



Nauru Bulletin

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President addresses world health assembly

Assessing the benefits of developing a WHO convention, agreement or other international instrument on pandemic preparedness and response

President Lionel Aingimea addressed the special session of the World Health Assembly convened to discuss and assess the benefits of developing a World Health Organisation (WHO) convention, agreement or other international instrument on pandemic preparedness and response.

The President's recorded statement, delivered on 30 November highlights the support of key development partners, call for sustainable health financing and governance, and inclusive dialogue particularly across Pacific Island countries.

Two years after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, President Aingimea reiterates that much of the developing world remains without adequate vaccine supplies.

Nauru's swift action to set up its capture and contain strategy in March 2020 to mitigate the risk of COVID entering Nauru was tough but necessary.



Nauru supports the strengthening of global health governance and the call for sustainable financing for the WHO

Although the airline's island destinations have been suspended, weekly cargo and passenger flights to and from Brisbane continue, posing continued risk of COVID transmission in to Nauru.

President Aingimea says the government's quick and sustained actions could not have been possible without the support of partners.

"Fostering inter-sectoral and intergovernmental cooperation and collaboration is essential if we are to successfully institute a global response and preparedness to COVID-19 and future pandemics.

"It is therefore imperative that an intergovernmental process if it were to be established, be diverse and inclusive ensuring that all stakeholders, not only member countries, are engaged," the President said speaking to the persistent exclusion of countries like Taiwan.

"Continuing to omit countries like the Republic of China (Taiwan) creates a gap that undermines global preparedness and response to health emergencies."

The President urges that lessons be learnt from the experiences of the pandemic and to honour the lives lost, as well as to develop inclusive processes that would better prepare the world to effectively respond to future pandemics and health emergencies.

Cont pg 2...

Remembrance day - Lest We Forget

His Excellency President Lionel Aingimea and Madam Ingrid Aingimea laid the first wreath on Remembrance Day at the cenotaph in front of the government office in Yaren, commemorating the 103rd anniversary of the signing of the Armistice in 1918 ending four years of the First World War.

The Memorial Guard mounted by the Nauru Police Force took charge as the flags of Nauru, Australia and New Zealand were lowered to half-mast.

The Ode of Remembrance was read by master of ceremony Dagaban Harris, followed by the playing of the Last Post, two minutes' silence, and the Reveille played by Ag Senior Constable Esson Temaki as the flags are hoisted to full-mast.

Remembrance Day honours the service men and women who died during wars, conflict and peace-keeping operations.

Formerly known as Armistice Day - in reference to the German surrender in 1918, the name was changed to Remembrance Day in 1945 •



President Aingimea and Madam Aingimea pay their respects on Remembrance Day

Produced by the Government Information Office

President address world health assembly

...from pg 1

Nauru acknowledges the work being done to strengthen WHO preparedness and responses and agrees with the general consensus that several key aspects of health emergency preparedness and response may not be addressed solely within the scope of international health regulations.

The President says these issues may be best addressed independently through other tools or instruments available through the WHO.

“There is need for clarity on the way forward, with an early decision to whether to strengthen the international health regulations and/or to develop a new instrument on health security and pandemic preparedness and response.

“The need for sharing data and lesson learning has taken on an increased urgency in this pandemic as it can literally mean life or death of our people. As this pandemic unfolds it is clear that no one is safe until we are all safe.”

Under normal circumstances and the increased burden of communicable and non-communicable diseases, many small island developing nations like Nauru, struggle to sustain its health systems.

In this respect, President Aingimea says Nauru supports the strengthening of global health governance and the call for sustainable financing for the WHO and the potential benefits it would bring.

“We further note that there is an immediate need to ensure that the special interests of island nations are adequately considered, particularly to ensure equity across low to middle income member states,” President Aingimea said, concluding that “leaving no one behind” is a global responsibility.

“Only through unity and inclusiveness can the global community triumph over this pandemic and future health emergencies, ensuring that no-one are left behind.” •

Gazette 202-21

Extension of Declaration of National Emergency for the Management and Minimisation of the Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19)

His Excellency President Lionel Rouwen Aingimea, MP, hereby extend the National Emergency for the Management and Minimisation of the Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) declared on 16th March 2020 for a further period of 30 days.

Dated 3rd December 2021

Three vaccines added to register

The Naoero Public Health Centre launched three new vaccines for infants, children and girls bolstering its national immunisation register and to protect the young and vulnerable, 26 November.

The three vaccines for pneumococcal conjugate (PCV), rotavirus (RV), and the human papillomavirus (HPV) were received through the support of the World Health Organisation, UNICEF and Rotary International.



Infant receives the rotavirus vaccine at the launch of three new vaccines

The PCV can prevent pneumococcal disease which according to the Centre for Disease Control (CDC) refers to any illness caused by pneumococcal bacteria. These bacteria can cause many types of illnesses, including pneumonia, which is an infection of the lungs. Pneumococcal bacteria are one of the most common causes of pneumonia.

The RV is for protection against a highly infectious stomach bug that typically affects babies and young children, causing diarrhoea and vomiting, tummy ache and a high temperature; and the HPV protects girls and women against cervical cancer.

“One of the biggest threats we found in that area was women who, because at a young age were abused and did not have access to cervical cancer vaccine would very early on in their lives be infected of course with cervical cancer,” President Lionel Aingimea said.

The Department of Health aims to vaccinate younger girls with the HPV from 11 to 13 years of age as studies from the WHO have shown it works best with this age group.

Minister for Health and Medical Services Isabella Dageago hopes that by year’s end “to fully cover our targeted population and for the subsequent years.”

According to Department of Health data, of the 41 women diagnosed with cervical cancer since 2016, 26 of them have passed away due to the disease.

UNICEF Pacific Representative Jonathan Veitch says pneumonia and diarrhoea are among the top three causes of mortality in children under the age of five in the Pacific.

“Around a third of all pneumonia deaths are due to pneumococcal disease, which is usually transmitted through contact with infected children. Rotaviruses are the leading cause of severe diarrhoea in children.”

The launch included administering the vaccines to young girls and children •

Aus-Nauru sign \$1.4m hospital funding

Nauru and Australia signed a \$1.4 million direct funding agreement (DFA) a day ahead of the commissioning of the acute care unit at the RON Hospital, 25 November.

Finance Minister Martin Hunt and Australian High Commissioner Dr Helen Cheney signed the DFA that will see the bulk of the funding go towards specialised medical equipment while \$25,000 is earmarked for refurbishment and fit-out for laundry needs for the unit.



Finance Minister and Australian High Commissioner sign the DFA for specialised medical equipment, training and vaccine roll-out

The funding is divided into five priority areas -- specialised medical equipment and diagnostics, infection prevention and control, mRNA vaccine management/vaccination roll-out, education and training, general clinical equipment; and laundry fit-out.

The objectives align with the overarching strategic directions outlined in relevant Government of Nauru and the health department's planning documents, such as the government's National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS) 2019-2030 addressing social and community sectors.

The Ministry of Health & Medical Services national health strategic plan 2016-2020 has four key result areas including health systems; primary health care and healthy islands; curative health; support services and networking.

The health department's annual operational plan 2020-2021 outlines key result areas in health secretariat and health systems; curative health; primary health and healthy islands; quality, planning operations and performance; training and professional development.

The ward, designed for high risk cases requiring isolation such as tuberculosis and COVID-19, will have its separate laundry facility which will ensure infections are contained, eliminating any cross contamination.

The COVID-19 Taskforce will cover freight costs and the procurement managed by the Taskforce and the health ministry •

Acute care unit commissioned

A milestone achievement in the preparation against COVID-19 was reached upon the handover and commissioning of the acute care unit at the RON Hospital, 26 November.

Minister for Health Isabella Dageago acknowledged donors for their unwavering support and unveiled the plaque to the 17-bed acute care unit which will be an essential facility in the care and treatment of patients especially in the event of COVID-19.



Acute care unit staff demonstrate prone positioning - placing a patient on their stomach to improve oxygen flow

The Minister says over 100 clinical staff have undergone training in early intervention of acute respiratory disease syndrome focusing on COVID management; adding that while there are no COVID cases on Nauru, the ministry is using the time to recruit essential staff to adequately equip human resources needs in this area.

“The acute care unit is designed to meet the challenges that the global pandemic faces in managing positive COVID critical cases in the clinical areas.

“The set-up of the unit includes a specific ventilation system to optimise ventilation which is imperative in the care of COVID patients,” the Minister said underscoring that the ventilation system minimises the risk of COVID-19 exposure on the staff.

Minister Dageago confirms the unit has increased the hospital bed capacity by a third, from 50 beds to 67.

“It will be outfitted to ensure a high standard of ongoing acute and critical care services to hopefully meet the demands of COVID or any other surge in the future.

“The state-of-the-art facility is in line with the [government's] Desperate Imagination goals and it will therefore determine and set the benchmark for infrastructure standards for our hospital. Also it will increase the level of standard of care that the hospital provides,” Minister Dageago said.

Australian High Commissioner Helen Cheney said it was a “tremendous achievement”, and the Nauru government “is not only positioned to protect the health of Nauruans from COVID-19 but also that there is the capacity to provide the highest level of clinical care services beyond COVID-19 into the future.”

A day earlier on 25 November, the High Commissioner and Finance Minister Martin Hunt signed a direct funding agreement to address priority areas and final fit out of the unit.

Cont pg 4...

Acute care unit commissioned

...from pg 3

Taiwan Ambassador Dean Wang said his government is pleased to be part of this achievement and took the opportunity to sign an MOU reaffirming the commitment between the ministry of health and Taiwan's Taichung Veterans General Hospital for ongoing medical treatments for Nauruans.

Deputy Secretary for Health Andrew O'Connell said at the onset of the global pandemic the government laid an aggressive response to ensure the safety of the Nauru population from the new coronavirus including the early establishment of the national COVID-19 Taskforce, and conversations quickly pivoted towards the introduction of the COVID-19 vaccinations.

"Ensuring that all eligible persons residing in Nauru received a COVID-19 vaccine is a key public health strategy which aims to limit the potential morbidity and mortality associated with COVID-19 infection if COVID-19 were to arrive to Nauru," Mr O'Connell said.

Mental health training commence

Training for twelve individuals on mental health services has commenced with the assistance of the International Health and Medical Services (IHMS) at the RON Hospital, 12 November.

The three-month training covered the fundamentals of providing mental health services, mental health risk assessment, crises response and basic health recovery approaches. Participants will attain certificates for basic mental health care.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) suicide is the second leading cause of death among 15 to 29 year olds.

The participants are employed across various government departments and state-owned entities.

The training aims to help the community and trained staff take the first step by treating non-aggressive, mild and moderate cases; and further expand as they move forward in the long-term.

On the first day of training the team were briefed then taken on a tour of the hospital and the new hospital facilities and where they will be based.

Kayser student's pass-out parade

Kayser College students performed a pass-out parade at the government office complex after completing cadet training with the Nauru Police Force, 2 December.

The 27-hour, nine week training is an initiative launched by the NPF to help promote discipline, order and a sense of pride in schools. Training for the next school will take place next year.

In his capacity as Minister for Police, President Lionel Aingimea says such training brings the young population and the police together.

"Apart from the fact that there would now be a closer fostering of the relationship between the Nauru Police Force and the young population of the republic, it also brought about the fact that you as students will get to know what the police do, you as students will be able to identify who the police are and you as students will be able to respect that uniform that they wear."

Trainer, Inspector Sakiusa Tikotani says students had to overcome challenges getting used to the manoeuvres, but ultimately were

"The strengthening of the health system is ongoing and we are here today to witness another major milestone in that journey – the handover and commissioning of our new acute care unit. This acute care unit will be an essential facility in the care and treatment of patients especially in the event of COVID reaching our shores."

A tour of the facility included a demonstration of prone positioning – placing a patient on their stomach to improve oxygenation.

The unit's concept design, design development, construction documentation, furniture, fixtures, and equipment, were done by Australian company Architects Dewar and Associates.

Local construction company Central Meridian Inc., was contracted to do the construction work which was completed months prior •



Staff from across government departments and SOEs take part in mental health training

The Department of Health asks the general public for their support and understanding on matters surrounding mental health so as to make a meaningful and positive impact to those in the community who may be suffering from a mental illness.

Currently, on Nauru, 152 people have been diagnosed with a mental health condition at varying stages; 35 of whom are on active treatment and medication •



President Aingimea says cadet training brings together the young population and the police

successful in coordination and working together as a team.

The parade was led by Parade Commander Kyle Itsimaera, Detachment Commanders Christopher Ribauw and Yoshiko Deireragea, whose roles are to issue the orders as the parade marches into position, and Colour Sergeant Elijah Arawateiti.

Each cadet will receive a cadet certificate for successfully completing the requirements as prescribed in the program •

Passport scanner ease processes

Slow manual immigration checks will be a thing of the past with the introduction of a passport scanner, 22 October.

The launch of the airport scanner will bolster the work of the immigration department's international arrivals processes.



Immigration official demonstrates the operations of the new passport scanner

The scanner is an imaging device that takes photographs of identity documents, such as passports for verification and data reading purposes; making it a more efficient and effective system.

The passport scanners will also help to screen passengers by verifying their eligibility to enter Nauru and also track entry and exit movements of passengers.

Additionally this also means that passports will not be collected and held by immigration unless absolutely necessary.

Visas can be issued on arrival to people with eligible passports and assist authorities have efficient access to passenger information such as travel history.

Minister for Justice and Border Control Maverick Eoe says these small improvements will contribute to bettering the country and the services that it offers to its people.

Minister Eoe adds that while the previous system was already functioning well, the department wanted "to take that extra step" to make improvements.

Prior to the introduction of the new system, passport checks were done manually and recorded using pen and paper which was difficult to maintain and store, and generally a much slower process.

The department went live with its digital visa processing system in October 2017, which now works in tandem with the new border management system •

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Police force welcomes new recruits

The Nauru Police Force (NPF) welcomes 18 new recruits in a graduation ceremony held at the Centennial Hall, 16 November.

Recruits Vicromic Starr, Marson Notte, Francis Togagae and Brujaldo Saxon each received special awards for highest marks in all examinations, leadership, all-rounder, and most improved, respectively.



Police recruits learn to stand tall and overcome fears when enforcing the law

The graduates completed five months training at the NPF training centre (NPFTC), focusing on theory and practical skills on relevant laws and policies, giving them the knowledge and understanding to implement the best policing practices.

Superintendent Gregor Garoa said the NPF recruitment program training curriculum was designed to produce high quality police men and women to deliver the best policing services to the people of Nauru and the government.

The training program also involved physical training to maintain fitness, officer's safety training, public order management, rescue of a drowning person, basic fire response and first aid.

Minister for Police, His Excellency President Lionel Aingimea addressed the new recruits encouraging them that the job "places upon you the skills and responsibilities that are found in fractions in other jobs."

"On a daily basis you are asked for the safety for the public, property and other officers before you."

NPF recruit and leadership award recipient, Marson Notte spoke of the challenges.

"We have to be courageous, to be different, to stand tall and overcome our fears when enforcing the laws and to show to our government, the Nauru Police Force, and the people of the Republic of Nauru that we are here for them and that we are the finest," Mr Notte said.

The day before the graduation ceremony, the 18 recruits swore their oaths of office before Resident Magistrate His Worship Penijamini Lomaloma at the Central Police Station in Yaren district •

Hilda Heine is first female Micronesian USP pro-chancellor

As the leader of the Micronesian Presidents' Summit, His Excellency President Lionel Aingimea takes great pleasure in congratulating Dr Hilda Heine on her appointment as the first female Micronesian to be selected to the position of pro-chancellor and chair of council for The University of the South Pacific (USP).



Dr Heine takes up the role as the first female Micronesian but second Micronesian after Kiribati

This is a huge accolade for Micronesia and extremely fitting that a great educationalist takes on this role at the region's premier university.

On 12 November the USP Council unanimously appointed Dr Heine for a term of three years commencing 1 January 2022.

Dr Heine is the second Micronesian to hold the position after Mr Ieremia Tabai of Kiribati who held the post from 1991 to 1997.

USP is renowned for nurturing future leaders and having Dr Heine at the helm of the council will provide the leadership required to help USP achieve its aspirational goals.

This appointment follows a trail of notable 'firsts' for Dr Heine's whose remarkable career, resilient leadership regionally and internationally demonstrates an exceptional choice by the University Council.

Dr Heine is a seasoned and renowned educator and politician in the Pacific. Having scaled every level of the education fraternity in her career, Dr Heine's illustrious background and profound knowledge on education are great assets to the University.

Dr Heine is also a strong advocate for climate action and women's rights and she has pioneered and founded many organisations propelled to protecting the environment and the vulnerable in society.

Dr Heine is not new to USP, having served in her capacity as the Marshall Islands minister for education from 2012 to 2015 and member of the USP council; then as president of the Republic of the Marshall Islands from 2016 to 2020 during which she served as USP chancellor from July 2019 to 12 January 2020.

On behalf of the Micronesian Presidents' Summit, we wish Dr Heine well in her new leadership role and congratulate her for this milestone achievement •

NAURU BULLETIN

USP open day, VCP farewelled

USP Nauru held an open day at its local campus with staff and students also bidding farewell to Vice-Chancellor and President Professor Pal Ahluwalia as he heads to Samoa where he will be based, 18 November.

The program officially started with an opening prayer by Reverend Jezza Agadio, followed by the national anthem and speeches.



Nauru USP student council president George Joram presents VCP Professor Pal Ahluwalia with a painting as staff and students bid him farewell

In his address, Professor Ahluwalia said his experience in Nauru gave him a broader understanding of the issues that uniquely affect regional campuses and that USP must continue to aim higher to gain world recognition so as to increase the standards and services to the people in the Pacific.

"We want the world to realise that excellence exists in USP," the VC said.

To that end, The Times Higher Education Rankings (THE) ranked USP as amongst the top 10 per cent of universities in the world and ranked 11th in the World Universities Real Impact (WURI) Ranking System in the category of 'Crisis Management' 2021.

USP Campus Director Sarina Tamakin said that they have been happy to have Professor Ahluwalia work with them on campus for most of the year.

The VCP's presence is beneficial for small regional campuses like Nauru in that it provides the VCP first-hand insight of the challenges faced by regional campuses.

Nauru Secondary School (NSS) students in attendance were encouraged to apply for USP courses upon graduation •



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Tributes pour in for former president Kinza Clodumar

On behalf of the government and people of Nauru, His Excellency President Lionel Aingimea pays tribute to veteran politician and former president of the Republic of Nauru, Kinza Clodumar, following his passing at the age of 76.

Mr Clodumar is the only Nauruan politician to have been elected to parliament in two different constituencies.

His political career spanned three decades since entering politics as a Member of Parliament for the constituency of Aiwo in the Second Parliament in 1971 and for six consecutive parliaments until 1982; then as a member for Boe from the 12th to 15th Parliament (1995-2004).

In December 1986 Mr Clodumar was the speaker of parliament for a short term; and served as president from February 1997 until June 1998.

Over the course of the 13th to 15th parliament (1999-2003) he held several ministerial portfolios including minister assisting the president, finance, Nauru Phosphate Royalties Trust (NPRT), foreign affairs, justice, environment, Island, Development & Industry (now Commerce, Industry & Environment), civil aviation and transport.

Outside of parliament, Mr Clodumar held numerous positions as chairman of corporations such as RONFin, Nauru Insurance, Nauru superannuation, and Nauru Air Corporation; as well as special presidential advisor, secretary to cabinet, acting chief secretary, registrar, and public service commissioner.

Educated at The Scots School Bathurst, in the Australian state of New South Wales, he was head prefect in his final year. He went on to study at the Australian National University and graduated with a BA in Political Science.

Mr Clodumar passed away peacefully on the afternoon of Monday 29 November. On the wishes of his family, a low-key state funeral was accorded the former president on Tuesday 30 November. He is survived by his wife Mirosława, five children, seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren •



*Kinza Clodumar
8 February 1945 ~ 29 November 2021*

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Republic of Nauru

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