



Consultation on the Revised Kyoto Convention

The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFAT) and the Nauru Customs Service organised a stakeholder consultation meeting on the International Convention on the simplification and harmonisation of customs procedures informally known as the Revised Kyoto Convention (RKC), 16 March.

RKC is widely regarded as the blueprint for modern and efficient Customs procedures in the 21st century. With its statutory provision, the RKC promotes effective controls and trade facilitation through application of simple yet efficient customs procedures.

Some governing principles that RKC elaborates on are the predictability and transparency of customs actions, simplified procedures for authorised persons, maximum use of information technology, standardisation and simplification of goods declaration, and supporting documents.

Deputy Secretary for DFAT Christiana Detenamo, in her opening statement, explained the purpose of the meeting



DFAT and Nauru Customs officials with participants at the RKC consultation

which is to discuss and exchange views on the benefits of Nauru acceding to the Revised Kyoto Convention.

“Because of the legally binding nature of the RKC, accession to the RKC will send out a clear and firm signal or message to traders, investors and other stakeholders inside and outside the country that the Government of Nauru is committed to promote and maintain efficient and modern Customs procedures consistent with modern international standards, and ensure that legitimate trade is facilitated

without compromising the Customs controls function. This also assists in attracting Foreign Direct Investment.”

Many RKC measures are expected to improve Customs release times at the borders.

Faster release times of goods will benefit both customers and administrations as they will be able to process more transactions without delay at borders.

RKC also improves the revenue collection as faster custom release times and lower trade costs will increase imports and a larger tax base will reduce incentives for smuggling.

Presentations were conducted by United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) Trade and Security Adviser Tevita Tupou and Customs and Border Consultant Viliame Raikuna.

Representatives from the finance department, business stakeholders and brokers around the island were invited to participate •

New high commission opens in Fiji

The relocated and renovated Nauru High Commission office in Fiji’s capital Suva was officially opened by His Excellency President Russ Kun, 6 March, at 28 Ratu Sukuna Road, Nasese.

The property is owned by the Government of Nauru and served as the residence of many of Nauru’s consul generals and high commissioners.

“Today marks a very proud moment for the government and people of Nauru,” President Kun said.

“For us, this is much more than just the opening of a new office. It is a culmination of many years of dedication, planning, and hard work. This facility represents our shared history, our common values, and aspirations and it is a testament to the close and very special bond of friendship between the people of Nauru and Fiji.”

While it may be a new office President Kun explains that Nauru has had a very long association with the building.

“In fact, we bought this property soon after Nauru established diplomatic ties with Fiji many years ago, but our government has, up until now, used it as a residence for our diplomats and other officials posted in Suva.

“I, too, lived some of my childhood years in this very spot, and I still have vivid memories of the time spent here.”

President Kun also thanked the Government and people of Fiji for their assistance and support which enabled the opening of the new office, as well as those who contributed to the construction and outfitting of the building.

The President acknowledged High Commissioner Michael Aroi for successfully overseeing the project despite the challenges of COVID-19 and budgetary constraints.

Construction began in August 2020 and concluded in September 2022.

Cont pg 2...

New high commission opens in Fiji

...from pg 1

Mr Aroi said the construction took a long time because it began at the start of the COVID pandemic causing massive delays to construction with the strict rules on people movement, and very limited to no building materials available.



HC Michael Aroi with staff members at the opening of the new office

At one point the tradesmen and construction personnel had to reside at the house while they finished the renovations due to the strict national rules in regards to moving around.

The previous office at Ratu Sukuna House in downtown Suva had been the location of the consul headquarters for over 40 years.

The renovations to the property maintained the original footprint but a second floor was added extending what was a smaller second level.

The opening was attended by Deputy Ministers Asterio Appi, Reagan Aliklik, Jason Bingham Agir, Jesse Jeremiah, and Acting Chief Secretary Ipia Gadabu, members of the diplomatic corps, PIF Acting SG Manoni, and SPC Suva's Paola Vivili, and members of the Nauruan community in Fiji •



US Navy Commander visit

The Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade (DFAT) hosted the visit this week of US Navy Commander Victor Lange in what is a further step towards solidifying the Nauru-US relations, and the Pacific as a whole.



Commander Lange delivering his address to the students of NSS

Commander Lange who is with the United States Navy as a Senior Defense Official and Defense Attaché to Nauru, arrived on Monday 13 March and conducted meetings with Nauru officials and engaged with the community.

This was his first visit to Nauru. He was also welcomed to a special assembly at Nauru Secondary School, and delivered inspirational and encouraging advice to the students who in turn asked questions about Commander Lange's experience in the navy, wartime, and his uniform.

Next stop was with DFAT Deputy Secretary Christiana Detenamo and Director Masau Detudamo who explain that as a Pacific country, it is vital that the United States works together with partners and allies to maintain peace and stability throughout the region.

The visit was extremely productive with face to face meetings that brought a greater understanding of our two countries.

Additionally, it gave a greater understanding of the important work that other partners are conducting with Nauru and overall, the visit will pave the way for greater collaboration and cooperation with the United States in the future.

Commander Lange is based in Suva, Fiji with his family. In his role as the Defense Attaché, Commander Lange is accredited to the Republic of Fiji, the Republic of Kiribati, the Republic of Nauru, Tuvalu, and the Kingdom of Tonga •

Safety First!

- * Drive safely
- * Be considerate with other motorists
- * Wear your helmet
- * Have your drivers' licence ready for police inspection
- * Have a designated driver if you plan to consume alcohol
- * Don't drive if you're underaged
- * Be responsible and let's all have a safe week ahead

God bless Nauru!

Central Shipping Commissioners conclude AGM on positive note

Reliable, frequent and affordable shipping rates were the key concerns of the Central Pacific Shipping Commission meeting held in Nadi, 7-9 March.

The 9th annual general meeting was hosted by Nauru with President Russ Kun chairing in his capacity as the Minister for Nauru Ports Authority.

This is the first face-to-face meeting since 2019 and is the third time for Nauru to chair.

The CPSC predominantly comprise ministers of transport and ports from the member countries, and in this space the ministers are the commissioners of the CPSC.

Other members included the Hon. Tekeewa Tarati, Minister of Information, Communication & Transport of Kiribati; Hon. Kessai H. Note, Minister of Transportation, Communications & Information Technology of the Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI); Hon. Nielu Meisake, Minister of Transport, Energy & Tourism of Tuvalu ; and Hon. Lauriane Tatau-Vergé, President of the Commission on Regional Cooperation, Economic Development and Tourism of the Territorial Assembly of Wallis and Futuna.

The first two days were technical meetings with ports and transport officials from the five member countries.

Nauru Maritime Deputy Director Kemp Detenamo chaired the technical meeting on behalf of Nauru and says it provides the opportunity for country representatives to table their grievances and challenges about the shipping services.

Tuvalu, and Wallis and Futuna are the least serviced of the CPSC countries, with Nauru faring better when it bought its own shipping line and is able to bring in a regular shipment with a container collection point in Fiji.

Most of the concerns put forward by members are the frequency of shipments and excessive freight rates which equate to the increase in price of goods for the consumer.

At the AGM proper on 9 March, President Russ Kun reiterated the extreme importance of a regular and affordable shipping service for members of the CPSC.

The Pacific Community's (SPC) Deputy-Director of Oceans and Maritime Programme at the Geoscience, Energy and Maritime (GEM), Jens Kruger, said shipping is "not just critical but also essential and is actually the backbone of our economies as we know it and it's a lifeline to our people".

"So when it comes to sustainable development and resilience, I firmly believe that we can achieve this in the maritime industry. It's a huge challenge and I think it's everybody's business and certainly you've all come here together to deliberate on this."

Mr Kruger says the targets can be achieved through the collaboration of the CPSC and support from regional organisations such as the SPC.

"Together we've already achieved a lot and we've already made a difference.

"The CPSC is an excellent example of a public-private partnership and regional cooperation to address [shipping] issues to improve connectivity, and access to markets," Mr Kruger said.

As chair, President Kun reiterated that the role of the CPSC is



President Russ Kun (center) with fellow commissioners of the CPSC

"extremely important for the member countries with a mandate that will ensure a broad social and economic outcome for our island nation and its people."

"The mandate specially addresses the provision of regular, predictable shipping services that are sustainable and with affordable shipping rates.

"Shipping services to our Island nations of the Central Pacific are our lifeline by providing trade, food security, and employment opportunities," President Kun said.

"Shipping is a key priority for the region and affordable shipping services have been a long-term dream of the people of the Pacific."

President Kun said shipping companies argue that the distance between island states was the cause of constantly rising sea freight rates, and low cargo volumes challenged the economies of scale, making it difficult for shipping companies to provide regular and affordable shipping services.

President Kun highlighted an unfortunate experience for Nauru in 2020 which left Nauru in crisis and serious food shortage when the shipping line contracted through the CPSC failed to provide a service for three months.

"In fact, the ship sailed straight past Nauru on its way to service other island communities," President Kun said.

This prompted the Nauru Government to provide air freight services with Nauru Airlines to import food essentials and medical supplies to support the community. The experience also led to the creation of the Nauru Shipping Line to address Nauru's shipping needs.

"Regrettably, I am sorry to inform you that the [Nauru] shipping line did not get much support from the CPSC."

The NSL provides a Suva to Nauru service with its one ship with a 350 20-foot container capacity. There are plans to acquire a second ship of 700 20-foot container capacity to service Brisbane to the Central Pacific.

While there are numerous issues to resolve, President Kun says Nauru is a proud member of the CPSC and supports the growth of regional shipping with the development of a Central Pacific hub port and aims to encourage and promote the economical, reliable, safe, and coordinated shipping services to the Central Pacific.

Shipping service providers Swire, Neptune Pacific Direct Line,

Cont pg 4...

Central Shipping Commissioners conclude AGM

...from pg 3

Kyowa Line, NYK Bulk and Project, and Gold Rock Investment Limited had open and direct discussions with the technical team and made presentations to the commissioners.

Swire challenged the CPSC to make enough portable cargo to make shipping affordable, suggesting that at least 20 containers are needed to achieve a breakeven for the shipping company to service a port.

Not enough containers is one of the disadvantages for a country when it comes to securing a regular service.

Wallis & Futuna will host the next CPSC meeting in July 2024 •

International Women’s Day

The Government of Nauru declared a public holiday for International Women’s Day joining the rest of the world celebrate under this year’s international theme, Innovation and Technology for Gender Equality, 8 March.



Guests of the International Women’s Day event

Acting President Rennier Gadabu attended the morning church service at Orro Congregational Church along with Speaker of Parliament Marcus Stephen, Minister Timothy Ika, Deputy Minister Maverick Eoe, Australian High Commissioner Helen Cheney and Taiwan Ambassador Dean-Shiang Lin.

Reverend Roger Mwareow led the worship followed by hymns sung by choirs of different churches, and recital of the women’s prayer, women’s anthem and prayer requests by guest speakers.

The guest speakers were from the Nauru National Women’s Council, Nauru National Youth, women in health, women in education, women in the community, women in the workforce, AusAid, and Child Protection division, Miss Nauru Alexandra Pitcher and Miss Aroeni Calishka Cain.

The day’s program concluded with lunch provided at the Centennial Hall •

Women’s day debate

The Women’s Empowerment Nauru Association (WENA) and the Nauru Electoral Commission (NEC) cohosted a series of debates from 1 March in celebration of International Women’s Day.

Deputy Minister Maverick Eoe, Australian High Commissioner Helen Cheney and Taiwan Deputy Councillor Francis Soong attended the final debate held at the Menen Hotel Tomano Room on Saturday, 11 March.

A total of 13 teams registered for the debate and after elimination rounds the remaining teams were team Bwebwenato with Phaedora Harris, Miniva Harris and Kamak Harris and team Nauru Language with Anita Koroa, Pancy Starr and Livingstone Hiram.

The two teams debated head to head on the topic ‘Do women belong in the [parliament] House?’.

Team Bwebwenato argued for the topic and won the debate taking home \$1000 cash while Team Nauru Language argued against and took second place with a \$700 cash prize.



Participants of the WENA NEC debate receive gifts from sponsors

One of Team Bwebwenato’s argument points was that females are needed in the House because “a male’s perspective is always going to be different to a woman’s perspective – women are naturally strong advocates for social and gender issues, women will make sure they are addressed”.

Special prizes for overall best speaker and youngest speaker during the debate were awarded to Phaedora Harris and Kamak Harris respectively. All teams that took part in the event received gifts for participation.

WENA’s Managing Director and Focal Point Greta Harris thanked the sponsors from the Australian Government through the Department of Foreign Affairs, United Nations Development Program through the Nauru Accountable Inclusive Governance (NAIG) project and Eigigu Holdings Corporation for their support of this event.

A special dinner was provided at the conclusion of the event for the participants.



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Nauru signs 99-year land lease in Canberra

On behalf of the Government of Nauru, High Commissioner Camilla Solomon signed a premium land lease contract for a 99-year agreement for the construction of a chancery in Australia’s capital , Canberra, 6 March.

Ms Solomon signed the contract together with Gillian Sally Barnes, delegate of the Minister for Regional Development, Territories and Local Government, on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia.

The signing of the 99-year lease is the first key milestone of the project formalising ownership of Block 17 Section 67 in Deakin, Canberra. The construction of the chancery must commence within 18 months from the lease commencement date and completed within three years.

“We thank the Australian Government and the National Authority of Canberra for allowing us this opportunity which will lead to reduced costs of operations. This is a significant opportunity that demonstrates the close relationship between our two countries,” Ms Solomon said.

The high commission office in Canberra was officially opened in 2 March 2022 •



(L-R) Gillian Sally Barnes and HC Camilla Solomon sign premium land lease contract



ROAD SAFETY MEASURES

- 
Buckle up
 Wear your seat belt at all times. Wear a helmet when driving a motorcycle.
- 
Observe the speed limit
 Speed limit: 50kph
 Driving past schools, churches and hospital: 20kph.
- 
Pedestrian crossing
 Drivers should slow down at traffic stops and give way to pedestrians at a zebra crossing.
- 
Never drink and drive
 Have a designated driver if you plan to drink. Don't operate a vehicle when you're intoxicated.

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

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Republic of Nauru

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