

**Votes and Proceedings
of the
Eighteenth Parliament
No. 29**

**First Sitting of the Seventeenth Meeting
Tuesday 22nd December 2009**

10.00am

1. The House met at 10.00am in accordance with the resolution made on 26th November 2009

Hon. Riddell Akua, Speaker of Parliament, took the Chair and read Prayers.

2. Statement from the Chair

Hon Speaker made the following statement to the House - *“Honourable Members, allow me to begin by congratulating the team that presided over the last sitting on 26th November. Let me announce them by their titles and perhaps you may find a little humour to prevail for just a short while. Firstly, the Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Dominic Tabuna, Member for Yaren, sat in this very Chair. In front in the distinguished table, the Deputy Clerk, John Garabwan as the supervisor, assisting him, Deputy trainee clerk, Raines Stephen and on the furthest right of the table, our assistant Parliamentary Counsel, Ms. Catriona Steele. All actors for want of a better description, however judging by the post comments that later came to my ears, I think the substantives must take care or they may have to seek employment elsewhere in the next financial year. My very sincere congratulation to them for a job well done. On a serious note, I think this is a milestone achievement in itself, saying to us all, the parliament is functioning with improved efficiency and going all out to improve in the other aspects of its Parliamentary work. I like all Members not only to recognize the small improvements but to assist by inputs to further progress.*

For this year’s experience with my travel, I must share to all that my travels have taken me, positive comments have been coming in my direction from other members of parliament in the region and I think it is appropriate to share this with you this morning given that a Christmas sitting is usually to reminisce upon the performance of the past year. The most common of them was how they look towards us in for lead in both the international and regional meetings. In the recent trip undertaken to Rarotonga, I met an MP from the Isle of Nuie by the name of O’love Jacobsen. She spoke highly of the incumbent Minister for Health, the Honourable Member for Boe. She also spoke of fond memories with a former member of Anetan, the late Roy Degoregore. I seek leave with his family to share these moments with them as well. She once visited our island when the late Roy took her for a drive around the Island. They encountered a flat tire and the late Roy not to be outdone by a flat tire, bought a new car so the visitor could continue her ride around the island uninhibited. Such passion for kindness. Mrs. O’love is a veteran MP of Nuie and as well a very well known figure in the region. Another of these high remarks came from the Hon Tom Marsters, an MP of the Cook Island, a veteran of the Cook Island Parliament and he represents them quite extensively in international meetings. He spoke highly of the Deputy Speaker on the two occasions they met. This is to mention just two incidents but I had received several of the same high praises not in this scene alone but in other meetings that my travelling took me.

Also worthy of mention, the two champions for gender and climate change themes respectively. As you are aware that the Hon Member for Ubenide, Mr. Ali Amwano was reinvited to the RRRT meeting held in Brisbane and again he received further accolades in that, not to speak of those he received in Rarotonga. The Hon Member from Ubenide Mr. Valdon Dowiyogo, was in the task group to sought out a communiqué for our regional leaders to take to the Copenhagen meeting, all in all, we as ambassadors to our country deserves merit and by gauging from the opinion of our peers the outcomes have been very worthy of mention.

Needless to say that the achievements of parliamentary matters are due to the support team and the co-operation of all here concern. As you are aware of the two parliamentary counsel in office. The PAC Secretary to be in by early January. The completion of the Members Offices and still some renovation occurring elsewhere in the parliament building as I speak. These being done with tough cash flow and a tough Minister for Finance trying to keep spending to a reasonable minimum. Again I give credit to those who gave their time and effort to have these projects completed.

The Parliament website is up and can be viewed by all and you could find it on www.naurugov.nr and click parliament of Nauru. Your Parliament have engaged a local artist to do the honours board which I am sure all Members would be thinking “about time”, let me inform all, that this project is not forgotten, necessary items have been purchased. However due to the fact that we’re right smack in holiday spirit and needless to say that the artist is just as in the same spirit as we ‘re all in, the date of beginning work is yet to be ascertained let alone the completion.

Well I think I have said enough and let us make haste to proceed with the real drama. Mwa tuba kor”.

3. Questions Without Notice were asked

At the conclusion of questions without notice, Hon. Valdon Dowiyogo (Ubenide) moved that further questions without notice, be extended for another hour.

His Excellency the President, seconded.

Question Put and Passed.

Questions without Notice continued for another hour.

The House was suspended and to resume when the bell rings.

4. Ministerial Statement and Tabling of Papers

(i) The Hon. Dr. Kieren Keke (Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade) made the following statement on ‘Passing of Nauru Honorary Consul to New Zealand’ – *“Mr. Speaker and Honourable Colleagues, it is with deep sadness that I advise the House of the passing away over the weekend of Mr. Philipp Muller, Nauru’s Honorary to New Zealand. Mr. Muller passed away in Auckland on Saturday 19th December at the age of 72. Mr. Muller had been serving as Nauru’s Honorary Consul to New Zealand, based in Auckland, since his appointment in July 2005.*

Mr. Speaker, I had the privilege of knowing Mr. Muller personally having gone to medical school with one his daughters, Heidi, who remains a very close personal friend. During my years studying in Auckland, the Muller family often looked after us, and their house was frequently used by our group of pacific students as a meeting place, for group study and

often just a refuge where we knew we would always find a warm meal and a welcome home atmosphere. Mr. Muller was a charismatic man who had immense experience and knowledge of the Pacific.

Mr. Muller's passing is not only a great loss for Nauru but also for the Pacific region. Messages of condolences have been issued from many, including the Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Tuiloma Neroni Slade, who has expressed deep regret over the passing of Mr. Philipp Muller.

In a Press Statement issued today, Mr. Slade said that "Mr. Muller gave exceptional service to the region," and that, "he will be fondly remembered and greatly missed as an admirable regional diplomat and strong rugby man."

Mr. Muller was a regional leader and was instrumental in the development of the Forum Fisheries Agency. He was Director of FFA from 1981 to 1991 and his contribution to fisheries in the region is still being felt today. He was still involved with regional fisheries and provided input recently on the Fisheries Treaty between the Pacific and the United States.

He was also a former Director of the Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC). The Forum Secretary General added that, "he was a fundamental player in building these regional organizations into the strong entities that they are today."

Mr. Muller went on to manage the Samoa Rugby Union and is well known in regional rugby circles.

His funeral service will be held in Auckland tomorrow morning and we are trying to make arrangements for Nauru to be represented at the funeral by Mr. Pyon Deiye, Nauru's former Deputy Secretary for Foreign Affairs who is currently on leave in New Zealand.

On behalf of Government and the Parliament of Nauru, we express our deepest condolences to his wife and family.

(ii) The Hon. Mathew Batsiua (Minister for Justice) made the following statement on 'Justice, Border Control & Corrections – 2009 Achievements' – *"Mr. Speaker and Hon. Members, honourable members will be aware of the challenges that has been faced by the Department of Justice and Border control over several years in several areas including the area of lawlessness in Nauru. I am happy to report that significant achievements have been made in several areas of our justice sector and 2009 saw significant achievements that sets a good groundwork and bodes well for 2010 and beyond.*

Secretariat

Towards the end of 2008, Eliesa Tuiloma joined us as our new Secretary for Justice, under the kind arrangement made by the Government of New Zealand through the forum. His tenure meant that we had through all of 2009 an experienced lawyer assisting us as our head of the Justice Department.

The assistance by New Zealand also enabled us to reap the benefits of having a Director of Public Prosecution as well as a Resident Magistrate in Nauru. Having these three key positions filled by experienced practitioners meant that law and order issues were dealt with in a timely and just manner and significant criminal cases were dealt with during the year including the police and prison building arson; a case which members would recall has been under investigation and prosecution over a long period of time.

The Secretariat has always had capacity problems with legal practitioners, but has managed to cope well although stretched very thin a times.

Capacity building of local staff is therefore a big focus of the Ministry.

Border Control

The challenges faced by Border Control throughout 2009 were more related to system changes and stronger control and accountability. An experienced Border control consultant undertook a significant audit during the year. His report, which was presented to Cabinet, made several recommendations in those areas and his report has enabled justice to highlight areas of Border Control where better and stronger control and systems needed to be implemented and in place.

Customs

The year saw significant custom arrest of goods where deliberate and intentional acts to avoid duty by importers were found. Three public auctions took place during the year, with proceeds of approximately \$20,000 generated but a customs crackdown on fraudulent documents used over several years by Chinese importers, resulted in duties and penalties being imposed that equated to approximately \$80,000 being recovered.

Customs continues to work at maintaining due diligence on border control transgressions, resulting in the arrest earlier this year of an unlawful cannabis import at the airport which culminated in a successful prosecution last month where the perpetrator was sentenced to imprisonment for 12 months. The customs proclamation of 2009, continues to be enforced by customs and the arrest of a significant amount in the area of \$100,000 a few months ago, is a clear example of how customs are improving and making significant arrests of customs breaches. These all provide a good foundation and show signs of integrity and high caliber of professionalism of the officers looking after our borders.

Following the restructuring of justice and border control, a new director of customs – Mr. Marcellus Mau was appointed during the year.

Immigration

The sad passing of the principal immigration officer Mr. Alf Itsimaera during the year meant a large gap in immigration was created by this loss. Alf Itsimaera has for many years given loyal service in various capacities to the republic and the list of condolences received from overseas bears testimony to this.

The ongoing challenge was to ensure strong policies and controls were in place that would result in a process where the status of visitors either professional or otherwise, was being monitored to ensure necessary compliance with our immigration laws, and regulations.

Thus, the computerization of all entry and departure records was started earlier this year. This would ensure that a backup system was in place and would provide valuable data and statistics to the Ministry on visitor numbers in Nauru. This added to strong policy decisions adopted by the Ministry, relating to the issuance of employment visas for both the public and private sectors, where standards in line with international practices were adopted with the need for applicants to produce police and medical clearances before due process could take place.

Quarantine

Significant quarantine regulations on par with international standards were introduced by Cabinet in 2004. This year saw significant enforcement of these regulations by quarantine.

A new Director of Quarantine, Mr. Rennie Gadabu, was appointed during the year, taking over from Mr. Frankie Ribauw, the latter moving across to CIE, as Director of Agriculture.

Quarantine has found that more and more containers arriving in Nauru need to be properly examined for pests with fumigation having to be carried in several, where such pests were found including spiders in those containers. In one container arriving from Australia, a red back spider was discovered by quarantine and fumigation carried out.

The strong quarantine measures include the need for phytosanitary clearance to be made from places of export to Nauru. Although importers have complained with respect to the extra costs associated, nevertheless, Nauru is kept safer from the introduction of otherwise dangerous pests or live organism into Nauru. Quarantine continues to be diligent in its efforts to protect the border as part of the mandate border control.

Public Prosecutions

As already mentioned, a major arson case was concluded earlier this year. This case along with many other successful prosecutions during 2009 has resulted in a win for law and order. This has posed challenges for the previous Director of Public Prosecution Paul Banister, has now been replaced by another capable legal practitioner Wilisoni Kurisqila.

As welcomed new addition to the Justice Department in Nauru of Ms. Barina Waqa has added to the strengthening of local capacity. After completing her law degree with USP in Vanuatu, she completed her six months of attachment work in Fiji that enabled her to be admitted to the bar in Fiji and then joined the Justice Department. She has been attaining valuable experience, conducting several prosecutions already, but will be used by justice in the many different variety of legal work to give her a wide legal exposure. At present she is working with the office of the Speaker of Parliament, in the Constitutional Referendum Team.

Correctional Services

With the enactment of the Correctional Services Act by Parliament, the Prison Services became officially part of the Department of Justice and Border Control. Members are aware that the police undertook a program with assistance from the Australian Federal Police, to train officers of the Correctional Services. This was completed earlier this year with 18 officers thereafter employed in the new Correctional Services.

The significant milestone to change the prison service into a Correctional Service was achieved with a journey beginning this year to implement the necessary changes to make this a reality.

The challenges are many with the major one being one of capacity for the housing of inmates. Thus infrastructure to house women and juvenile inmates was provided for in this year's budget and I am pleased to report that the tender process has just been concluded and work on these extensions and refurbishments are expected to start as quickly as possible in the New Year with expected completion before the end of this financial year.

In the meantime, working in Tandem, a parole board has already been appointed to review the many applications for parole currently filed with the Department of Justice. Members will recall that an amendment to the Criminal Justice Act of 1999 was made at the last sitting of Parliament to enable an Act as Chairman of the Board. I am also pleased to announce that Mr. Sunia Soakai, who is qualified in accordance with the criteria set for the position, was recently appointed as Chairman. It is expected that the board will sit at regular intervals to determine parole applications.

At the same time, the Correctional Services and the Department of Justice is working on a system of marks for approval by the Minister for Justice that would then be gazette to enable remissions of up to one third of a sentence of imprisonment to be applied. This would enable prisoners who have done well and undergone programs of rehabilitation to receive marks that would go towards remission of their sentence.

Summary

The Department of Justice and border Control has had a challenging year. Capacity continues to remain the biggest challenge, and the ministry continues to send as many of its officers to workshops and conferences as is possible in order for officers not only to keep up with relevant international trends and changes, but also as a means to train and equip them.

The retirement of Robert Kaierua has added to the current capacity constraints. Robert acted as a Public Defender and held numerous positions including Registrar of Corporations, Deputy Curator, Licensing Authority and amongst other roles would represent the Nauru lands Committee in court.

However, I wish to advise that as part of our ongoing bilateral discussions with New Zealand we have put to the Government of New Zealand to consider extending their assistance for Nauru to cover two extra key positions in Justice. If they agree we will have funding for the position of a Solicitor General and a Public Defender on top of the positions of Secretary for Justice, Director of Public Prosecutions and Resident Magistrate.

In conclusion, 2009 was all about staying on track. We had made important inroads in several areas which have been lacking for a long time and it was pleasing to note that the departments maintained this improvement.

With additional key justice personnel in the New Year, these improvements will be further consolidated.

I wish to thank my senior managers in the Justice Department with a special mention to the Secretary, Eliesa Tuiloma and his very able PLO (Public Legal Officer) Mr. David Aingimea. Thank you Mr. Speaker.”

(iii) The Hon. Frederick Pitcher (Minister for Utilities) made the following statements on ‘Utilities Update’ – *Mr. Speaker and members of the House, I am please to take this opportunity to provide a brief update on activities at the Nauru Utilities Authority.*

Mr. Speaker, power generation continues unabated, with the provision of 24/7 electricity to the entire island. The newest and largest generator, Ruston 7 was commissioned in November, and has been supplying the grid for the past month at around 2.5MW maximum. With Ronphos production coming on-line, total daily power demand is now up to around 3.4MW, with R7 supplying 70% of that demand. We can get more out of R7 in the coming months as we gradually bring it up to the maximum derated output of 3.2MW. With R7 coming online fulltime, we have been able to take R6 offline for full servicing for the first time in almost 2 years, and that engine is now back online. Presently R1 is off-line for a full rebuild and service, and it should be ready for action again in the next couple of weeks – which will bring our power output capacity to just over 8MW from our suite of 4 Rustons. We still have two Cummins which we use as backups and for black-starting the Rustons. Next year we expect to complete the rebuild of R4, which should bring our total capacity to around 12MW, providing ample redundancy in our power station to allow for a regular preventative maintenance

program to be implemented to ensure our generators run efficiently for many more years to come.

Mr. Speaker, it has take much effort and funding to bring our power back to normal, and we have our hard-working staff in Utilities, and the funding of our donors to thank for this momentous achievement. However, we cannot become complacent. Much needs to be done to maintain our power generation capacity, and to ensure that power distribution improves. In this respect, Utilities expects to commence the new power pole project from January onwards. We already have 80 new timber poles on the island – which we will begin installing in the worst affected districts such as Anibare in the coming months. An additional 2,000 new poles will be needed over the next 2 years for the whole island and this should last the country for the next 20 to 30 years.

Mr. Speaker, the prepayment metering system is running well. There have been a few reported problems of meter breakdowns which we have addressed, but meter tampering and bypassing remains an issue we have to address, which we intend to do with heavy fines and disconnections.

Revenues for the last 3 months have improved significantly, thanks to increased demand from industry and the larger businesses.

Financially, the authority has improved in general, and has been able to pay pending salaries to all its workers last week. However, there is a long way to go until the authority achieves profitability and self-sufficiency.

Mr. Speaker, despite a third RO unit coming on-line recently, water production has fallen significantly in the past month – due no doubt to the ample rain the island has been blessed with. Our stored water reserves in B13 now exceed 20 days supply to the nation, and this will likely increase in the rainy days ahead.

In terms of personnel movements, I am pleased to inform the house that Mr. Wayne Brearely has been re-appointed as Manager of Utilities for another two years. The position had been advertised internationally following the completion of Mr. Brearely's contract this month, and interviews for the short-listed candidates were conducted by PACTAM. The interview panel unanimously selected Mr. Brearely as the preferred applicant and his acceptance was confirmed by AusAid and Government last week. I congratulate Wayne and look forward to working with him for the next 2 years.

In concluding this statement Mr. Speaker, I wish to again extend my gratitude to all the employees of the Utilities Authority. This has been a year of great achievements for the authority – despite very trying circumstances, and I commend them all for their efforts and dedication. As I have said before, the achievements in the utilities sector this year have not only resulted in a positive change in all our daily lives, but they have marked a key milestone in our journey towards national recovery.

Thank you all and I wish everyone at Utilities a very merry Christmas and a successful 2010.

Tubwa kor.

(iv) The Hon. Mathew Batsiua (Minister for Health) made the following statement on 'End of year statement' – *“Mr. Speaker and Member, I wish to highlight some of the many activities undertaken by the Ministry during 2009. The Ministry is headed by the Secretary for Health, and consists of 5 departments, Medical Service, Nursing, Public Health, Administration and Planning and Finance and are each headed by a Director.*

Administration

This Department supports both curative and public health services and is responsible for the overall day to day non-clinical administrative requirements of the Nauru Health Department.

The approval of the Ministry's Organisational reform Report in July resulted in the restructure of the Health Department with the 5 Departments referred to above with an establishment of 235 staff.

The Department welcomed back Giedo Garabwan following his successful completion of management studies in Fiji.

The following were considered as achievements;

- Establishment of weekly ordering of stationery and non medical supplies through local outlets*
- Training staff in basic computer and English at USP Campus Nauru*
- Participation in Organisational Reform activities*
- Improved security with noticeable decrease in vandalism at NGH and RONH*
- Recruiting expatriate skilled workers*
- General waste system introduced through collaboration with Nauru Rehabilitation Corporation*

Medical

At the outset of 2009, there was a new optimism and enthusiasm among the staff of Republic of Nauru (RON) Hospital, Emphasis was based in dogin a "better job" in serving health needs of the people of Nauru, despite the impact of limited resources and geographical remoteness.

The department encompasses the largest workforce and consist of outpatient, inpatient and clinical support services.

The following were considered as achievements;

- All visiting medical teams and specialist were able to use the operating theatre.*
- The Visiting Ophthalmologist visited 3 times during the year.*
- The extension of the OT to accommodate the installation of the new autoclave.*
- The recruitment of 2 GMO to ensure the Out Patient and Accident and Emergency roster is maintained 24/7.*
- Implementation of 24/7 cover of the OPD and the Emergency Department by MO.*
- Establishment of nursing station and treatment room at the OPD.*
- Establishment of the Special Clinic for follow-up of chronic cases i.e. the Medical, Surgical and Gynaecology Clinic.*
- Implementation of the school dental visit.*
- Recruitment of Senior Lad Technician through Global Fund Project.*
- Biochemistry analyser purchased from Australia has increased the number of biochemistry tests performed locall.*
- Ongoing training through Pacific Open Health Learning Network (POHLN) for laboratory staff.*
- Recruitment of qualified pharmacists.*
- Bulk purchasing of drugs from IDA and Multichem for the consumables.*
- Imprest system for drugs implemented at inpatient wards.*
- A team visited to review and recommend Health Information Systems improvements.*

- *Submission of the Training Plan for Mental Health in Nauru to PIMHNET for implementation.*
- *Implementation of tuberculosis awareness campaign programme.*

Nursing

The Nursing Department is responsible for assessing all patients presenting to outpatients and the wards, providing direct patients care and coordinating patient care related activities. The ability of workforce to respond more effectively to above mandate is dependent on the availability of appropriately trained and supported health professionals where and when they are needed. Thus an emphasis in 2009 for the department was focused on the Review of Nursing Services. Expatriate nurse are still required to fill the gaps in specialists areas such as midwifery and Operating Theatre.

The Department was delighted to employ 3 nationals who graduated from the Fiji School Nursing. These recruits were Kerri Itsimaera, Constantina Mwareow and Kyreena Ratabwi. The department expects the return of 3 students in January 2010 and there are currently 6 nationals undergoing undergraduate nursing studies and 2 pursuing midwifery training.

The following were considered as achievements;

- *Implementation of recommendations from the Nursing Services review Report.*
- *Development of Nursing Standard Procedures Manual.*
- *Implementation of activities in the Operation Plan 08/09.*
- *Implementation of orientations program for new staff.*
- *Supporting visiting specialists and Taiwan Mobile Medical team.*
- *Undertaking monthly ward inventory of equipments and supplies.*
- *Hosting 2 Taiwanese Nurse through the Volunteer Programme.*

Public Health

The department is responsible implementing public health programmes; health promotion and primary health care services in collaboration the medical services department, other government departments and instrumentalities, civil society organizations, churches and community groups.

The following were conserved as achievements;

- *14 health video clips including NCD (physical, activity, nutrition, smoking, alcohol control), communicable diseases (STI, HIV/AIDS, Trachoma, Personal Hygiene), reproductive health (antenatal care, postnatal care, family planning, Cervical Cancer), environmental health (vector control, food safety) were developed and broadcasted on Nauru TV and radio.*
- *The recruitment of NCD Coordinator in February under SPC NCD grant.*
- *The completion of the Nauru NCD plan.*
- *Ongoing physical activity programmes such as the Wednesday walk, Aerobics, community physical activities, physical activities competitions. With further donor funding, the department plans to develop physical activity centers in the public health department and in the communities.*
- *The national weight reduction campaign “Stomp the Fat” initiated 2008 and was undertaken in 2009.*
- *The Tobacco bill was finalized and tabled in the parliament and passed in April.*

- *Education program and treatment program using WHO SAFE strategy were ongoing in the communities, at the clinic and a schools.*
 - *STI surveillance survey had been undertaken and STI management guideline have been developed and circulated to relevant stakeholders.*
 - *The IHR plan has developed and implemented with technical assistance from WHO.*
 - *Workshops for pandemic preparedness with a focus on animal was conducted in collaboration with quarantine and facilitated by SPC.*
 - *The Pandemic Taskforce was reactivated and the now meets regularly. Rapid test kits, PPE materials and Tamiflu were received.*
 - *The departments restructuring was completed and job description for all the public health staff had been developed, performance appraisal now needs to be implemented.*
 - *MCH services are now managed by the Obstetrician and the clinic has shifted to RoN Hospital and is staffed by both PH and midwifery staff.*
 - *The EPI program is ongoing with 100% coverage maintained and increased drug compliance for Rheumatic Heart Disease.*
 - *Vector borne diseases outbreak prevention and control programmes continue and a minimal supply of insecticides, materials and equipment has been stockpiled for emergency use.*
 - *Regular inspection for food safety was carried out and medical check up for food handlers was initiated.*
 - *Commemorative awareness campaigns were undertaken for World No Tobacco Day, World Sight Day, World Diabetes Day, World AIDS Day, Mental Health Day, Road Safety Week, World TB Day and World Leprosy Day.*
 - *SPC disbursed funding for Nauru's HIV/TB project which includes staff salaries, procurements, trainings, capacity buildings, logistic supplies, technical support for planning, monitoring and evaluation of the project.*
 - *TB and Leprosy follow up programs had been strengthened in the communities and sputum screening, contact tracing, public awareness programs had also been initiated as per WHO guideline.*
 - *HIV peer educator training and education in the communities is ongoing.*
 - *HIV/TB prevention including awareness programs, education and training programs were on going in the public health department and communities.*
 - *A draft Public Health Act is currently been finalized for processing to Parliament.*
- The Ministry continues to benefit from its bilateral programme with its development partners.*

The Ministry receives significant financial support from the Government of Australia through its MOU to support, staff training, specialist medical visits, repair and maintenance of equipment, purchase of equipment, drugs and consumables, critical refurbishment, NCD and diabetes, health promotion and education.

The remaining members of the Cuban Medical Brigade consisting of a Paediatrician, Obstetrician and laboratory Technician will arrive on 26 December and are in addition to the Physician and Pharmacist who arrived in July.

The AusAID funded Pacific Island Projects managed by the Royal Australian College of Surgeons resulted in the following visits,

- **Gastroentrology, 14-21 July**

- **Renal;** 13-17 March and 7-14 September
- **ENT;** 21-30 November
- **Cardiovascular;** 27 October to 3 November

The Taiwan Mobile Medical Team continues its bi-annual visits in May and November providing a range of services to the people of Nauru. The teams are made up of a Hepthologist, Dialysis Nurse, Surgeon, Dentist, Paediatrician and Nurses.

The Israeli ENT Specialist arrived November and will be depart Nauru in the first week of January 2010. The specialist has been instrumental in completing the school visits commenced by the Taiwan Mobile Team.

To ensure services delivery is improved and staff work environment is safe and conducive for performance the following critical refurbishments were undertaken,

RoN Hospital

- *Refurbish nurses home toilet facilities*
 - *Medical Records; extension, internal refurbishment, shelving, filing, painting*
 - *Old Pharmacy; Converted to library and education room*
 - *Laundry; Internal refurbishment, plumbing*
 - *Bulldoze and clear damaged buildings*
 - *Construct perimeter fence*
 - *Director PH office; Internal refurbishment and external paint*
- The following minor works were undertaken as critical requirements,*
- *Installation of shelter for generator at NGH*
 - *Renovation of pharmacy secondary storage*
 - *Installation of ceiling in pharmacy primary storage*
 - *Installation of backup water supply for Operating Theatre and Dental Clinic*
 - *Installation of autoclave at RON Hospital*

The Scope of Works for the Physical Activity Building at NGH, Community Health Promotion Centres and the refurbishment of Buada Community Health Promotion Centre have been developed.

A priority throughout the year was to strengthen the service delivery platform to ensure basic hospital services such as back up electricity, adequate supply of water, medical equipment, oxygen plant, pharmaceutical and medical consumables are always operational and available.

This resulted in the dialysis machines, reverse osmosis, dental and medical equipment, air conditions, oxygen plant and generators maintenance been outsourced. To ensure sustainability local expertise was sought in the first instance and in its absence offshore expertise was engaged. Local expertise is engaged for the air condition, reverse osmosis (excluding dialysis RO) and genset maintenance.

A review of the bids for the Refurbishment of Nauru General Hospital has been completed and finalization of contract formalities are underway with the work proposed to commence in January 2010.

The scope of works involve the renovation of existing structures to cater for, Health Promotions, Environment Health, Community Health, Nutrition, Diabetic Clinic and meeting rooms. The work is expected to be completed in 8 weeks.

The Oxygen Plant compressor installed in October allowed the plant to produce a buffer stock of oxygen however it failed in November and the pumps aware dismantled and sent to Australia for repair. There is an adequate supply of oxygen to meet current hospital needs and it is anticipated the pumps will be returned on 26 December.

The Technician contracted to service the Oxygen Plant has volunteered to repair the hyperbaric chamber during his visits to service the Plant. The Ministry is awaiting the report so as to determine the next steps.

The maintenance and repair of dental equipment, general medical equipment and dialysis machines, dialysis and RoN Hospital reverse osmosis units have all been outsourced externally which has reduced equipment downtime and enhanced their longevity.

Before I end Mr. Speaker, it would be remiss on my part not to acknowledge and express publicly in this forum my sincere gratitude for the leaders in my department for their wonderful commitment and efforts throughout this year. We have had a fair share of challenges in Health in the coming days, weeks and months ahead.

Nonetheless, we will continue to do our utmost to meet the health and medical needs of all people in Nauru.

To my general, Mr. Sunia Soakai and his able team of lieutenants Normal Powell, Dr. Alani angitau, Marissa Cook, Gano Mwareow, Dr. Thant Zin, Dr. Kiki Thoma and Pauline Fitzgerald. Thank you for your excellent commitment, leadership and support during this year. To all my staff within the Ministry of Health from public health, medical services administration, all staff in ancillary services, health staff in the government office including my secretary – thank you all for your wonderful efforts and I look forward to continuing and consolidating the excellent work and achievements to date, in the new year. Thank you.

(v) *The Hon. Matthew Batsiua (Minister for Sports) made the following statements on “AFL U/16 Oceania Cup” – Hon. Speaker, as mentioned in earlier sittings, AFL Nauru sent a U/16 national side to compete and represent Nauru at the AFL Oceania Cup staged in Fiji on December 12 and 13. I am extremely pleased to report to the House that the team was very successful coming second in the tournament, losing only one game to the eventual winners, Tonga.*

The team did beat three other nations including the much fancied New Zealand team, this was their last match for the tournament and capped off a very successful event for them.

The team received much admiration from all those who watched the game given the size of the other teams compared to our team. During the days of the tournament, Suva experienced a lot of rain and wind, causing most of the matches to be played close to the ground hence become very physical, which was to our disadvantage because we were outsized by all the other teams. However despite this physical disadvantage, our boys were extremely courageous and against odds, outplayed and beat much bigger teams and came second on percentage only to Tonga.

Out of this, six of our players have been selected by the AFL to be part of this Oceania training squad. Yoshi Harris, Tomwell Raidinen, Buddy Detageouwa, Donatello Moses, Rueben Olsson and Ebed Thoma. These players will now have a chance of making it on the world team which will compete at next year’s AFL U/16 championships in Melbourne. This is a very significant step towards the ultimate aim for football in Nauru and that is to see a Nauruan drafted into the AFL in the near future.

The team returned to Nauru on Monday December 14 and greeted their families and friends with their version of the Nauruan “haka”.

Before concluding I wish to acknowledge the generous support and assistance given to the team by its sponsors. Without this support it would not have been possible for the team to travel and accomplish what it did.

I wish to make special mention and thank the following entities, for their support for the Nauru Stars. Digicel, Our Airline, Education Department, Yahoo, Dusty Road and Big Mac.

Finally I wish to thank the many Nauruans living or were in Fiji during the tournament for turning out in droves to support the team. I am certain that this was a source of great encouragements and pushed the team to achieve what it did.

Tubwa kor.

(vi) The Hon. Dr Kieren Keke (Minister for Finance & Foreign Affairs) made the following statement on “Recent Official Travel” – *Mr. Speaker and Honourable Colleagues, I just returned to Nauru on the weekend after nearly 3 weeks of overseas travel on official government business. The main reasons for my travel were to (i) sort out financing for the aircraft C Check and Engine change, (ii) travel to and meetings with the Governments of Morocco, Russia, Abkhazia and South Ossetia. I also had a meeting scheduled with the Government of Singapore but due to time constraints this was deferred to another time.*

The majority of this travel was externally funded by development partners. Nauru government contributions were for incidentals and a small portion of airfares only.

Aircraft Heavy Maintenance Funding

Whilst in transit in Brisbane, I had meetings with the Chairman, CEO and strategy team of Our Airline which were focused on the C Check and engine change required on the second aircraft, VH – NLK. These will be due in the first half of 2010. The exact timing depends on a number of variables including actual hours flown, engine cycles run and how the airline can best manage services with one aircraft whilst maintaining Nauru services, the Norfolk contract and planned new routes and contracts. A lot of work and at this time, having the work done in Singapore rather than Australia seems to result in savings of approximately half a million dollars.

Whilst in transit in Singapore on the return leg of my journey, I held meetings with the aircraft financiers, Getax Pacific Finance Ltd. I was accompanied to these meetings by our advisor, Mr. Manish Sundarjee. Subject to final approvals, I am now confident that we have been able to renegotiate the terms of the finance to enable full funding of the heavy maintenance and the engine change, and that we will likely now be able to do all of this at the same time in early 2010 at a time that best suits the airline. The restructuring of the finance will also result in a reduction in the monthly repayments which is a positive outcome and will provide us some cash flow relief.

I should emphasize, that the finance for the aircraft purchase and now the heavy maintenance and engine change are ultimately being funded through the revenues being received by Our Airline on the Norfolk contract. No new funds from Government or Our Airline will now be required to fund the heavy maintenance or engine change on this aircraft, which is an excellent outcome. We also recently obtained updated independent valuations also still provides more than adequate security for the finance as additional reassurance.

Visit to Morocco

The second leg of my journey was travel from Brisbane to Morocco with Minister for CIE Honourable Frederick Pitcher.

We had a full schedule of meetings that included meetings with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Cooperation, the Ministry of Energy, Mines, Water and Environment and Ministry of Economy and Finance. We also had a tour of the major phosphate mining area and meetings with mining management at the mines as well as a meeting with the Chairman and senior executive of the phosphate company.

Morocco, whilst an Arab Muslim country, is a very liberal and diverse country with a great mix of religions and people. They have a rich history and culture and pride themselves as being a major tourist receiving some 8 million visitors each year. We were very well received and were privileged to experience the warm friendship of their government and people.

The meetings were focused on discussing areas of mutual interest and where Morocco may look at assisting Nauru in our development agenda. Morocco has a keen interest in developing its relations with the Pacific and has proposed to begin holding regular Summits with all the Pacific Islands Countries. They have significant developments and expertise in water management and solar energy that they could share with Nauru and the Pacific. The discussions also explored the possibility of assistance with banking and insurance and we also met with senior businessmen from the private sector, some of whom expressed an interest in visiting Nauru to explore opportunities in various sectors, including fisheries.

Overall, this visit was a first step in further strengthening our relationship with Morocco and there are a number of issues that need to follow up and further advanced, however I am very optimistic that the relationship will produce real and significant benefits to Nauru's future development.

Visit to Russia

From Morocco, Minister Pitcher returned to Nauru, whilst I met up with Honourable Landon Deireragea and Honourable Rykers Solomon in Dubai, from where we travelled on to Moscow in Russia. Immediately upon our arrival in Moscow we went straight to a meeting with the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Sergei Lavrov, and his Deputy Minister, Alexei Borodavkin. We had a detailed and long meeting with the Foreign Minister which was largely focused on how we can develop the bilateral relationship between Russia and Nauru. The Minister highlighted Russia's support for Nauru's struggle for Independence in the 1960's and that although we have enjoyed a longstanding and friendly relationship for several decades, that Russia wants to significantly develop this bilateral relationship further.

In Summary, the approach Russia has proposed to take in support of our development needs is two stage. Initially with a focus on assisting us with major infrastructure needs and secondly to develop economic activity thru diversification and new industry on Nauru.

Some ideas and areas were further discussed in further meetings we had with Minister of Economic, Ministry of Industry & Trade and the Federal Fisheries Agency.

I am sure that Members are aware that there have been international media reports on the proposed assistance from Russia. I wish to advise Members to simply disregard these reports as media speculation and fabrication. It has never been the approach of this Government to ask for specific amounts of money in exchange for specific commitments by Nauru. In all bilateral discussions, including with our well established and closest allies like Australia, we make it known to them what our challenges and priorities are and they assess how they may assist us. Similarly, Australia from time to time advises us of their needs in various priorities or issues they have and we consider how we may assist them. Neither are conditional or directly linked out but

the reality is that in all bilateral relations, the expectations is that both sides will find ways to work cooperatively with each other.

As we did at the Donor Round Table in November, during our meetings in Moscow, we laid out to our Russian counterparts Nauru's challenges and our strategies and priorities and provided under the NSDS. They are assessing how they may best assist us addressing these challenges. There was no discussion of any dollar figure. There was no request by us for any specific amount of cash and no offer of such from Russia. What they have offered is to send a team of officials and technical people to Nauru in January or February to determine what projects they may take up and the details of these projects.

However, I have no doubt from the meetings we had in Moscow, that Russia is genuine and serious about their assistance to Nauru and that they will be working with us on a long term development program. We are not talking about a one-off project. This is the start of a long term and substantial package of development cooperation. I am certain that the assistance from Russia will be significant and will play a major role in helping us achieve our NDS goals and in rebuilding Nauru's economy and ultimately improving the quality of life for all Nauruans.

At the same time, I also want to emphasise to members that this new relationship should be seen as complementing our cherished and close relations without long standing partners and allies, in particular Australia, Taiwan, Japan, the European Union, New Zealand, Italy, Turkey, Cuba, Germany, Singapore, India and others. As Members well know, we have actively sought out and developed a range of new partnerships and relationships with quite a range of countries from all over the world, all with the ultimate aim of finding mutually beneficial relations that deliver assistance to our development challenges.

Visit to South Ossetia

Mr. Speaker, Following our meetings in Moscow, again accompanied by the two Honourable Members of Parliament, Hon. Rykers Solomon and Hon. Landon Deireragea, we travelled to South Ossetia, a country in the Caucasus region on the southern border of Russia. We had a series of meetings with their Foreign Minister, Minister for Finance, Minister for Economy, Speaker of Parliament and discussions with academics at their University. Following the visit and these meetings, we signed a joint statement on the establishment of diplomatic relations with South Ossetia with their Ambassador in Moscow.

Visit to Abkhazia

We then travelled by overnight train to another country on the southern border of Russia and lying on the Black Sea, the Republic of Abkhazia. We again had a full program of meetings with their President, Foreign Minister, Minister for Finance & Economy and their Deputy Speaker. Prior to departing Abkhazia, we signed a joint statement on establishment of diplomatic relations. We expect a delegation from Abkhazia, probably to be led by their Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, to visit Nauru early in 2010 to further develop this new relationship.

We then took the long journey home via Moscow, which enabled us to experience freezing temperatures of 27°C below zero in Moscow, then through Singapore at 27°C above and transiting thru Brisbane before arriving home on Saturday.

Mr. Speaker, this recent travel was long and exhausting and involved many, many meetings, but I am pleased with the many significant outcomes that I know will help Nauru recover and rebuild a stronger future and better life for our people. Thank you”.

5. Motion - Leave Sought For

Hon. Mathew Batsiua (Minister for Justice) sought leave of the House to present the Customs (Amendment) Bill 2009.

Leave was granted

6. Motion

Hon. Mathew Batsiua (Minister for Justice) moved to present the Customs (Amendment) Bill 2009.

Hon. Sprent Dabwido (Minister for Transport) seconded.

First Reading

The Bill was presented and read a first time.

7. Motion - Second Reading

Hon. Mathew Batsiua (Minister for Justice) moved that the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. Sprent Dabwido (Minister for Transport) seconded.

Second Reading speech ensued.

Debate was adjourned to the next sitting (S.O. 159)

8. Motion - Suspension of Standing Orders

Hon. Mathew Batsiua (Minister for Justice) moved that S.O. 159 be suspended to enable the second reading debate to ensure forthwith.

Hon. Sprent Dabwido (Minister for Transport) seconded.

Question put and passed.

Debate ensued

Question put and passed.

The Bill was read a second time

9. Motion - Third Reading

Hon. Mathew Batsiua (Minister for Finance) moved that the Bill be now read a third time

Hon. Sprent Dabwido (Minister for Transport) seconded

Question Put and Passed

The Bill was read a third time

10. Motion

Hon. Dr. Kieren Keke (Minister for Finance) moved that his two motions on the Notice Paper be deferred to the next sitting.

Hon. Freddie Pitcher (Minister for CIE) seconded.

Question Put and Passed

Orders of the Day

11. Orders of the Day No. 1 - Civil Aviation Bill 2009

Hon. Sprent Dabwido (Minister for Transport) moved that the second reading of the Bill be deferred to the next sitting.

Hon Freddie Pitcher (Minister for CIE)) seconded.

Question Put and Passed

12. Orders of the Day No.2 - “that the statement made by the Deputy Speaker on 26th November, 2009 be noted”.

Debate ensued

The Paper was noted

13. Orders of the Day No.3 - “that the statement made by Hon Mathew Batsiua on Forum Disability Ministers Meeting in the Cook Islands be noted”.

Debate ensued

The Paper was noted

14. Orders of the Day No. 4 - “that the statement made by Hon. Dr. Kieren Keke on the revised and reviewed NSDS be noted”

Debate ensued

The Paper was noted

15. Orders of the Day No. 5 - “that the statement made by Hon. Sprent Dabwido on Our Airline’s route to Fiji via Kiribati be noted

Debate ensued

The Paper was noted

16. Orders of the Day No. 6 - “ that the statement made by Hon. Mathew Batsiua on activities in the Ministry for Health be noted”.

Debate ensued
The Paper was noted

17. Orders of the Day No. 7 - “that the statement made by Hon Kieren Keke on Donor Round Table be noted”.

Debate ensued
The Paper was noted

18. Orders of the Day No. 8 - “that the statement made by Hon Roland Kun on Developments with NFRMA be noted”.

Hon Godfrey Thoma moved that discussions on the Paper as noted by him be deferred to the next sitting.

Hon Dantes Tsitsi seconded

Question Put and Passed

19. Motion fixing the date for the next sitting

His Excellency the President, Hon Marcus Stephen moved that the House at its rising do adjourn until a time and date to be fixed by the Chair.

Hon Kieren Keke (Minister for Finance) seconded.

Question Put and Passed.

20. Adjournment

His Excellency the President, Hon. Marcus Stephen moved that the House do now adjourn.

Hon. Dr. Kieren Keke (Minister for Finance) seconded.

Adjournment debate ensued.

Question Put and Passed.

And then the House at adjourned until a time and date to be fixed by the Chair.

Members Present

All Members were present at sometime during the sitting except-

* Mr. Adeang

Frederick Cain
Clerk of Parliament

* Suspension