

‘Oku ou fakatapu ki he ‘Otua Mafimafi ‘i he ‘Ene finangalo lelei ‘o foaki mai ha ‘aho faka’ofa’ofa pehe ni, kuo Ne faka’ata ke tau fakataha fiefia ai ‘i hono toe fakafakafe’iloaki fo’ou ‘o e ‘Ofisi ‘o e ‘Omipatimeni ki Tonga mo hono Kakai.

Kole ke u hufanga ‘i he ngaahi fakatapu kuo kamata’aki ‘a e fakataha’anga fiefia ‘o e ‘aho ko eni, kae hao atu e ki’i fatongia ni.

A very good afternoon to you all

Hon. Speaker Lord Tu’ivakano, Hon. Chief Justice, Lords of the Realm, His Majesty’s Councilors, Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, Ministers of the Crown, Members of the Diplomatic Corps, Members of the Clergy, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I have been asked to briefly share my experience as one of four long-serving staff still with this office.

I’m very grateful for the opportunity though I wish this day and occasion should have come sooner.

I joined the office in 2003, when Mr Siaosi Taimani ‘Aho was the first ever Commissioner for Public Relations. He had a staff of five, and I, one of only two investigators.

We had a fair number of complaints under Commissioner ‘Aho. A few were successfully resolved, but most Ministries and Departments took unreasonable time to response. Some simply didn’t respond until the Commissioner got on the phone, sometimes raise the voice or summoned them to give evidence in his presence.

In 2004, Mr ‘Aho was appointed Minister of Justice, but before he left, he introduced me to the Ombudsman regional body – The Australasia Pacific Ombudsman Regional Conference (“APOR”).

There were opportunities for technical assistance, and training of investigation staff, offered through the office’s membership with APOR, and the International Ombudsman Institute (IOI).

The late Rev Penisimani Tavalu Fonua was Commissioner for about a year and had to retire in 2006 having attained age 72 as according to law.

Work was tough back then, especially when there was no Commissioner for many years (from 2006-2012). During those times, the closure of the office was often discussed in Parliament. It was referred to by some politicians as a watch-dog without teeth.

At one time a proposed Good Governance Commission was to become an umbrella body to govern and administer the Ombudsman, Auditor-General & FOI. Fortunately the office survived the many big waves and had so far enjoyed the support of Government.

We are in debt to the Lord Speaker, due to his leadership and the support of his Government back in 2014 saw the redevelopment of the Office with the appointment of Mr 'Aisea Havea Taumoepeau Commissioner. We are equally grateful to the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister, for the continuing support of Government which so far brings us here to witness the launch of various developments, the website, the new name which will further the work of the Office of the Ombudsman.

The legislative changes enacted in 2016, means further empowerment to do our job! The legislation expanded where it was limited. For example, the Ombudsman has powers to publish report or information relating to the exercise of his functions in the public interest or the interest of any person ...

I am now part of an Investigation Team, headed by Director Lepaola Vaea with three other investigators, the CEO is also an integral member of Team Investigation, and include two support staff. There is a corporate division headed by Deputy CEO Melelua Langi within an office of 21 staff altogether.

The investigation is comprehensive, and independent, and yet we always strive to stay open to change and development for the better!

In my view the future of the office is promising. We are committed to promoting good administrative practices and decision –making in government

In closing, may I congratulate you all for gracing the occasion and for making this milestone event happen.

Faka-Tonga

Kole ke u hufanga 'i he tala fakatapu kuo kamata'aki 'a e ouau ni, kae fakakakato atu mu'a 'e he motu'a ni 'a e fatongia lea 'o e houa ni 'i he lea faka-Tonga.

Hange koia ne u lave ki ai, kuo kouna au ke u fai ha talanoa nounou ki he tuku'au mai 'a e 'Ofisi mo e taukei vaivai kuo a'usia. Ko e motu'a ni ko e taha pe ia 'o e toko fa 'oku kei fakakaungatamaki 'i he fatongia ni, mei he 'Ofisi kimu'a na'e 'uluaki 'iloa ko e 'Ofisi 'o e Komisiona ki he Va mo e Kakai.

Ne kamata 'e he 'uluaki Komisiona ko Siaosi Taimani 'Aho mo ha kau ngaue 'e toko fa, 'i he 2001 mei he tuliki na'e 'iloa fuoloa ko e Falekoloa 'o e Pule'anga 'i Fasi-moe-Afi. Ne u toki kau mai 'i he 2003, ko e taha 'o e ongo 'ofisa fakatotolo.

Na'e kamata si'isi'i pea 'iai pe hono ola, ka na'a mau fakatokanga'i na'e kei fo'ou 'a e fakakaukau 'o e fakatonutonu ngaue'aki 'o e launga. Na'e lahi 'aupito 'a e to'ohi 'a e ngaahi potungaue ke tali mai 'a e ngaahi fiema'u fakamatala, pea kau lahi ia ki he tuai ange 'a e ngaue.

Ko e ngaahi potungaue lahi na'e pau ke toutou tohi atu pe telefoni pea a'u pe ki he lea fakahangatonu ki ai 'a e Komisiona pe fekau'i ha ni'ihi ke omai!

'I he 2004 na'e fakanofu ai 'a Komisiona 'Aho ko e Minisita Lao, ka kimu'a pea mavahe atu ki hono fatongia fo'ou na'a ne fakafe'iloaki 'a e motu'a ni ki he sino 'Omipatimeni fakafeitu'u ko e APOR mo e sino fakamamani-lahi 'oku 'iloa ko e IOI.

Na'e ma'u tokoni 'a e 'ofisi ni mei he ongo sino ko 'eni he ngaahi ako mo e tokoni fakatekinikale.

Na'e hoko 'a Faifekau Penisimani Tavalu Fonua kuo mama'o ko e Komisiona hono ua, 'i ha ta'u nai 'e taha pea kakato 'ene faifatongia 'i Novema 2006 'i hono ta'u 72 'o fakatatau ki he Lao.

Ka 'i he taimi tatau na'e li'ekina 'a e 'ofisi 'o 'ikai hano Komisiona pau he ngaahi ta'u lahi. Ko e faingata'a lahi 'eni ki he ngaue .. 'ai ai 'ene toki kamata hake mo e 'ikai ha Komisiona he ko e Komisiona toko taha pe 'oku 'oange 'e he Lao 'a e mafai ke ne faka'ata ha ngaue fakatotolo.

Ko e ngaahi ta'u 'eni 'o e 2006 ki he 2012. Na'e toutou feme'a'aki ai 'a e fale alea ke tapuni 'osi 'a e 'ofisi. Pehe 'e he ni'ihiki 'oku maumautaimi, pea fokotu'u 'e he ni'ihiki ke 'ai ha sino makehe mo malohi ange, tokua! Na'e fa'a hua'aki mei he kau fakafofonga mo e toko lahi ko e kuli le'o 'oku 'ikai hano nifo, hufanga 'i he fakatapu.

'I he taimi 'e taha na'e alea'i 'a e Lao Fakaangaanga ki ha Komisoni Pule Lelei, ke ne pule'i mo tokanga'i 'a e ngaue 'a ha 'Ofisi 'Omipatimeni, 'Ofisi 'o e 'Atita-Seniale pea mo e Tau'ataina 'a e Fakamatala. Kapau na'e hoko 'eni ('i he tui 'a e motu'a ni) ko 'ene ta'e'aonga 'aupito ia 'a e poutuliki 'o e faifatongia 'a e 'Omipatimeni ke fakahoko tau'ataina 'ene fakatotolo mo pule'i 'ene founa ngaue! Malie ne 'ikai ke hoko, pea hao mai 'a e vaka 'o e 'ofisi ni neongo 'ene ngavaivai 'i he ngaahi peau ta'ane 'o e liliu.

Ko e 'aho ni, ko e misi 'o e kuo hili kuo fakasino.

'Oatu ai 'a e fakamalo ki he fakaafe fakalangilangi 'i ho'o laumalie lelei ke fakafou mo fakalalakaka'i 'a e 'Ofisi ni lolotonga ho'o tataki 'a e Pule'anga 'i he 2014, 'o kamata'aki hono fokotu'u 'o 'Aisea Taumoepeau ko Komisionaa! Pehe foki 'a e houna'ia ki he 'Eiki Palemia, Tokoni Palemia mo e Pule'anga 'i he poupu malohi ho pule'anga ki he langa fakalalakaka 'o e 'ofisi, pea tau fakamo'oni ai he 'aho ni ki he hono toe fakafe'iloaki ki Tonga 'a e 'Ofisi ni 'i he tu'unga ma'olunga, fakaola ngaahi fakalalakaka 'o kau ai 'a e pesi fetu'utaki website pea 'i he hingoa fo'ou mo fakamamani-lahi 'o e 'Omipatimeni.

Ko e ngaahi liliu 'i he Lao 'i he 2016 'oku hoko ko e me'a ngaue lelei ange mo malohi ke ne fakaivia 'a e fuafatongia 'oku mau poletaki ki ai. Hange ko 'eni, 'e

lava 'a e 'Omipatimeni 'o pulusi ha lipooti pe fakamatala 'oku ne ma'u koe'uhi ko 'ene fakahoko hono fatongia pea 'oku tui 'i he'ene fakakaukau taau 'oku mahu'inga ki he fonua pe ko ha toko taha fakafo'ituitui.

Ko e fakatotolo ko e huitu'a ia 'o e 'Ofisi ni. Mei he toko ua 'o 'aneafi, kuo 'iai 'eni hono Talekita 'ia Lepaola Vaea, pea 'iai mo ha kau 'ofisa fakatotolo 'e toko 4, pea kau mai ki ai mo e Pule Ngaue Linda Folaumoetu'i. Kuo 'iai 'eni mo e Va'a Ngaue Tokoni (Corporate Dvision) 'oku tataki 'e Melelua Langi 'i ha 'ofisi kuo 'alu hake mei he toko 5 ki he toko 21.

'Oku mahino ange pea tau'ataina 'a e fakatotolo, neongo ia 'oku mau vekeveke kei ako pe mo feinga ke 'unuaki 'a e fa'unga 'o e ngaue ke toe leleiangē.

'I he'eku fakakaukau 'oku 'iai 'a e kaha'u-melie pea mohu 'amanaki ki he 'ofisi ni mo 'ene tukupa ke taaimu'a 'i hono faka'ai'ai 'o e faifatongia lelei mo e faitu'utu'uni taau 'i he Pule'anga 'o Tonga.

'Oku ou talomonu atu ki he ngaahi fatongia 'oku mou fuesia, fakamalo foki 'i he fakalangilangi kuo mou me'a ai he ouau ni ... mo fakamo'oni ki he a'usia 'a e 'epoki fo'ou 'o e ngaue ni 'i he 'Ofisi 'o e 'Omipatimeni 'o Tonga ...

'Ofa atu ...