Pacific Islands Law Officers’ Network Annual Meeting 2010

‘Regional Approaches to Combating Crime’

Communiqué

The Pacific Islands Law Officers’ Network, comprising senior law officer representatives from Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Republic of Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Vanuatu, meeting in Brisbane, Australia, on 8-10 December 2010, communicate the following outcomes of their discussions:

Concerned about the significant impact of corruption and transnational and domestic crime in the Pacific region, in particular as a threat to national and regional security and economic sustainability, the meeting noted:

- the low levels of ratification by Pacific Island countries of international instruments relating to corruption and organised crime;
- significant and emerging transnational crime issues in the Pacific region, including firearms trafficking and people trafficking;
- the threat to security and the impediment to economic growth represented by corruption and environmental crime; and
- the work of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police and the Pacific Immigration Directors’ Conference to develop agreed solutions to address the security challenges arising from criminal deportees.

The meeting also expresses concern that violence against women remains a significant issue in the Pacific region.

The meeting takes note, with appreciation, of the wide range of law and justice assistance available to Pacific Island countries.

The meeting has reached the following conclusions:

1. Members agree to support the efforts of the Pacific Transnational Crime Network in combating transnational crime in the Pacific and the work of its coordination centre (PTCCC) in collecting crime statistics and working with other forums to share information;

2. There is a need to improve national and regional responses to combat transnational organised crime and members will use best endeavours to improve and update legal frameworks to combat transnational organised crime and facilitate exchange of information between law enforcement agencies;

3. Members will consider becoming Party to international agreements relating to transnational crime and corruption, where that has not already occurred, including the United Nations Convention against Corruption and the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime;

4. Members agree to support the efforts of States to negotiate an International Arms Trade Treaty;

5. Facilitating information exchange, particularly law enforcement and fisheries information, will be important to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, and other emerging transnational crime in the Pacific. In this regard the meeting...
notes the *Vava'u Declaration on Pacific Fisheries Resources* and notes negotiation of the *Niue Treaty Subsidiary Agreement* which will cover the exchange of fisheries law enforcement data, cross-vesting of enforcement powers and the use of fisheries data for other law enforcement activities, and encourage members to consider reviewing and amending domestic legislation to better address environmental crime and corruption;

6. Members will continue to support efforts to combat violence against women, update legal frameworks to respond to violence against women, and improve access to justice for victims of sexual and family violence; and

7. Members noted *Australia’s Framework for Law and Justice Engagement in the Pacific* and encourage Members to engage with Australia regarding the Framework.