Visit to New Zealand by Hon Leaupepe Taimaaino Toleafoa Faafisi, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Samoa

1–4 May 2017

Background
The visit by Hon Leaupepe Taimaaino Toleafoa Faafisi, Speaker of the Samoan Legislative Assembly, celebrated the special relationship between New Zealand and Samoa in the 55th year of the signing of the Treaty of Friendship between the two countries. It also enabled relatively new members of the Samoan Parliament to meet with New Zealand parliamentarians in the company of their Speaker.

The visit coincided with that of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) Secretary-General Akbar Khan. Samoa is a member of the CPA.

The last Speaker-led visit from Samoa was in April 2012. Samoan parliamentarians attended the Pacific Parliamentary Forum in November 2016.

Meetings within Parliament
The New Zealand Speaker, Rt Hon David Carter, hosted a dinner and held an official meeting with the Samoan delegation. The dinner was also attended by New Zealand members of Parliament. The discussions covered parliamentary procedures and sharing of ideas about strengthening democracy. They reaffirmed the strong and convivial links between Samoa and New Zealand. The Samoan delegation was interested in question time in the New Zealand Parliament and talked
about the process of holding government to account in Samoa, particularly as the current Government is the only party in Parliament.

The Samoan Speaker had a luncheon with the Pacific Parliamentary Friendship Group (PFG), which included nine New Zealand members of Parliament and was co-hosted by Hon Peseta Sam Lotu-liga MP and Aupito William Sio MP. The PFG gave a warm welcome to the Samoan delegation and discussed different aspects of the New Zealand–Samoa relationship. This was also covered in discussions with Hon Alfred Ngaro MP, Minister of Pacific Peoples, and Hon Trevor Mallard MP, Assistant Speaker, on behalf of the Leader of the Opposition, Andrew Little MP. The Samoan Speaker and the Minister discussed positive impacts of the Samoan community in New Zealand compared to some media representation, and by Samoan students as seen at Victoria University. The Samoan parliamentarians were keen to discuss the role of members of Parliament with Mr Mallard and he shared insights with them.

The Samoan delegation was introduced to the House and attended question time.
Meetings outside Parliament

The delegation visited the Great War Exhibition near the Pukeahu National War Memorial Park. This included viewing information on Samoa during World War One. The exhibition covers the four years of this war, its history and impact, and information on the Battle of Gallipoli. The delegation gained a visual and spoken appreciation of this and were shown displays relating to Samoa.

The delegation was hosted by Associate Professor Hon Luamanuvao Winnie Laban, Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Pasifika) at Victoria University of Wellington, to a gathering of ‘Pasifika at Vic’. The delegation was introduced to Samoan alumni, current students and staff and to the Pasifika programme at the university. The Samoan Speaker applauded the programme and those who spoke about themselves and their links to Samoa. The delegation was very impressed with their calibre and motivation.
The delegation attended the CPA Lecture, where Sir Don McKinnon spoke on Dark Clouds over Democracy. They also had a meeting with the CPA Secretary-General, Akbar Khan, during which they discussed CPA assistance to Samoan parliamentarians.

Conclusion

The programme provided Hon Leaupepe Taimaaino Toleafoa Faafisi and his delegation with a variety of opportunities to discuss the work of parliamentarians, share experiences, and demonstrate the strength of the bilateral relationship between New Zealand and Samoa. A warm parliamentary celebration in the 55th year of the New Zealand–Samoa Treaty of Friendship.

Programme

Monday 1 May

Arrival into Auckland  
Travel to Wellington  
Dinner hosted by HE Leasi Papali’i Tommy Scanlan, Samoan High Commissioner

Tuesday 2 May

Meeting with Akbar Khan, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)  
Tour of the Great War Exhibition  
Meeting with HE Paulo Cesar de Camargo, Brazilian Ambassador to New Zealand  
Meeting with Hon Trevor Mallard MP, representing the Leader of the Opposition  
CPA lecture series with guest speaker Rt Hon Sir Don McKinnon ONZ, GCVO  
Dinner hosted by Rt Hon David Carter MP, Speaker of the House of Representatives

Wednesday 3 May

Official call on Rt Hon David Carter MP, Speaker of the House of Representatives  
Meeting with Associate Professor Hon Luamanuvao Winnie Laban QSO, Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Pasifika), Victoria University of Wellington  
Lunch with members of the New Zealand–Pacific Parliamentary Friendship Group, co-hosted by Hon Peseta Sam Lotu-liga MP and Aupito William Sio MP  
Meeting with Hon Chester Borrows MP, Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives  
Introduction to the House and observation of question time  
Meeting with Hon Alfred Ngaro MP, Minister for Pacific Peoples  
Departure from Wellington

Thursday 4 May

Conclusion of formal programme
Delegation

Lea'ana Ronnie Posini MP; Charlene Malele, Clerk; Faalogo Iosefa Sopi Falaniko MP; Hon Leaupepe Taimaaino Toleafoa Faafisi MP; Toleafoa Ken Vaafusuaga Poutoa MP; Toomata Aki Tuipe'a MP
Afioga Leaupepe Taimaiano Toleafoa Apulu Faafisi

Territorial Constituency: Aana Alofi Nu.1
Title: Chief; Matai Title: Apulu [Faleasiu]; Pulemagafa [Fagalii]
Party: HRPP
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Samoa
Member of Parliament: since 1991

*Previous Parliamentary Roles include:*
Member of: Standing Orders Committee; Production, Commerce, Industry and Labour Committee; Privileges and Ethics Committee
Minister of Police and Inclusive of Prisons and Fire Services
Other Responsibilities: Juvenile Rehabilitation, Apia Park Board; Robert Louis Stevenson Foundation
Associate Minister: Education, Sports and Culture

Hobbies: Football, Boxing, Farming, Community Service

Faalogo Iosefa Sopi Falaniko

Territorial Constituency: Siumu
Other Matai Titles: Tuuu [Siumu]
Party: HRPP
Member of Parliament: since 2016

Member of: Economic Sector Committee

Hobbies: Rugby, Golf
Toleafoa Ken Vaafusuaga Poutoa
Territorial Constituency: Lefaga / Faleaseela
Other Matai Titles: Sauafea [Saoluafata]
Party: HRPP
Member of Parliament: since 2016
Member of: Economic Sector Committee
Other Appointments: Board of Director [Samoa Shipping Corporation]
Hobbies: Rugby, Soccer

Toomata Aki Tuipe’a
Territorial Constituency: Salega Sisifo
Party: HRPP
Member of Parliament since 2016
Member of: Finance and Expenditure Committee
Other Appointments: 1978-1995 [Loan Appraisal Officer, Internal Auditor, Branch Manager (Savaii), Manager Loan Operation], DBS; 1997-2015 [C.E.O], Agriculture Store Corporation
Hobbies: Reading, Travelling, Sports, Farming

Lea’ana Ronnie Posini
Territorial Constituency: Safata West
Other Matai Title: Fainuulelei [Vaiala]; Galumalemana [Faleula]
Party: HRPP
Member of Parliament: since 2016
Member of: Social Sector Committee
Other Appointments: 1989-2005 Head Department, – Mechanical, [Samoa Polytechnic]; 2006-2015 Head of School - Mechanical Engineering, [NUS]
Hobbies: Rugby, Boxing