



## 41<sup>st</sup> PILON ANNUAL MEETING 2022

Virtual

### OUTCOMES REPORT

1. Members of the Pacific Islands Law Officers' Network (PILON) met online for the 41<sup>st</sup> annual PILON meeting on Friday, 4 November 2022.
2. Ms Su'a Hellene Wallwork, Attorney General (Samoa) and PILON Chair welcomed PILON members to the meeting and to the online format.

#### PILON's Strategic Priorities

### Corruption

3. 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.
4. In particular, Members noted that the Working Group:
  - a) delivered a webinar on the use of digital evidence in the investigation and prosecution of corruption in partnership with the PILON Cybercrime Working Group
  - b) delivered a webinar on mutual assistance targeted to police, prosecutors and central authorities in the Pacific Islands
  - c) released a two-part series of animated videos on whistleblowing in the first half of the year
  - d) proposes in 2023 to continue to meet virtually, and deliver webinars, and
  - e) is also exploring the possibility of adapting its *Who, What, Why of Whistleblower Protection* booklet into online modules.
5. The Working Group membership will remain the same in 2023.

### Cybercrime

6. 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, Federated States of Micronesia and Vanuatu) for their achievements over the last year.

7. In particular, Members noted the Working Group:
  - a) delivered a webinar on the use of digital evidence in the investigation and prosecution of corruption in partnership with the PILON Corruption Working Group
  - b) ran the Zyber Intermediate Digital Forensics course
  - c) delivered a webinar on Cybercrime Legislation in partnership with the Council of Europe
  - d) launched the Zyber Fundamentals of Digital Forensics, with 12 participants in the lawyers and Judges' course and 14 participants in the law enforcement course
  - e) will meet in Fiji for the Cybercrime Workshop at the end of November, and
  - f) will develop a range of digital evidence guidance materials and deliver a webinar on cybercrime legislation in 2023. The Working Group will also run the Zyber Intermediate digital forensics course again.
8. The Working Group membership will remain the same in 2023.

## Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

9. 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, Tokelau and Vanuatu) for their work over the last year.
10. In particular, Members noted that the Working Group:
  - a) delivered a four-part webinar series on supporting vulnerable witnesses in SGBV cases
  - b) developed draft Regional Guidelines to assist prosecutors and witness support officers to support vulnerable witnesses through the prosecution process
  - c) plans to publish research on the use of special measures in both law and practice across the region later this year
  - d) will finalise and publish the Regional Guidelines and then support the implementation of the guidelines through an in-person workshop in the second half of 2023, and
  - e) The Working Group Chair will also represent PILON on the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police Gender and Family Harm Board.
11. The Working Group membership will remain the same in 2023.

### **Country reports**

12. Members welcomed the country reports provided by PILON members on recent developments and issues of interest in their jurisdictions. The Kingdom of Tonga, Australia, the Republic of Nauru, New Zealand, Niue and the Cook Islands provided an update.

13. The Pitcairn Islands requested assistance from Pacific Island countries as to whether any other countries are aware of any Pacific caselaw on courts examining allegations relating to interference with assessors. The Pitcairn Islands requested member countries and territories contact Pitcairn Islands via email before the end of November.

### **Secretariat and Governance matters**

## **PILON Secretariat**

### 14. Members:

- a) thanked the Secretariat for its report on activities during 2022
- b) noted the 2021-22 PILON Activities Budget Financial Report and the 2021-22 Secretariat Operational Budget Financial Report
- c) noted the 2022-23 Secretariat Operational Budget
- d) thanked the Secretariat for its outstanding work in supporting members over the past year, and
- e) thanked Australia, New Zealand and the staff of the Samoan Office of the Attorney General for their ongoing support for PILON.

### **Planning for 2023**

### 15. Members:

- a) agreed that the PILON Strategic Plan (2019-2022) will be extended for an additional year into 2023 given the inability to travel and meet in-person
- b) agreed that at the next Annual Meeting PILON consider whether to include an additional pillar to the strategic plan which deals with the independence of judges and lawyers in support of the rule of law as proposed by the Cook Islands
- c) noted the amendments made to the PILON Travel Policy endorsed by the Executive Committee during its meeting in September 2022
- d) accepted the standing offer of Nauru to host the 42<sup>nd</sup> PILON Annual Meeting in 2023 as they had previously proposed to host this Annual Meeting but were not able to facilitate this and noted the Federated States of Micronesia's invitation to host the meeting if Nauru are not in a position to do so, and
- e) agreed that the existing Executive Committee will continue their role into 2023, consisting of Samoa (Chair), Nauru (incoming Chair), Cook Islands (immediate past Chair), Australia, New Zealand, Solomon Islands and Tonga.