



Pacific Islands Law Officers' Network Charter

Article 1

Establishment of PILON

1. This Charter establishes the Pacific Islands Law Officers' Network (PILON) as an association of senior law officers from Pacific Island countries and territories.
2. In this Charter, 'senior law officer' includes a person who is responsible at the highest level of the public service of a country for:
 - a. providing or settling legal advice to government;
 - b. drafting or administering legislation in the law and justice sector; or
 - c. representing the state in civil or criminal legal proceedings.

Article 2

Purpose of PILON

1. The purpose of PILON is to:
 - a. provide a network for senior law officers in the Pacific to share expertise, exchange experiences and learn from each other in order to advance key law and justice issues;
 - b. strengthen regional policy and operational cooperation on key law and justice issues;
 - c. develop regionally supported law and justice policies for consideration by appropriate decision making bodies;
 - d. identify initiatives and deliver programs to build the capacity of PILON country member law and justice agencies; and
 - e. engage and collaborate with other regional and international organisations and networks as part of furthering the above purposes.

Article 3

Membership of PILON

1. The country members of PILON are American Samoa, Australia, Cook Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Pitcairn Islands, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.
2. A country member of PILON may include a territory of a country.
3. The observer members of PILON are the Asia-Pacific Group on Money Laundering, the Commonwealth Secretariat, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the Oceania Customs Organisation, the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency, the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police, the Pacific Immigration Development Community, the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, the Pacific Legal Information Institute, the Pacific International Maritime Law Association, the Pacific Regional Environment Programme, the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, the South Pacific Lawyers' Association, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the University of the South Pacific.
4. A country or territory may apply to the Secretariat to become a country member of PILON.
5. A country, territory or organisation may apply to the Secretariat to become an observer member of PILON.
6. Upon receiving an application to become a country member or an observer member of PILON, the Secretariat must:
 - a. circulate the request to each PILON country member;
 - b. place the request on the agenda for the next annual meeting; and
 - c. reply to the applicant, in writing, advising of PILON's acceptance or rejection of the request.
7. A new country member or observer member may only be admitted to PILON by the unanimous agreement of the country members present at a quorate annual meeting, or in accordance with Article 7.14.
8. PILON country members must keep the Secretariat informed of the name, title and contact details for the senior law officers of their country or territory and other contact persons for PILON matters, as appropriate.
9. PILON observer members must keep the Secretariat informed of the most appropriate contact details for PILON matters.
10. A senior law officer may delegate his or her role to another person in relation to particular meetings or other involvement in PILON by advising the PILON Secretariat in writing.
11. A country member, or observer member, may withdraw its membership of PILON by advising the Secretariat, in writing.
12. PILON country members commit to actively participate in PILON and contribute to the progression of PILON's strategic priorities and its purposes, by
 - a. Ensuring attendance at an annual meeting by a senior law officer, or where unavailable, a suitably qualified senior official,
 - b. Collaborating on the development of regionally supported law and justice policies, and
 - c. Sharing expertise and experiences with other country members, as appropriate.

Article 4

Chair of PILON

1. The Chair of PILON is a nominated senior law officer of the PILON annual meeting host country.
2. The incoming Chair is a nominated senior law officer of the host country for the next annual meeting.
3. The incoming Chair becomes the Chair at the commencement of the annual meeting for which their country is host.
4. The Chair is responsible for:
 - a. chairing the annual meeting, including declaring the meeting open and closed, directing discussions and according the right of persons to speak, announcing when decisions are reached and ensuring the observance of the PILON Charter; and
 - b. chairing the PILON Executive Committee.

Article 5

Executive Committee of PILON

1. PILON must appoint an Executive Committee to oversee PILON matters and to provide guidance to the Secretariat between annual meetings.
2. The functions of the Executive Committee includes, but are not limited to:
 - a. appointing staff of or consultants to the PILON Secretariat;
 - b. development (in collaboration with the Secretariat) of draft PILON Governance documents, including PILON Strategic Plans;
 - c. driving implementation of the PILON Strategic Plan;
 - d. approving and monitoring progress on the Secretariat's Work Plan;
 - e. developing guidance material (in collaboration with the Secretariat) for PILON activities and meetings, where appropriate; and
 - f. monitoring PILON expenditure and financial records.
3. PILON may only appoint a member of the Executive Committee, by consensus, during an annual meeting, or in accordance with Article 7.14.
4. The Executive Committee comprises:
 - a. the Chair of PILON;
 - b. the incoming Chair of PILON, when identified;
 - c. the immediate past Chair of PILON;
 - d. the PILON member country that is hosting the PILON Secretariat; and
 - e. at least two other PILON country member representatives.
5. Only one representative per country member may be on the Executive Committee at any one time.

6. If a PILON country member's representative is unable to continue as a member of the Executive Committee during the interval between annual meetings, the representative must:
 - a. inform the Secretariat in writing that he or she will no longer be able to hold the position; and
 - b. arrange a replacement representative.

Article 6

PILON Secretariat

1. The PILON Secretariat shall consist of a Coordinator and such other staff as is decided by the Executive Committee.
2. The functions of the Secretariat include but are not limited to:
 - a. facilitating the activities of PILON and its committees and working groups (including facilitating the implementation of resolutions passed by PILON);
 - b. providing administrative support to PILON, the Executive Committee, the PILON Chair and any PILON committees or working groups, including:
 - i. organising the logistics for teleconferences or physical meetings of PILON annual or special meetings and working group or committee meetings) (including making travel and venue bookings and other arrangements);
 - ii. sending invitations and provisional agendas, in consultation with the Chair, to each country member and observer member, where possible, at least three months before each annual or special meeting of PILON;
 - iii. settling the agenda for other meetings, in consultation with the relevant Chair, and circulating meeting agendas, with the Chair's agreement, where possible, at least two weeks before the meeting;
 - c. maintaining official PILON records, including records of all PILON meetings, meeting outcomes and appropriate budget and financial records;
 - d. providing an information sharing and communications network, including providing relevant information concerning law and justice issues to PILON country members, observer members and other relevant stakeholders;
 - e. facilitating dialogue and cooperation between PILON country members on regional approaches to law and justice issues
 - f. actively engaging with other regional and international organisations to identify appropriate opportunities and linkages for PILON to progress its law and justice agenda;
 - g. supporting PILON members in accessing appropriate technical and capacity development assistance;
 - h. developing and implementing the Secretariat's Work Plan and assisting the Executive Committee to monitor progress;
 - i. drafting the PILON Strategic Plan (in collaboration with the Executive Committee), and assisting Executive Committee to implement and monitor progress, once endorsed by PILON.
3. Country members may make voluntary financial or staffing contributions to contribute to the operational costs of the PILON Secretariat or PILON's activities.

Article 7

PILON Annual Meetings

1. PILON is to hold annual meetings.
2. An annual meeting is to be hosted by a country member of PILON and must be open to each PILON country member and observer member.
3. The host country is responsible for providing a suitable meeting venue, identifying suitable accommodation options for meeting delegates, arranging domestic transport for delegates, providing communications and providing support to the PILON Secretariat.
4. The Secretariat must advise members as early as possible of the date and place of the next annual meeting.
5. The purposes of annual meetings are to provide PILON country members with a forum to:
 - a. advance the purposes of PILON set out in Article 2;
 - b. develop action based resolutions and outcomes to address regional law and justice priority issues;
 - c. receive reports from and provide input into the work of committees, working groups and the Secretariat; and
 - d. agree on the PILON Strategic Plan to guide PILON priorities over the forthcoming period.
6. A PILON country member or observer member may propose an agenda item for discussion at the PILON annual meeting by advising the Secretariat of the proposed item before the meeting.
7. PILON country members are solely responsible for decision-making during a meeting. Unless otherwise specified in this Charter, or agreed by consensus, during an annual meeting or in accordance with Article 7.14, all PILON decisions are made by consensus.
8. More than one senior law officer may participate in a PILON annual meeting on behalf of a country member. However, each country member must choose a head of delegation who speaks on behalf of that country during PILON decision-making.
9. The PILON Secretariat, in consultation with the Chair, may permit, or request, a representative from a country, territory or an organisation that is not a country member or an observer member of PILON to attend a PILON annual meeting and observe or make a relevant presentation to the meeting.
10. The Chair may direct that there be a closed session for country members only. However, this does not preclude the Chair from inviting an observer member or other guest to participate in a closed session.
11. At the beginning of each annual, or special meeting, the Chair may establish an outcome report committee, which will assist the Secretariat to prepare an outcomes report during the meeting, to be approved by country members prior to the close of the meeting.
12. Where possible, PILON should determine the member country which will host the next annual meeting during the annual meeting.
13. A majority of country members must be present at a PILON annual meeting to constitute a quorum.
14. If a PILON annual meeting is not quorate, the resolutions of the meeting remain provisional until communication of acceptance by all country members is received by the Secretariat. Where a country member does not communicate its position within one month of being advised of a provisional resolution, that country member will be deemed to accept the resolution.

15. PILON members may hold a special meeting in between annual meetings, with the agreement of the Executive Committee. Special meetings will follow the same procedures as annual meetings, with such adaptations as may be necessary, to be determined by the Chair.

Article 8

PILON Committees and Working Groups

1. PILON country members may appoint a committee or working group to address a specific issue or to conduct a specific activity for a set period or indefinitely, by consensus, during an annual meeting or in accordance with Article 7.14.
2. A PILON committee or working group shall nominate a chair for that committee or working group who shall be responsible for:
 - a. developing and progressing an appropriate work plan to progress the specific issue or activity for which the committee or working group has been established;
 - b. organising regular teleconferences of the working group or committee, including the development of agendas (in collaboration with the Secretariat); and
 - c. reporting on the activities of the working group or committee and progress against the work plan to the Executive Committee as requested and on an annual basis to the PILON annual meeting.
3. Committees and working groups may determine their own procedures for operating.
4. Despite Article 8.3, only the Secretariat is entitled to commit or expend PILON funds to support committee or working group activities.

Article 9

Amendments to the PILON Charter

1. A country member may propose an amendment to this Charter for consideration at a PILON annual meeting, by requesting the Secretariat to circulate an amendment to the Charter no less than one month before the annual meeting, or before a special meeting.
2. The Charter may only be amended by consensus at a PILON Annual Meeting or special meeting.