



SPECIAL EDITION “KI-AMA ‘O E UANOA’I TA’U” VICENNIAL ANNIVERSARY 15-22 AUGUST 2021

Ombudsman’s Remarks: Special Edition Vicennial Anniversary

“Ki-ama ‘o e Uanoa’i Ta’u”

It is a pleasure to introduce this Special Edition of the Vicennial Anniversary. It highlighted the milestones of good governance for Tonga as a nation, in particular the Constitution, international alliances and the evolution of ombudsmanship. We celebrated in prayer; in sonata – recited and danced; in vivace mini-music festival; in publication of milestones of good governance; in opening an Ombudsman Office in Neiafu, Vava’u, and a documentary on Good Governance.

The Constitutional protection of the Ombudsman became law on 11 August, 2021, and added an extra dimension to the Vicennial celebrations. We acknowledge with gratitude the well wishes on behalf of the Office of the Ombudsman, New Zealand, APOR and IOI.

Vaccinated, Victorious, Vicennial – Good Governance.

Mr. ‘Aisea Havea Taumoepeau, SC
Ombudsman



Above (l-r): Rev. Dr. Taliai Niumeitolu (Principal of Sia’atoutai Theological College), Mr. ‘Aisea Taumoepeau, SC., (Ombudsman), Lord Fakafanua (Speaker of the Legislative Assembly) and Lord Chief Justice Michael Whitten, QC., at the Vicennial Anniversary Celebration, Fa’onelua Convention Center.

Ombudsman attains Constitutional Status

The culmination of the Vicennial Anniversary of the Office of the Ombudsman was the Constitutional status granted by His Majesty in assenting to the Act of



Constitution of Tonga (Amendment) Bill 2018.

The Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Lord Fakafanua, spoke of this major milestone when delivering the keynote address at the Vicennial (20th) Anniversary Celebration of the Office of the Ombudsman on Wednesday, 18th August, 2021.

The theme of the anniversary was V. V. V. Good Governance. The theme highlights the importance of being vaccinated against COVID-19, being victorious in good governance and the milestones of the vicennial (Latin for 20 years) anniversary. (Con’t on p.2)

Ombudsman attains Constitutional Status

(con't from p.1)

Lord Fakafanua, who was the guest of honour at the ceremony, said that the Constitutional amendment became law on the 11th of August, 2021.

"The Constitution of Tonga now recognizes the Ombudsman as a Constitutional appointment and enshrined in the Constitution, is the independence of the Office of the Ombudsman."

The Lord Speaker also said that there is much to be commended about this development and highlighted one aspect of Ombudsmanship.

"... there is no doubt that the role of the Ombudsman has proven to be pivotal in the protection of the rights and interests of the citizens of Tonga and as a vital tool of democracy."

"The rigor with which the Ombudsman and his office have overseen the work of the government and government officials has been significant and effective and the Ombudsman and his very capable staff should all be proud," Lord Fakafanua said.

The Speaker said that the celebration of the Ombudsman's Vicennial anniversary is a momentous occasion ... an opportunity not only to reflect on the achievements over the last two decades but also the challenges.

"The success of the first two decades should serve as a powerful and sobering reminder of the substantial and fundamental duties that has been given to you, the Ombudsman, to continue to lead this institution further forward and to render it more capable of serving the citizens of Tonga."



According to the Speaker, the Ombudsman is positioned in a crucial place between the government and the public. And the office acts as a safety net for the members of the community.

"In the last 20 years, the Ombudsman has played a fundamental role in providing access to justice, improving the standard of public administration, ensuring fair and impartial treatment of all citizens, and this contributed significantly to the promotion of good governance, accountability and transparency through the oversight of the government administration and service delivery."

(Con't on p.3)



Good Governance highlighted in Sunday services

The importance of good governance in the services of the Office of the Ombudsman was highlighted by two services at the FWC Centenary Church of Nuku'alofa and the "Laumalie Ma'oni'oni" Church of Neiafu.

The President of the Free Wesleyan Church, Rev. Dr. Tevita Havea, preached on Sunday, 15th August on the theme "Laka Tokanga, laka ke Ngali Poto," or "Walk Carefully and Walk Wisely." Their Majesties, King Tupou VI and Queen Nanasipau'u were present at the service.

In focusing on the 20th Anniversary of the Office, Rev. Dr. Tevita Havea wished the Office many blessings as it advances beyond two decades of services.

"We are happy to join the Ombudsman Office in marking 20 years of dedicated service for the Government of Tonga."

"On behalf of the FWC, I wish that God would help with the work that you carry out that are beneficial for the nation and the government and the people. I urge the members of the church to pray for the works of the Office and also the people of Tonga,"

He then emphasized the importance "to walk carefully in accordance with the laws and decisions ... to tread carefully and to be wise."

The President cited the wisdom asked by King Solomon from God "the wisdom for his heart to govern his people.

"I believe this is the message for the Office of the Ombudsman to intervene and assist using the rule of law ... and to trust God and His wisdom when making decisions for his people," Rev. Dr. Havea said. (con't on p. 3)

Ombudsman attains Constitutional Status (con't from p.2)

The second sermon held at the *Laumalie Ma'oni'oni* Free Wesleyan Church of Neiafu, was delivered by the Chair of the FWC of Vava'u, Rev. Tu'ipulotu Faletau, (above), on Sunday, 22nd August. Rev. Faletau posed the question *"Who is Good Governance. Who rules over life."*

"These milestones and achievements have served to bestow upon the Ombudsman growing recognition and ever greater legitimacy in the eyes of the public and all institutions alike," according to the Lord Speaker.

In delivering the vote of thanks, the Chief Executive Officer, Mrs. 'Alisi Taumoepeau, KC., highlighted how the Office and the advancement of good governance "stand on the shoulders of giants." Mrs. Taumoepeau cited major achievements beginning from the promulgation of the Constitution of Tonga in 1875 and started off as a Constitutional Monarchy, Tonga's sovereignty as a nation, the demarcation of Tonga's boundaries in 1887 which still stands today despite the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.

"We speak of the International Alliance that we've forged that is alive today, and Your Excellencies, Lord Chief Justice, you are a testament to that and it has only been in the last 20 years that this focus on good governance that we are celebrating today. It's just a development of what those giants in our history and in our nation have done," the CEO said.

She also named all the prime ministers of Tonga from 1876 to 1975 when Tonga celebrated the centenary of the Constitution and said these were *"the prime ministers who indeed forged, built, developed and brought this nation to what it is today.*

"Indeed, we stand on the shoulders of Giants," the CEO emphasized.

In regards with the theme of V. V. V. Mrs. Taumoepeau emphasized the importance of being vaccinated, as represented

by the first "V" and paid tribute to the CEO of the Ministry of Health and his staff.

"Vaccinated as being of utmost importance, not only for Tonga but worldwide.



We fully support this drive, whatever your persuasion, we are behind this drive and the tireless effort of our Health Ministry and all our health workers. They are trying to get as many of us as possible, vaccinated.

"I think the least we can all do as responsible citizens is to get vaccinated as we acknowledge today the dedicated work of our front-liners in ensuring that we all stay COVID-free," the CEO said.

Mrs. Taumoepeau (pictured above) concluded by expressing her gratitude to the government and His Majesty for the Constitutional amendment as *"a very important milestone for the office which became law when gazetted on the 11 of August, 2021, and very happy to say we had no say in the process but I know there's someone in control in these things, it was gazetted in time for this celebration."*

She also said that the UN passed a resolution last December endorsing the work of the Ombudsman worldwide and *"because Tonga is a member state and bound in international law by these resolutions, we will all take note."*

The CEO also thanked the Guest of Honour, Lord Fakafanua, Rev. Dr. Tali'ai Niumeitolu, the President of the Methodist Church who started off these celebrations in his sermon on Sunday, 15th August, at the FWC of Tonga, conductor Mr. Save Mafile'o and Tupou Tertiary Institute as well as guests. ©OMBTonga

Good Governance highlighted in Sunday services (con't from p.2)

"The one who is good governance and rules over life is someone who has wisdom in leading the way. And despite the challenges along the way, he leads them to green pastures.

"That is a sign of a good leader who leads his people with good governance ... and despite the multitude of people, they will speak in unison and trust that their keeper would not make them want.

"That is the purpose of why the Speaker is here with us, why the Ombudsman is here, they are trying to ensure that we draw closer to good governance thus aligning us all with the Ruler of this universe and His teachings."

Rev. Faletau also said that good governance and the person who rules life leads with wisdom ... he knows how to lead people directly towards the right paths to receive the Holy Spirit as opposed to a

sinful person who does not keep to a straight pathway. *"He only destroys."* The Ombudsman, Mr. 'Aisea Taumoepeau, SC., conducted the prayer. The CEO and members of the staff also attended the service. It marked the closure of the weeklong Vicennial Anniversary celebration of the Office of the Ombudsman. ©OMBTonga



Launch of booklet – “Milestones of Good Governance”



The Lord Speaker also launched a booklet titled “Milestones of Good Governance.” The Ombudsman, Mr. ‘Aisea Taumoepeau, SC., presented the booklet to Lord Fakafanua (pictured above).

“May the Vicennial Booklet act not only as a reminder of the milestones achieved but also as a strong, fundamental foundation for future and long-term success in the institution.

“It’s a privilege indeed to celebrate the Ombudsman Vicennial Anniversary with you all, and the launch of this Vicennial Booklet for the Office of the Ombudsman.

“The booklet features the history of good governance in Tonga, describes the early days of the Office of the Ombudsman and its progress over the years and highlights its evolution,” Lord Fakafanua said.

The booklet was launched in both Tongan and English and as an Ombudsman publication for the Vicennial. @OMBTonga

Honouring past Commissioners of Public Relations

In welcoming the Guest of Honour and other guests at the Vicennial Anniversary program, the Ombudsman, Mr. ‘Aisea Taumoepeau, SC., paid tribute to former and late Commissioners of Public Relations.



The Office was formerly known as the Commission for Public Relations.

Mr. Taumoepeau said that his office today salutes the services given by those before us.

“We are greatly indebted to them. Today is a tribute to their service to King and Country.

“In particular, the very first Commissioner for Public Relations, Siaosi Taimani ‘Aho, Rev. Pensimani Fonua, Lupe ‘Ilaiū, Pita Vuki and Sateki ‘Ahio,” the Ombudsman said.

He then called for a minute of silence to honour the late Commissioners, Siaosi ‘Aho and Rev. Penisimani Fonua.

The Ombudsman also highlighted the origin of the Ombudsman, the Ombudsman’s Mandates, Initiation of an investigation by the Ombudsman and Non-compliance.



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Vicennial Prayers



The Principal of Sia’atoutai Theological College, Rev. Dr. Taliai Niumeitolu (above) offered the Thanksgiving Prayer for the Office of the Ombudsman during the Vicennial Anniversary program.

Rev. Dr. Niumeitolu focused his message on Luke 12:13-21 when a brother sought the intervention of Jesus Christ so his elder brother could share with him his inheritance from their deceased wealthy father. He aligned this Scripture with when people who have problems seek help from the Ombudsman.

“Good Governance is someone who prepares for eternity, someone who possesses Godly wisdom.

“When King Tupou I granted Tonga to God at Pouono, the monarch’s wish was for Tonga to have people with Godly wisdom, a nation whose people store up Godly wealth for eternity,” recited Rev. Dr. Niumeitolu.

The program was attended by the Lord Chief Justice of Tonga, Michael Whitten, Q.C., the Attorney General and former CEO of the Office of the Ombudsman, Mrs. Linda Folaumotu’i, Minister of Education and Training, Hon. Hu’akavameiliku, members of the Diplomatic Corps and invited guests. @OMBTonga

Special Vicennial Sonata - “Ki-ama ‘o e Uanoa’i Ta’u”

One of the highlights of the Vicennial Anniversary was a sonata composed by the former Governor of Ha’apai, Rev. Dr. Mohenoa Puloka, a local poet and artist.

The sonnet, titled “Ki-ama ‘o e Uanoa’i Ta’u” or literally translated as the “Milestones of Good Governance,” or simply means “victorious vicennial,” according to the Ombudsman of Tonga.

The sonnet was read at the ceremony by Dr. Viliami Puloka, younger brother of the composer. It was then sung and danced to by the Tupou Tertiary Institute (TTI) Orchestra and Choir.

Here are the lyrics of the sonata:



VICTORIOUS IN GOOD GOVERNANCE FOR 20 YEARS

VICTORIOUS VICENNIAL
 HOPE OF THE FUTURE
 TACKLING IN JOY
 DAY AND NIGHT WAY TO GO
 GUARANTEE OF THE FUTURE IN THE PRESENT
 GOOD HOPE LEGACY OF GOD AND TONGA
 WANDERING WIND OR ENEMY
 HEROIC MOANA PASIFIKA
 EMBRACE/EXPERTISE AND UNKNOWN
 RAIN OR SUN, SMILE AND REJOICE
 REJOICING, ALERT, INTEGRITY AND
 COMPASSION
 STRETCH YOUR ARM AND CALL ON THE SPIRIT
 OF GOD
 PREPARING THE FESTIVITY OF VICTORY
 SAFETY OF SHALLOW, VICTORIOUS, SUN KISSED
 VICENNIAL

KI-AMA ‘O E UANOA’I TA’U

KI-AMA ‘O E UANOA’I TA’U
 ‘AMANAKI’ANGA ‘O E KAHA’U
 TAUALA ‘I POTATALA
 ‘AHO MO E POO ‘A HONO ANGAA
 FAKAMA’UNGA ‘O E KAHA’U HE LOLOTONGA
 ‘ANAUMELIE ‘A TONGA LOTU FOLOFOLA
 HA MATANGI TAKA PE HA LAPA
 TAKAOFI MAI ‘A E TAUKEI MO E SOLA
 ‘AHO ‘ENI ‘O E KAIVAI ‘O MOANA PASIFIKA
 ‘UHA PE LA’A MALIMALI KATAKATA
 LOPA-TUIA ANGATONU MANAVA’OFA
 MAFOLA HO NIMA PE A UI ‘A PULOTU ‘AKA’AKA
 HE TEUAKI E KATOANGA HE KUO KE IKUNA
 A’A-‘I-NAMO ‘O FEKITA MO HA ‘ULUA

Fa’u ‘e Rev. Dr Tevita Mohenoa Puloka

Special Vicennial Tribute from the Chief Ombudsman of New Zealand



The Chief Ombudsman of New Zealand and President of the Australasian Pacific Ombudsman Region (APOR), Judge Peter Boshier (*above*) paid tribute to the Vicennial Anniversary through video link.

Judge Boshier, who is also the Director of the International Ombudsman Institute (IOI), firstly, expressed his regret for not being able to be in Tonga for the occasion.

"My friends, I am very sorry that I cannot be with you for your 20th celebration of the Ombudsman Office in Tonga.

"What happy memories I have of my last visit to your office. How much I would have liked to have repeated that and have been with you for this important and significant occasion.

"You have in Tonga such wonderful leaders of 'Aisea and 'Alisi. You are strong performers in Tonga and in our region in Ombudsmanship. We are so fortunate to have you.

"I want to particularly recognize the theme of your conference. Vaccinated, Victorious, Vicennial Good Governance. What a magnificent, well-thought-through theme. I hope this goes well for you. I know it will.

"I also want to congratulate you and your office, and your entry of Ombudsmanship into Vava'u in the way that you are doing it. So I bring you warm greetings from my office, how I wish we could have done this personally. And I hope we will next year, but we shall see.

"And so, congratulations, well done, admirations, and the very best wishes here, from the Ombudsman Office here in Wellington.

"Malo 'aupito, no reira, tena koutou, tena tatou katoa."

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Documentary features nation building capacity of Good Governance

The theme *"'Oku Langa Fonua 'a e Pule Lelei"* was a special production of the Office of the Ombudsman to underscore how good governance builds a nation.

The radio and TV documentary portrays vital information on how Christianity began to shape Tonga's cultures and traditions when King Tupou I accepted the "new faith." Additionally, modern education brought by missionaries was fully embraced by the *"'Uluaki Fa"* and mandated that all his people – men, women, youth and children – must all be educated. Tonga's renowned and heroic seafaring or *"tau tahi"* also brought wealth for Tongans from neighbouring countries as well as the first initiative to set the sea boundaries of Tonga way before the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.

The culmination was the promulgation of the Constitution of Tonga in 1875.

The program features renowned Tongans including His Eminence Soane Patita Paini Cardinal Mafi, the Head of the Roman Catholic Church, Professor 'Ana Maui Taufe'ulungaki, Former Minister of Education as well as Rev. Dr. Paula Latu, Researcher on Theology and Independence of Sia'atoutai Theological College.

The one-hour documentary was the first program to begin the Vicennial highlights on Saturday, 14th August, over Radio Tonga and BroadCom 87.5FM as well as TV Tonga.



Vivace Mini-music concert



Another highlights of the Vicennial celebrations was the Vivace Mini-music concert. It featured local performers of Tupou Tertiary Institute (TTI) Orchestra and Choir including renowned soloist, Siniva 'Atolomake Helu.

The Vivace concert performed several numbers from top international composers of classical, opera and film music using oboe instrument, violin, guitars, amongst other instrument. The two-part classical concert was conducted by Savelio Mataele.

The first part consisted of four (4) items that began with *Gabriel Oboe* played by the soloist oboe, Sione Finau. It was followed by *Habanera* (Carmen) Bizet sung by soloist, Siniva 'Atolomake Helu, an *Opera Libiamo* by G. Verdi, performed by soloists 'Ofa Fe'ao and 'Atolomake Helu, and the *O Sole Mio* by Eduardo di Capua sung by 'Ofa Fe'ao, Siaosi Lomu, Lui Taufa and Kasipa Piutau.



The second part consisted of six (6) items where the first four portrayed heroic music and themes of well-known movies including *Game of Throne*, *Pirates of the Caribbean*, *Gladiators* and *Moana* that also showcased dancers from the Silapelua Academy of Dances.

The Vivace Mini-concert was concluded by two local compositions. The first was the "*Kolo Fonua*" by Rev. Dr. 'Aho, a tribute to the academic achievements of HM King Tupou VI. The last item was "*Ki-ama 'o e Uanoa'i Ta'u*" specially penned by the retired Governor of Ha'apai, Rev. Dr. Mo-henoa Puloka, in honour of the Vicennial Anniversary of the Office of the Ombudsman.

The Mini-concert was prelude by the *Fetu'u Ngingila* choir and the Tonga Police Band.

The Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Lord Fakafanua and Lady Fakafanua, Lord Chief Justice Whitten QC., and Mrs. Whitten, the Ombudsman and CEO as well as guests attended the Vicennial Mini-music concert, held at the Fa'onelua Center, on Wednesday evening, 18th August, 2021. ©OMBTonga

Vicennial Special Awards

Three special awards were presented during the Vicennial Vivace Mini-concert held on Wednesday evening.

A pioneer of the Office of the Ombudsman, Mrs. Mo'onia Taufa, was acknowledged for being the longest serving member of the employees.

Mrs. Taufa joined the office when it was initially established under the name Commission for Public Relations in August, 2001.

The Principal Investigation Officer, Mr. Pilimisolo Tamo'ua, was also acknowledged as the second longest serving member of the staff. He joined the office in 2003.

The Lord Speaker of the Legislative Assembly was also presented with an award by the Ombudsman as a token of appreciation.

Their awards were made during the interlude of the Vivace Mini-concert.

Mo'onia and Pilimisolo received their awards from the Guest of Honour of the Vivace concert, Lord Fakafanua. ©OMBTonga



Ombudsman opens new office in Neiafu, Vava’u



The Vicennial Anniversary was also marked with the launch of a new branch of the Office of the Ombudsman in Neiafu, Vava’u. The new office is located at the corner of Tu’i Road and Talau Road.

It signifies the growing number of ombudsman works required in Vava’u instead of having to wait for some time for the required information to be sent from Vava’u. According to the Ombudsman, Mr. ‘Aisea Taumoepeau, SC., it is hoped that the Neiafu office would garner more cooperation and support towards good governance in the works of the government.

In launching the office, the guest of honour and Speaker of the House, Lord Fakafanua urged the people of Vava’u on the importance of effective and efficient services to be carried out.

“We live in a democratic environment where the essence is when the people elect the members of government in the expectation that the government would serve the people.

“The Office of the Ombudsman has an important role to protect the people from wrongful use of powers and irresponsible governing of employees by the government.

“One of the duties of the office is to uphold the rule of law therefore it is appropriate to have a branch here in Vava’u, where King Tupou I granted Tonga to God at Pouono.

“This is a historical milestone where the king governs his people with love and hope to protect them and their rights.

“The event at Pouono also signifies the trust placed by the king on the ability of his people to make decisions by themselves without foreign interference.

“That is the essence of King Tupou I’s granting Tonga to God that embraces all the principles of good governance and leadership,” emphasized Lord Fakafanua.

He also pointed out the independence given to the Ombudsman to exercise his powers without fear, discrimination due to social status or impediments.

“The new office would enable vulnerable people to seek help easily and to serve effectively and efficiently,” said Lord Fakafanua.”

Lord Fakafanua also unveiled the plaque of the new office located at the corner of Tu’i and Talau Roads.

He then encouraged the people of Vava’u to capitalize on this development “to protect their rights ... with transparency for everyone without discrimination in government decisions and leadership.”

Rev. Liuaki Fungalei offered the dedication prayer of the new office. The CEO, Mrs. ‘Alisi Taumoepeau, KC., then made the vote of thanks.

The program was attended by guests from various sectors of the government, business sector and the community.

The Tupou Tertiary Institute Orchestra and Choir also sung the “*Ki-ama ‘o e Uanoa’i Ta’u*” sonata, a composition of Rev. Dr. Mohenoa Puloka specifically for the Vicennial Anniversary of the Office of the Ombudsman. @OMBTonga



The Vicennial materials produced specifically by the Office of the Ombudsman to highlight its 20th Anniversary included the followings:

- A documentary on the theme – “‘Oku Langa Fonua ‘a e Pule Lelei” – broadcast over Radio and TV beginning on Saturday, 14th August, 2021, Monday, 16th August & Tuesday, 17th August;
- Thanksgiving Prayer at the FWC Centenary Church, Nuku‘alofa, on Sunday, 15th August, led by the President, Rev. Dr. Tevita Havea;
- Vicennial Anniversary Program on the theme V. V. V. Good Governance – broadcast live over Radio & TV Livestream over Facebook on Wednesday, 18th August, 2021;
- Vivace Mini-music Concert held on Wednesday evening, 18th August, 2021 at the Fa‘oneluva Convention Center and broadcast live on Radio and TV livestreaming on Facebook;
- Rebroadcast of Vicennial Anniversary Program on Radio and TV on Thursday, 19th August; 2021;
- Rebroadcast of Vivace Mini-music Concert on Friday, 20th August, 2021 on Radio & TV;
- Broadcast live on radio and TV livestreaming of the official launch of the second office at Neiafu, Vava‘u held on Saturday, 21st August, 2021;
- Sunday Service at the Laumalie Ma‘oni‘oni FWC of Neiafu, led by Rev. Tu‘ipulotu Faletau, and broadcast live on radio and TV livestreaming on Facebook;

All the above media coverage was provided by the Tonga Broadcasting Commission (Radio, TV and Livestreaming) as well as BroadCom 87.5FM (Radio and TV Livestreaming).

All content is available on traditional media, website and online for our local and overseas audiences:

Website – www.ombudsman.to

Facebook – Office of the Ombudsman

Radio & TV Tonga Livestream (Tonga Broadcasting)

BroadCom 87.5FM (BroadCom Livestream)



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