protection and Welfare Act.

Culture and Language hosted an event to celebrate International Mother-Language Day and a poster and story writing competitions; as well as new directors for the tourism office and youth affairs.

A consultant for UNICEF was on-island in August to provide technical assistance in training workshop with child protection staff.

“Women’s Affairs has come through many positives with the pushing for budget allocation for the Domestic Violence and Family Protection Act Committee, the requesting for the budget for women’s initiatives in the implementation of the CEDAW recommendations and most importantly moving towards having a retention of intellectual memory for the future generation to learn and build on,” Minister Scotty said.

Finance minister David Adeang then presented a statement on the port’s sustainable development and climate change resilient connectivity project, highlighting the formal signing of the various port project agreements on 13 August, moving Nauru closer to having its first ever port facility and a landmark achievement for the Waqa government.

The breakdown of contributors for this anticipated AUD\$100 million project is: Asian Development Bank 28 per cent, Green Climate Fund 35 per cent, Government of Australia 18 per cent, and Government of Nauru 19 per cent.

President Waqa presented the final ministerial statement of the sitting on his attendance at the fourth forum foreign ministers meeting in Samoa on 10 August.

“I am pleased to say that the opening discussion paper was on Nauru’s theme for the Forum leaders meeting in the September, “Building a Strong Pacific, Our People, Our Island Our Will”. Our theme set the scene for the remainder of our discussion on: Strengthening the Pacific islands forum’s international engagement and advocacy; regional security – Biketawa Plus declaration; securing the Pacific’s maritime boundaries, and aerial surveillance program in the Pacific,” President Waqa said.

His Excellency also had the opportunity for a bilateral meeting with the New Zealand Foreign Minister Hon. Winston Peters.

“I want to commend the efforts of the New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern and her government in trying to mend our relationship that is now warm and getting stronger.”

President Waqa concluded the presentation of statements by reiterating the importance of the forum leaders meeting which is expected to attract 400 distinguished guests.

The sitting was adjourned at 9.00pm•

# CPSC aims for lower freight charges and more reliable shipping services

The fifth annual general meeting of the Central Pacific Shipping Commission was held on Nauru from 15 to 17 October, the theme of which was CPSC: building stronger shipping services.

The Commission is formed by member countries Nauru, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands and Tuvalu.

This year, CPSC observers Wallis & Futuna signed the CPSC agreement and became full members.

The CPSC is still in its infancy, but is now regarded as the body necessary to provide a forum for raising issues and challenges and suggesting improvements regarding trade facilitation, international and domestic cargo, ship and passenger clearance and more.

Port Authority of Nauru General Manager Anton Jimwerei explained why the CPSC was established in 2014.

“Shipping services to the islands and the isolated islands in particular like Nauru, Kiribati and Tuvalu, were a major matter for (Pacific Island) Forum leaders. They wanted to secure or establish reliable and affordable shipping services to these remote islands.

“At the time, regional transport ministers saw an example with the Micronesian Shipping Commission (MSC).

“They asked the secretariat of the SPC to investigate the possibility of establishing a similar commission for the Central Pacific,” Mr Jimwerei said.

The first AGM of the CPSC was in Suva, Fiji at the SPC Pacific Community offices, as SPC plays a role as Secretariat.

The Marshall Islands hosted in 2015, followed by Nauru (hosting in Suva) in 2016, Kiritimati Island in 2017, and Nauru again in 2018, at the request of Nauru to coincide with Nauru’s 50th anniversary of independence.

## **Day 1: Opening ceremony and CPSC technical committee meeting**

President Waqa officially opened the 5th CPSC annual general meeting in the Tomano room at the Meneñ Hotel, attended by over 40 representatives across CPSC delegations, Government of Nauru departments, commercial shipping operators and interested members of the public.

This was the first of two open to the public sessions advertised on the government notices online distribution feed, as there is high-level public interest in Nauru’s lifeline - shipping.

The President reinforced to delegates the great importance of the meeting, listing the socio-economic impacts of successful outcomes of CPSC negotiations, including food and medical supply security, economic growth, employment creation and a safer and economically-viable maritime industry.

“The role of the CPSC is extremely important for the member countries, with a mandate that will ensure broad social outcomes for our island nation people.

“The mandate specifically addresses the provision of regular, predictable shipping services that are sustainable and with affordable shipping rates,” President Waqa said.

He urged member countries to further strengthen their cooperation, as size and isolation require them to stand in solidarity to achieve the best outcomes for the common good.

As 2017 outgoing host, Kiribati’s Minister of information, communication, transport and tourism development Hon Willie Totataake added,



*CPSC members, technical team and SPC secretariat staff with President Waqa at the opening of the CPSC AGM on 15 October*

“We are indeed looking forward to sharing developmental ideas towards the common vision which is building stronger shipping services”.

Vice president of the Territorial Assembly of Wallis and Futuna Mr Sosefo Motuku then signed the CPSC agreement, joining the commission as a full member before addressing members in French, followed by an English language translation. He spoke of Wallis and Futuna’s new approach over the last two years to ‘regional integration’.

“We have the same issues that we live with regard to shipping.

“We are resolved to engage more in regional cooperation. We are associated member of the Pacific Islands Forum since September 2018, recently a member of the South Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO) and now full member of CPSC,” the Vice President said.

Mr Motuku outlined the benefits his country wishes to gain as a new CPSC member, and the contribution his country will make to the commission.

“We want to reduce shipping costs and by induced effect, consumers’ prices.

“We will contribute to CPSC through new volumes of cargo and for shippers a new market that will participate to what we all, private and public stakeholders, try to achieve: quality shipping services in the Pacific at competitive costs and responding to the needs of our people,” Mr Motuku said.

After the official photo session, the remainder of the day was dedicated to country reports chaired by the technical committee, SPC secretariat financial reports, work plans and budgets moving forward and commercial shipping operator’s reports and performance reviews.

President Waqa hosted the official opening dinner that evening in the Aterebog Restaurant at the Meneñ Hotel.

## **Day 2: CPSC technical committee meeting and side events**

Discussion on day two included entry assurance certificate (EAC) renewals and SPC-CPSC draft protocols and bylaws, with two side events. The morning session covered Maritime Technology Cooperation Centre (MTCC) Pacific and green ports conducted by Pacific Community (SPC) Ocean and Maritime Program Deputy Director, Thierry Nervale.

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SPC assists stakeholders in the maritime industry to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and seek low carbon options. They also offer face to face and online training for young seafarers that now includes environmental modules as they raise awareness and create an attitude shift in the maritime workforce, in line with, for example, the Framework for action on transport services 2011-2020, and in particular theme five regarding the reduction in reliance on fossil fuels.

SPC begins with an energy audit, and before moving to technical solutions, implements simple, common sense and comparatively inexpensive measures such as reducing vessel speed by two knots to achieve up to 25 percent in fuel savings, and retrofitting ships with solar operated LED lighting and refrigeration.

Challenges arise however with a fleet that is on average between 25 and 30 years old, as retrofitting is really only practical on vessels built after the year 2000.

SPC also consult on-shore with 'green' port design and logistics to help countries increase ship turnaround times, minimise their environmental footprint and in climate mitigation.



*MTCC Pacific and green ports side event with SPC's ocean and maritime program deputy director Thierry Nervale on 16 October*

"Part of the energy efficiency of a port is to look at the route inside the port for the forklifts. We can see that the way some ports are being operated is not energy efficient – the way they've decided to store the containers," Mr Nervale said.

Mr Nervale gave the example of Muaiwalu House at the Port of Suva in Fiji which experienced a 21 percent reduction in electricity consumption between 2016 and 2017 simply by increasing the temperature of their air conditioning system. Lighting was converted to LED and eco-driver training was implemented. An annual energy bill of FJ\$2.1 million was reduced by FJ\$300,000 and 32 tonnes in greenhouse gas emissions were avoided via modest measures such as these.

At the end of day two, Nauru stakeholders, with PAN, met with Neptune Pacific Limited for a closed side-event.

### **Day 3: CPSC and EAC holders meeting**

The final day of the CPSC AGM brought together CPSC members and EAC holders to thrash out a win-win for members and shipping transport operators alike.

CPSC members first had to agree amongst themselves on the terms of the negotiations with shipping operators in attendance: PDL, Neptune, Swire, Matson and Kyowa.

Each operator's representative individually attended a 20 minute question and answer session with CPSC member delegates to discuss their company's annual report and performance review, after which members convened for a closed discussion where meeting outcomes were finalised and signed off on.

*Nauru Bulletin* spoke with Tuvalu's chief executive officer in the ministry of communication and transport Dr Tapugao Falefou who described the overall outcome of the CPSC AGM as a 'win-win' for all parties.

Positive discussion was had on the formation of a stand-alone CPSC secretariat separate from the Pacific Community (SPC) who has performed in the role as CPSC secretariat for the last five years since inauguration.

"We've tasked the SPC to come up with a business case of what options that we may transition the SPC secretariat to a full-fledged CPSC secretariat.

"It looks like we have three options; to maintain the existing arrangement; to have only a secretariat with a CEO just to handle administrative issues, or a full-fledged secretariat where we have technical people – legal advisor, economic advisor, etcetera," Dr Falefou said.

Committing to President Waqa's challenge to CPSC members on day one for innovative solutions to bring shipping costs down and guarantee a reliable shipping service, members agreed on a strategy.

In order for the CPSC to perform its due diligence through a comprehensive economic analysis of shipping rates, cargo volumes and routes, it was agreed with shipping operators that the CPSC would issue not five year, but two year interim licences with a submit-to-tender process on expiry.

"The idea was supported by His Excellency's statement the first night we hosted the dinner for the commission (CPSC) to think outside the box and the only way to think outside the box is to tender when it comes to deciding who should provide the service to member countries of the commission," Dr Falefou said.

Day three ended with the handover of the CPSC chairmanship from Nauru to Tuvalu, as they prepare to host CPSC AGM 2019, followed by a dinner hosted by Minister for PAN Hon Tawaki Kam and Mrs Kam.

Minister Kam outlined the CPSCs focus of lowering prices and increasing reliability, and how President Waqa's challenge guided fruitful discussions.

In addition to issuing interim licences to operators and moving towards an independent CPSC secretariat, Minister Kam reported that CPSC members are invited to MSC's AGM in 2019 to learn from their process and network.

"The opportunity will facilitate CPSC members to meet alternate shippers that currently service the north Pacific shipping region, but also have capacity to service the CPSC region," Mr Kam said.

At the end of the evening, President Waqa presented each head of CPSC member delegations with a model *equo* (outrigger canoe) crafted by Donald Apadinuwe•

## Latest Taiwan mobile medical mission success

President Waqa hosted a meeting with Republic of China (Taiwan) Ambassador to Nauru, Joseph Chow, Taiwan embassy staff, the Taiwan mobile medical mission team and senior executives of the Taichung Veterans General Hospital (TVGH) on 11 October to thank them for their work over their 10-day mission in Nauru.



*President Waqa thanks the Taiwan mobile medical team, including TVGHs Tsung Hung Chang (3rd fm R) and Jian-Ying Gau (2nd fm R) in the cabinet room on 11 October*

Nauru's President awarded certificates of appreciation to the Taiwan mobile medical mission team on the occasion of the 107th National Day of ROC Taiwan (known as 'ten-ten') on the previous evening, 10 October.

TVGH's Deputy Superintendent Mr Tsung Hung Chang and Director of Division, Ms Jian-Ying Gau took the opportunity to visit this long-standing mission on Nauru and celebrate "ten-ten" on island with the medical team before departing on 12 October.

The team comprised cardiovascular surgeon Dr. Yung-Szu Wu, otolaryngologist (ENT doctor) Dr. Yu-Yen Chen, ophthalmologist (eye doctor) Dr. Jing-Jie Wang and registered nurses Ms. Hui-Chi Chuang and Ms. Wei-Ling Liao, the latter completing her third mission on Nauru.

During their mission, and working side-by-side with Nauruan medical staff, Dr Wu treated 24 heart patients and performed four operations, Dr Chen consulted with 249 eye patients and performed 48 surgeries, while ENT physician Dr Wang treated 160 patients.

Surgical procedures were possible on this mission as a result of the specialised surgical equipment donation to RoN Hospital earlier this year.

TVGH medical staff offered two pieces of health advice to people living on Nauru.

First, eat healthy to be healthy. Specifically, aim to eat less carbohydrate, eat more fruit and vegetables and make water your drink of choice every time.

Second, practice correct hand washing procedures and routines, and teach them to your children, as this alone dramatically reduces infections, particularly eye infections.

Taiwan mobile medical missions historically occur every six months. However, with Taiwan's commitment to more medical missions at the Pacific islands forum in September, we may see another mission in Nauru before March 2019•

## Nauru partners with the Sovereign Order of Malta

A joint communiqué to establish diplomatic relations was signed between Nauru's Permanent representative to the United Nations (UN), Ambassador Marlene Moses, and the Sovereign Order of Malta's Permanent Observer at the UN, Ambassador Oscar R. de Rojas y Villa at the United Nations in New York on 5 October 2018.

The joint communiqué expresses that both parties are, "desirous to develop and strengthen relations of friendship and cooperation for mutual benefit."

Across the world, the Sovereign Order of Malta is dedicated to the preservation of human dignity and the care of all those in need, regardless of their race or religion.

Its history extends over 900 years. The Sovereign Order of Malta, a lay order of the Catholic Church, was founded in Jerusalem and established in the year 1113.

Its full title is Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta.

The order was granted observer status with the UN in 1994 with a mission to support and extend the humanitarian goals of the Order of Malta and its members. It has diplomatic relations with over 100 states – Nauru has brought this number to 108 - and is now seated in Rome, Italy.



*Nauru's permanent representative to the UN Ambassador Marlene Moses, and the Sovereign Order of Malta's Permanent Observer at the UN, Ambassador Oscar R. de Rojas y Villa after the signing on 5 October*

The Order of Malta is active in 120 countries caring for people in need through its medical, social and humanitarian works.

Ambassador Oscar de Rojas has been the Permanent Observer of the Sovereign Order of Malta to the United Nations since September 2015.

Prior to his present functions, Ambassador Oscar de Rojas, recipient of multiple awards and distinctions for his contributions across the world, had served at the highest levels in roles focussed on finance and economics, international politics and development, working in both diplomatic and academic fields•

For more about the work of the Sovereign Order of Malta, visit <https://www.orderofmalta.int/>



## SingPost delivers in Nauru

Singapore Post vice president of international mail business Fiona Lim visited Nauru on 18 October to meet with President Waqa, Naoero Postal Services Corporation executives and board members and Nauru Post staff.

SingPost, as it is known, is a public company in Nauru to introduce its business model and discuss a joint venture designed to assist Nauru Post in the upgrade of its operations.

President Waqa and Ms Lim exchanged gifts, including Nauru Post first day covers commemorating Nauru's 50th anniversary of independence, and from Singapore, an original framed landscape artwork incorporating a first local stamp.

In last month's address to the United Nations secretary general, President Waqa observed that, "Conventional development strategies are not working in the Pacific".

President Waqa continues to seek 'outside the box' opportunities for Nauru that better fit the Pacific island economic and development context, giving small island states the ability to participate in and contribute to their own fiscal sustainability.

"We are seeking partners that appreciate our challenges and are willing to work with our constraints," President Waqa said.

### *Postal services 'outside the box'*

With traditional mail volumes in decline for many years, postal services around the world have adapted and diversified their business models. At the same time, the explosion in online shopping has dramatically expanded international parcel logistics, handling and delivery services and solutions for postal operators.



*President Waqa with SingPost VP IMB Fiona Lim with Nauru Post acting chair and director Favae Herman (far L) and director Jacqueline Itsimaera (R) on 18 October*

"In 2015 there were about 3.4 billion internet users. Our analysis has forecast that it will double by 2020 to 7.6 billion.

"Connective devices like mobiles, laptops will grow more than three times to about 15 billion devices.

"E-commerce sales will triple to US\$5 trillion by 2020, which is why we see the focus on the e-commerce landscape," Ms Lim said.

Ms Lim visited the Nauru Post shopfront and operations, and spent time with staff to ascertain the needs and potential of Naoero Postal Services Corporation into the future before departing on Friday 19 October•

## Vehicle donation to churches

On Friday 19 October, the Nauru Government presented vehicles to three churches on the island as a token of appreciation for their outstanding support and contribution to government events throughout the year.

President Baron Waqa and cabinet ministers invited church leaders from the Congregational Church, Catholic Church and the Assemblies of God to receive the vehicles on behalf of the government and people of Nauru.

While the government acknowledges the assistance from other churches, "these three churches always front up and offer [their assistance]."

"We just want to say thank you to the churches for their contribution which is well, well noticed and appreciated," President Waqa said.



*President Waqa presents Reverend Roger Mwareow Toyota Rav 4 keys in the cabinet room on 19 October*

"When we ask you to assist our departments in organising events and activities, you are always there. So I would like to say thank you."

President Waqa gave thanks to God for His enduring guidance and protection for everything.

Reverend Roger Mwareow of the Nauru Congregational Church was presented with the keys to a Toyota Rav 4 and Congregational Church Secretary General Peta Gadabu received the keys to a 12-seater Toyota Hiace van.

Reverend Evi Agir of the AOG church and Father Keletolemo on behalf of the Catholic church council each received keys to 12-seater Toyota Hiace vans.

In thanking the church representatives, President Waqa underscored the valuable work and contributions these churches make when it comes to the government's request to assisting in any way in terms of prayer, choirs, and clean-ups, and other events for government functions, especially in the recent major events like the independence day celebrations and Nauru's hosting of regional events in particular the Pacific leaders forum.

The vans will be used by the churches for general purpose and needs•



## Nauru celebrates Taiwan's 107th national day

Nauru and Taiwan joined together at the Meneñ Hotel to celebrate the 107th national day of the Republic of China (Taiwan) on the evening of 10 October.

Taiwan Ambassador Joseph Chin-Fa Chow, embassy staff and their families welcomed Nauru's President Waqa and Madam Louisa Waqa, along with members of parliament and special guests to share the occasion which is also known as double-ten day (tenth day of the tenth month).

Taiwan's Double Ten National Day -- marks the start of the Wuchang uprising on 10 October 1911, which led to the downfall of the Qing Dynasty in China and the formation of Taiwan on 1 January 1912.

Ambassador Chow's opening address spoke to Taiwan's impressive global economic standing, including the fact that Taiwan is rated as the 22nd largest economy in the world.

Commenting on Taiwan's foreign relations, he described Taiwan as exercising "stead-fast diplomacy of mutual assistance for mutual benefit."

On message, Ambassador Chow called again for Taiwan to be included in the United Nations (UN), saying that Taiwan can help the UN meet its goals and asking for "an equal and dignified participation in sustainable development goal-related meetings."

The Ambassador then moved to Nauru-Taiwan relations, thanking Nauru for their unwavering support in international and regional fora and commenting on the friendship based on political, economic and cultural cooperation and shared views about the Pacific region.

He mentioned Taiwan's foreign minister's commitment at the recent Pacific Islands Forum on Nauru to the establishment of a \$US2 million fund, as well as to increase medical missions to Taiwan's Pacific partners.

After presenting a \$US300,000 cheque to President Waqa as sponsorship of the fibre optic connectivity project, Ambassador Chow spoke of the future.



*Ambassador Chow presents President Waqa with a cheque for Nauru's fibre optic local connectivity project on Taiwan's 107th national day held at Menen Hotel 10 October*

"The bi-lateral relations between Nauru and Taiwan are always moving forward. We look forward to further realising the potential that exists between our two countries," Ambassador Chow said.

President Waqa responded, reiterating Taiwan's success, and offering his observations.

"Its (Taiwan's) institutions and corporations are some of the finest in the world, its economy is robust and its level of development exceeds that of many Western countries. Most importantly, its people are vibrant, prosperous and happy," the President said.

He thanked Taiwan for its support for Nauru in a range of ways – direct financial contributions, technical expertise and equipment, contributions to the intergenerational trust fund, the Taiwanese technical mission (TTM), educational scholarships and more.

"A friend is always at hand to support us – in good times and hard times. I am honoured to say that Taiwan is a true friend," the President said.

President Waqa made Taiwan an assurance.

"On my part, I will continue to advocate for Taiwan at international and regional fora. I have done so many times during my term as president and I can assure you, Ambassador Chow, that I will continue to do so as long as I am President of Nauru.

"We will stand up and support our freedom-loving friends from Taiwan," the President declared.

His Excellency concluded with a toast to an ever-stronger Nauru-Taiwan friendship, thanking Taiwan's leadership and embassy staff on Nauru before presenting the latest Taiwan mobile medical mission team with certificates of appreciation from the Department of health and medical services (DHMS), signed by Minister for Health Hon Charmaine Scotty.

Taiwan Embassy's Councillor Shau Ann Lee then led guests through an evening of good food and entertainment as the evening's master of ceremonies.

In gaining a deeper understanding of Taiwan's mission in Nauru and in the region, Taiwan's agenda, as outlined by President Tsai on 10-10 day, is helpful.

She said that Taipei had to strengthen diplomatic ties and establish its "irreplaceable strategic importance", adding that Taiwan's advocacy for freedom, democracy and a market economy had helped it to become a model for Asian democracy, to develop a strong economy and win the support of like-minded countries.

While the United States remains Taiwan's largest supporter, President Tsai named Japan, the European Union and some of its allies as other sources of support to help strengthen the island's international presence and role in the world.

In supporting Taiwan, the Pacific region, and Nauru specifically then, are a part of this strategic global support network•

### Health messages

from the

**Taiwan mobile medical mission to Nauru:**

1. eat healthy to be healthy
2. practice regular handwashing to avoid infections, especially eye infections

## Nauru celebrates Fiji Day 10 October

Nauru's Fijian-nationals community invited Nauru to join with them to celebrate their national day, Fiji Day, on the evening of 13 October at the Naoero community sports centre at Yaren.

Fiji Day falls on 10 October each year, celebrating Fiji's anniversary of independence – now the 48th.

His Excellency President Baron Waqa and Madam Louisa Waqa were guests of honour at the celebration hosted by representatives of the Fiji community on Nauru, including Fiji Community chair Mr Maritino Nemani and mistress of ceremonies for the night, lawyer with the justice department, Ms Laisani Tabuakoro.

The evening began with a traditional Fijian chief-guest welcoming ceremony, presided over by the *mataivanua* (a herald or spokesperson) where a *sevusevu* welcome is presented on behalf of the community and the ceremonial kava is shared.

Chief guest President Waqa then addressed attendees, congratulating Fiji on its milestone and reminding all to remember those who came before, working ceaselessly for the freedoms Fijians and Nauruans enjoy today as peoples of independent nations.

He spoke of the working relationship Nauru has with Fiji, thanking all Fijians on Nauru for their service.

Nauru is advanced by the expertise of Fijians working across almost every sector of government, including education, health, justice, hospitality, administration and human resources.

“We (the people of Nauru) have benefitted greatly from our cooperation with Fiji.

“We have the teacher's exchange, retired public servants and very beneficial to our police is the cooperation between our two (police) forces.

“Thank you for your contribution to this country, for your effort in developing Nauru. We appreciate your service,” President Waqa said.

He assured the Fiji community that the relationship is ongoing.

“We will continue to need the service of Fiji people here on Nauru. You are part of our big Nauru family,” the President said.

President Waqa concluded by paying a personal tribute to Mr Nemani, thanking and commending him for his tireless work and for his leadership role as Fiji community chair in keeping



*President Waqa and Fiji community chair Maritino Nemani cut the Fiji Day cake on 13 October celebrating Fiji's 48th year of independence*

the community united and focussed on their work in Nauru. Mr Nemani, he said, always kept him updated, and advised and assisted him.

In reply, Mr Nemani thanked past leaders of Fiji for their vision and achievement of independence, and their aspirations to be a good democracy with citizens who wish to contribute and serve, for example, by sharing their skills and talents overseas.

“I thank His Excellency, his members of cabinet, chief secretary for having faith in us to come and serve,” Mr Nemani said.

The national anthems of Fiji and Nauru were next, with a special rendition of *Nauru Bwiema* sung by Nauru-based Fijian girl Adi Soroutu followed by the cutting of the Fiji Day cake by President Waqa and Mr Nemani.

Reverend Roger Mwareow then blessed the food, which included traditional Fijian *lovo*, *kokoda* (raw fish in coconut cream, lime and chilli), *palusami* (baked taro leaf in coconut cream) and Indian-style curries with roti.

Guests were entertained throughout the evening by performances of the *meke vakamalolo* (seated dance) and the *meke wesi* (spear dance), along with a hula duo, and dancing to live music.

The distinctive harmonies of the *Boe Domumwans* were a fitting end to the 48th year of independence of Fiji celebrations on Nauru for another year•

## Eben Omo enviro-watch: fishing

Eben Omo is an environmental awareness campaign run by the environment division of the department of commerce, industry and environment (CIE).

*Nauru Bulletin* will feature Eben Omo key campaign messages to educate the public and change behaviour to improve environmental outcomes for Nauru.

**Issue:** lack of inshore fisheries management in Nauru

**Target audience:** reef fishers, community decision makers

**Problem statements:**

- unregulated in-shore fishing means less fish and smaller fish are being caught every year
- fish are not being allowed to grow to maturity to breed and restock the reef
- many breeds are disappearing from the reef; one example is the grouper

**So what?**

*Less fish means:*

- fishers are spending more time and money to catch anything
- increased reliance on expensive and unhealthy imported foods
- our Nauruan way of life – a life where eating fresh local fish is the norm – is under threat
- the health of the reef will continue to decline

**Solutions:**

There are many success stories throughout the Pacific region. Communities need to take the lead in establishing rules that everyone agrees to:

- minimum sizes of fish caught
- ‘bag’ limits on quantities caught

## Eben Omo enviro-watch: fishing

- allocating protected breeding areas on the reef
- respecting fish breeding seasons
- supporting restocking programs
- minimising damage to the reef from people and equipment
- zero chemicals on the reef

### Benefits:

- Fish stocks and sizes will increase

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- Income potential for fishers and savings for families will increase
- Nauruans' way of life will survive and thrive for future generations to enjoy.

The next edition of *Nauru Bulletin* will discuss how families can eat healthier and earn an income as fruit and vegetable growers•

## HE's rendition of Mahatma Ghandi's song goes global

His Excellency's rendition of Mahatma Ghandi's favourite song has become the highlight of the final compilation of videos submitted worldwide as part of Ghandi's 150th birth anniversary celebrations.

Artists from over 124 countries contributed musically in paying homage to Mahatma Ghandi through his favourite song 'Vaishnava Jan To Tene Kahiye',

President Baron Waqa and Nauru's high commissioner to Fiji, Kim Aroi recorded the song in Fiji on 23 July.

India's Ministry of Foreign Affairs selected video submissions from over 40 countries and edited into a five-minute compilation of the song's rendition. The medley version was launched by India's Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi during the closing ceremony of the Mahatma Ghandi International Sanitation

Conference in the presence of the Secretary General of the United Nations on 2 October in New Delhi.

In a letter by India's high commissioner to Nauru, Mr Vishvas Sapkal conveyed heartfelt gratitude to President Waqa for the "historical gesture which is, I am sure, etched in the memory of not only the Hon Prime Minister of India but all those who have viewed the magnificent shorts from beautiful Nauru and have had a listen to the soulful voice of His Excellency the President and Ambassador Kim Aroi."

President Waqa's gesture was seen as a special tribute to Mahatma Ghandi and a personal gift to India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi•

The compilation video can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DEXIPHOY-BI> . Nauru's video comes in at 2:29.

## A passion for sport and culture

The \$US600 received by the Sports department in August to assist with the promotion of traditional sports in Nauru has been prudently allocated by Community Project Coordinator Brenda Waidubu.

Dedicated sportswoman Ms Waidubu, who was Pacific islands forum steering committee traditional sports vice-chairperson, has volunteered for many years in her community of Anabar, rallying members to form sports teams to participate in independence and constitution day events playing *itsibweb*, *karaduga*, *ibibwo*, *akaberere* and *atsi*.

She attributes her love of sport and culture to her upbringing, where traditional practices were highly valued. She now has the opportunity to pass on her knowledge and understandings to her own children and all generations on Nauru, both in schools and the wider community.

With her traditional sports promotion team of around 15 passionate volunteers, Ms Waidubu conducts research in the community to inform traditional sports players.

"The 'young-at-heart' (older citizens) have their own stories of the games and the rules," Ms Waidubu said.

Part of the donation received in August was allocated to weavers who made traditional sporting equipment and traditional attire for events during the Pacific islands forum in early September, and the performers who entertained visitors, including the leader's spouse program at the frigate bird watch at Anabar.

More sports equipment and traditional wear is required for Angam Day this year, and the Government of India donation will help to cover those ongoing expenses needed to continue to support the promotion of traditional sports play on Nauru•



Nauru traditional sports attire and equipment

Photos: Brenda Waidubu

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Republic of Nauru

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