



**COMMUNIQUÉ**

# **EIGHTH PACIFIC ISLANDS CONFERENCE OF LEADERS**

**6 – 9 MAY 2007**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.**

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**The Eighth Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders (PICL) convened for the first time in its 26 year history in Washington D.C. from 6 – 9 May 2007.**

**Twenty Island Leaders participated, representing an area that encompasses one-third of the globe.**

**The following Leaders from Pacific Island governments attended the Conference: the Honorable Aitofele T. Sunia, Lieutenant Governor of American Samoa; Honorable Jim Marurai, Prime Minister of the Cook Islands; Honorable Redley Killion, Vice President of the Federated States of Micronesia; Honorable Poseci Bune, Minister for Public Enterprises, Public Service & Public Sector Reform of the Republic of Fiji Islands; Honorable Armelle Merceron, Minister of Finance of French Polynesia; Honorable Felix Camacho, Governor of Guam; Honorable Linda Lingle, Governor of the State of Hawai'i; His Excellency President Anote Tong of the Republic of Kiribati; His Excellency President Kessai H. Note of the Republic of the Marshall Islands; His Excellency President Ludwig Scotty of the Republic of Nauru; Honorable Cameron Diver, Head of the Office of Regional Cooperation & External Relations of New Caledonia; Honorable Premier Mititaigimene Young Vivian of Niue; Honorable Pedro A. Tenorio, Resident Representative to the United States of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; His Excellency President Tommy E. Remengesau, Jr. of the Republic of Palau; His Excellency Mr. Evan J. Paki, Ambassador to the**

**United States, Special Envoy of Papua New Guinea; Honorable Toomata Poese Alapati, Minister of Education, Sports, & Culture of Samoa; Honorable Patterson Oti, Minister for Foreign Affairs, External Trade and Immigration of the Solomon Islands; Honorable Dr. Feleti Sevele, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Tonga; Honorable Willy Telavi, Minister for Home Affairs & Rural Development of Tuvalu; and Honorable Ham Lini, Prime Minister of the Republic of Vanuatu.**

**The purpose of convening the meetings in Washington was to broaden and deepen the Pacific Islands region's engagement with the United States. High level meetings were held with the Executive and Legislative Branches of the U.S. government. A wide range of topics were discussed including economic development, security, trade, aid, environmental protection, climate change, fisheries, emergency responses to natural disasters, USAID and the desire to expand U.S. public diplomacy programs, especially those of an educational and exchange nature. The PICL agreed on the need to strengthen the Joint Commercial Commission (JCC) by securing additional resources to fund the programs for developing trade and investment, and by revamping the agreement to improve market access for Pacific Island countries' exports. This is in accord with the proposal submitted by the Twenty-Ninth Meeting of the Standing Committee of the Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders held May 18 – 19, 2005.**

**The planned U.S. military expansion in Guam was discussed at length. It was agreed that the East-West Center would do its best to undertake research and analysis related to the increased U.S. military presence in Guam.**

**In a separate luncheon hosted by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), CEO Monique Babut urged resolution of the question as to where the climate**

**change adaptation fund under the Kyoto Protocol will reside. The Honorable Tommy Remengesau, Jr., President of the Republic of Palau, made a presentation regarding the Micronesian Challenge program and the important work of the Global Islands Partnership (GLISPA). He encouraged broad participation in the Micronesian Challenge which promotes the establishment of marine protected areas throughout the Pacific Islands region. Appreciation was conveyed to Ms. Babut and the GEF for hosting the luncheon.**

**It was agreed that this precedent-setting gathering in Washington, D.C. establishes a way forward for strengthening U.S.-Pacific Islands relations. It was further agreed that it would be very useful to have similar high level meetings with the United States in the future. The East-West Center's Pacific Islands Development Program and other regional processes were identified as being well suited to ensuring that there is practical and appropriate follow up to the issues raised in Washington. The Center will continue to work with Pacific ambassadors based in the United States regarding these areas.**

**The Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders expressed deep appreciation to the U.S. Department of State, particularly Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, for hosting a productive and useful meeting; and, the U.S. Congress, particularly Congressman Eni Faleomavaega, for making the roundtable discussion on Capitol Hill a success. The Heads of Delegation were especially moved by a U.S. House Resolution welcoming and recognizing the honorable members of the Eighth Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders.**

**The Leaders further expressed their gratitude for the 2007 Pacific Night hosted by the Pacific Island nations' embassies, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, and the National Geographic Society, which brought together some**

**1,000 individuals with interests in the Pacific Region. The Leaders were also appreciative of U.S. Ambassador for Public Diplomacy Karen Hughes' participation in a roundtable dialogue. The discussion emphasized the need to expand and invigorate U.S. public diplomacy in the Pacific Islands region with particular focus on the Peace Corps, Fulbright, and scholarship programs.**

**The U.S. leadership who met with the Conference Delegations recognized and expressed the need to reengage with the Pacific Islands. The Leaders agreed this is the beginning of a new partnership with the United States. They emphasized the need to raise the visibility of the Pacific Islands region in Washington, D.C., and to develop mechanisms with the United States that will facilitate expanded engagement such as summits with Pacific Island leaders scheduled on a regular basis.**

**In keeping with tradition, the Eighth Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders selected members of the Standing Committee for the next three years. The Members are as follows:**

**Chairman: His Excellency President Kessai H. Note  
Republic of the Marshall Islands**

**Vice-Chairman: Honorable Ham Lini, Prime Minister  
Republic of Vanuatu**

**Members: Governor, American Samoa  
Prime Minister, Cook Islands  
President, Federated States of Micronesia  
Prime Minister, Republic of the Fiji Islands  
President, French Polynesia  
Governor, Guam  
Governor, State of Hawai'i  
President, Republic of Kiribati  
President, Republic of Nauru**

**President, New Caledonia**  
**Premier, Niue**  
**Governor, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands**  
**President, Republic of Palau**  
**Prime Minister, Papua New Guinea**  
**Prime Minister, Samoa**  
**Prime Minister, Solomon Islands**  
**Prime Minister, Tonga**  
**Prime Minister, Tuvalu**

**Prior to adjourning, the Conference expressed its appreciation to the Chairman for his outstanding leadership, and to the East-West Center for the meeting arrangements and for offering its guidance and assistance in following up on the main issues identified by this Conference.**