



## 39<sup>th</sup> PILON ANNUAL MEETING 2020

Online

### OUTCOMES REPORT

1. Members of the Pacific Islands Law Officers' Network (PILON) met online for the 39<sup>th</sup> annual PILON meeting on 5 November 2020.
2. The opening prayer was led by the Samoan Attorney General and PILON Chair, Ms Savalenoa Mareva Betham-Annandale.
3. The Meeting Chair, Ms Karen Moore, Assistant Secretary, Attorney-General's Department, Australia welcomed PILON members to the meeting and to the online format.

#### **PILON's Strategic Priorities**

##### *Cybercrime*

4. Members noted the report from Tonga as the Chair of the Cybercrime Working Group and thanked Tonga and the other Working Group members (American Samoa, Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, New Zealand, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu) for their achievements over the last year.
5. In particular, Members:
  - a) Noted the postponement of the regional training workshop to be held in Fiji in 2020 until 2021;
  - b) Noted the intention for the Cybercrime Working Group to hold a further online training sessions in 2020-21 on a variety of cybercrime topics;
  - c) Received in appreciation the PILON Mutual Legal Assistance Handbook: Cybercrime & Electronic Evidence and encouraged members to utilise this resource when making requests for mutual legal assistance; and
  - d) Encouraged members to consider acceding to the Council of Europe's Convention on Cybercrime (Budapest Convention), noting that this continues to be a regional priority action under the Boe Declaration.

##### *Sexual and Gender-Based Violence*

6. Members noted the report from Samoa as the Chair of the Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) Working Group and thanked Samoa and the other Working Group members (American Samoa, Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu) for their work over the last year.

7. In particular, Members:

- a) Noted with thanks the work of the former Attorney General of Samoa, Mr Lemalu Hermann Retzlaff;
- b) Received in appreciation the booklet of the *Model Provisions for amending Evidence Acts to incorporate special measures for vulnerable witnesses to sexual and gender based violence offences – with explanatory text*;
- c) Thanked the Working Group for their contributions to the explanatory text that sets out the policy justification for Model Provisions; and
- d) Noted that the Working Group intends to develop an additional online resource on Pacific experiences in supporting vulnerable witness and a Model Prosecution Guide for Sexual Assault Offences in 2021.

*Pacific Legislative Drafters' Committee (PLDC)*

8. Members noted the report from Samoa as the Chair of the PLDC and thanked Samoa and the other Steering Committee members (Australia, Fiji, Nauru, New Zealand, and Vanuatu) for their work over the last year.

9. In particular, Members:

- a) Thanked the PLDC and Steering Committee for its development and endorsement of Terms of Reference and a Work Plan for 2021-2023;
- b) Received in appreciation the *Pacific Toolkit: From policy to legislation* as a resource developed by the Australian Attorney-General's Department to assist Pacific officials to navigate through the challenging policy and legislative drafting process; and
- c) Noted that the Committee hopes to facilitate a drafters' conference in 2021.

*Corruption*

10. Members noted the report from the Corruption Working Group and thanked the Chair Nauru and the other Working Group members (American Samoa, Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands and Solomon Islands) for their work over the last year.

11. In particular, Members:

- a) Noted the postponement of a joint workshop with the Pacific Prosecutors' Association which was to be held in Vanuatu in 2020 until 2021;
- b) Thanked the working group for the video resources on prosecuting corruption and congratulated the working group on a successful follow up Q&A session; and
- c) Noted that Samoa has joined the Corruption Working Group.

**Country reports**

12. Members welcomed the country reports provided by PILON members on recent developments and issues of interest in their jurisdictions, particularly those relating to the impacts of COVID-19 on PILON's strategic priorities.

## **Secretariat and Governance matters**

### *PILON Secretariat*

#### 13. Members:

- a) Thanked the Secretariat for its report on activities during 2020;
- b) Endorsed the Secretariat's 2021 work plan;
- c) Noted the 2019-20 PILON Activities Budget Financial Report and the 2019-20 Secretariat Operational Budget Financial Report;
- d) Noted the 2020-21 PILON Activities Budget and the 2020-21 Secretariat Operational Budget and the availability of funding for additional projects throughout the year;
- e) Thanked the Secretariat for its outstanding work in supporting members over the past year and in particular the transition to online meetings and the updated PILON website; and
- f) Thanked Australia, NZ and staff of the Office of the Attorney General in Samoa for their ongoing support for PILON.

### **Planning for 2021**

#### 14. Members:

- a) Welcomed and accepted the offer of Nauru to host the 40<sup>th</sup> PILON Annual Meeting in 2021;
- b) Agreed that the Executive Committee will consist of Samoa (Chair), Nauru (incoming Chair), Cook Islands (immediate past Chair), Australia, New Zealand, Solomon Islands and Tonga;
- c) Noted the postponement of the Pacific Litigation Skills program; and
- d) Noted the postponement of the Pacific Legal Policy Champions program.