

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

1) Remarks of the Ombudsman



Malo e lelei from Nuku'alofa,

*This years theme:
Act Now (Ngaue leva). Advocating for efficient
response to public's concerns.*

The key focus has been:

- I. Strengthening legal and institutional frameworks to secure compliance and;*
- II. Promoting advocacy and public engagements; with the focus on local government; and*
- III. Advancing fairness, accountability and human rights.*

Beyond investigating and resolving complaints, recommendations proposed serve as powerful tools for shaping governance with integrity in public service.

Mrs. 'Alisi Numia Taumoepeau, KC.
Ombudsman.

Public Holidays

July 12 – *Birthday of King Tupou VI*

September 15 -16th — *International day of Democracy and Opening of the women's practice parliament in Tonga.*

September 17th— *Birthday of Crown Prince Tupouto'a 'Ulukalala*

Monthly Themes

July — *Transparency*

August — *Ki-Ama,*

September — *Bill of Rights (Part 1 of the Constitution)*

Content

- 1) Remarks of the Ombudsman**
- 2) Highlights & Themes**
- 3) Staff**
- 4) Outreach and Community Engagement**
- 5) Monthly Devotion**

1) Highlights and Themes

On the **International Day of Democracy**, the **Third Session of the Women’s Practice Parliament** was officially opened — marking another important milestone since its first sitting in **2014**.

The program featured remarks from **Lord Fakafanua**, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly; **Magistrate Loupua Pahulu-Kuli**, Speaker of the Women’s Parliament; **foreign representatives**, and **women leaders** from various sectors.

The **Guest of Honour and keynote speaker**, *Mrs. Alisi Numia Taumoepeau KC – Ombudsman, former Member of the Privy Council, and Tonga’s first female Cabinet Minister and former member of parliament* — delivered an inspiring address encouraging women to take leadership roles and participate actively in national decision-making.

An official welcome for the members of the Women’s Parliament was conducted by the **Clerk of the Legislative Assembly**, *Mrs. Gloria Pole’o*.

The program also featured musical items by *‘Atolomake Helu* and the *Sia’atoutai Theological College Choir*, and concluded with remarks from the **Prime Minister of the Women’s Parliament**, *Hon. Mele Tonga ‘Alatini Finau*, followed by a vote of thanks by *Hon. Dulcie Tei*.

This year’s session focuses on key themes of **Education, Health, and Women’s Empowerment**, and was held from **15–16 September 2025**.

The public were invited to follow the proceedings live on **Fale Alea Facebook Live, Tonga Broadcasting Live, or BroadComm Live**.

The Legislative Assembly extended its heartfelt appreciation to its partners — **UNDP (Pacific Parliaments’ Effectiveness Initiative, funded by the Government of New Zealand)**, the **Government of Australia**, the **People’s Republic of China**, and **Balance of Power** — for their continued support.

The Women Practice Parliament

At the opening of Tonga’s Women’s Parliament 2025, Ombudsman Mrs. Alisi Numia Taumoepeau KC, reflected on her own experiences as a former member of parliament. She noted that while progress has been made, women’s voices remain underrepresented and their potential not fully realised.

She emphasised that equality is about more than numbers. It requires women’s perspectives to be fully integrated into national decision-making. More women in Parliament, she said, Tonga would see policies and laws better addressing education, healthcare, families, and the economy.

Mrs. Taumoepeau described the Women’s Parliament as both symbolic and practical. It is a platform for inclusive governance, civic engagement, and a continuation of women’s historic roles in leadership and community service. She noted its importance in offering young people structured opportunities to engage in political discourse, laying the foundation for stronger participation in the future.

Looking ahead, the Ombudsman expressed hope that women’s presence in Parliament will one day be seen as the normal rather than an exception. She concluded by calling the event not just a ceremonial milestone but an invitation to reflect, listen, and work towards a more balanced and representative legislative assembly.



2) Monthly Devotion

Each new month begins with reflection, encouragement and a renewed sense of purpose and dedicate the month ahead to the Lord.

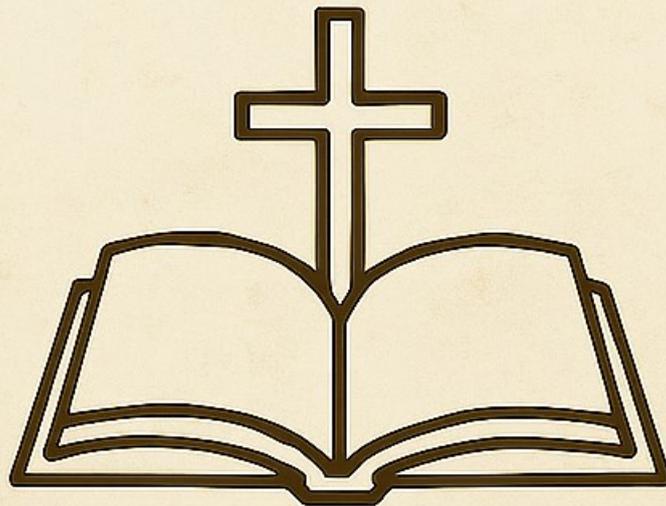
July

The July devotion was led by Mele'ofa Mohenoa and Mo'onua Taufu.

MONTHLY DEVOTION

August

The devotion in August was led by Moses Uili and Me Saafi their text on Colossians 3:23 "Whatever you do, do it with all your heart as it is for the Lord, not for the people"



September

The September devotion was led by 'Etivoni Pifeleti and Tevita Kafoa. They shared with us the powerful message taken from Psalm 119:71 "My suffering was good for me, for it taught me to pay attention to your decrees."

3) Outreach & Community Engagement

Local Government: Following on from the outreach to Ha’apai and Vava’u’s Local government. Tongatapu and ‘Eua were also engaged.

Tongatapu:

A. District and Town officers: Nukunuku.

On 17 July 2025, continued outreach program was held specifically to Nukunuku district and its town officers. This program was led by the Principal Investigator, Pilimisolo Tamo’ua, Legal Officer, Sione H. Topui; Investigator Officer, Siosaia Tu’i’onetoa; IT Douglas ‘Akauola & Senior Investigator Officer, Mosese Uili.

B. District and Town Officers: Tatakamotonga.

On 24 July 2025, the Principal Investigator led an outreach visit to the district and town officers of the Tatakamotonga district. The engagement provided a valuable platform for officers to raise concerns and seek clarification on key matters. Among the issues discussed were the relevant law relate to District and Town Officers, the process for distinguishing genuine complaints from vexatious ones. Alongside this was, was clarifying the differences between the role of the office of the ombudsman to the Anti Corruption Commission Office.

C. District and Town Officers: Kolomotu’a & Kolofo’ou.

On 28 July 2025, another outreach was held for the districts of Kolofo’ou and Kolomotu’a.; Led by PIO Pilimisolo Tamo’ua; LO Sione H. Topui & SIO Mosese Uili.

D. District and Town Officers: Vaini.

On 31 July 2025, continued outreach program was held at the Vaini district where it was also led by PIO Pilimisolo Tamo’ua; LO Sione H. Topui; Douglas ‘Akauola & SIO Mosese Uili.

‘Eua:

E. District&Town Officers.

On 24 August 2025, a team led by LO Sione H. Topui, IO Siosaia ‘O. Tu’i’onetoa & SIO Mosese Uili held an outreach program at ‘Eua. Attending this program were town officers and district officers of ‘Eua where they came together to know more about the role of the office of Ombudsman in Tonga.



F. Radio Talk-back Program

On **14 August 2025**, the Ombudsman’s Office continued its public outreach through a live radio talkback program. The session was led by Legal Officer Sione Hamani Topui, Investigation Officer Siosaia ‘Ofa Tu’ionetoa, and Senior Investigation Officer Mosese Uili. During the program, the team engaged with listeners and received a total of six calls. These included six questions and two comments, with participation from four male and two female callers. Notably, one male caller raised two separate questions, while one female caller posed a question and also shared a comment. Another male caller provided additional feedback on the work of the Office.



On **4 September 2025**, the Ombudsman’s Office hosted another radio talk-back program to further raise public awareness about its role and services. This session was led by Chief Executive Officer Roman Vaihu, Senior Investigation Officer Mele’ofa Mohenoa, and Senior Investigation Officer Mosese Uili. The team responded to six questions, all submitted by male participants, highlighting continued community engagement and interest in the work of the Office.



4) Staff of the Month

This award acknowledges members who demonstrates exceptional commitment and dedication to their respective roles. The office extend heartfelt appreciation to these individuals. Recognizing and celebrating their hard work also inspires staff to strive for excellence and remain committed to their responsibilities, good governance and integrity.

July

This month award goes to Me Saafi (Accounting Officer). Congratulations Me!

August

Ms Petunia Lilo (Executive Assistant) was presented with the staff of the month for August. Congratulations Petunia!

September

Mr Sione Hamani Topui (Legal Officer) awarded the staff of the month for his outstanding dedication and hard-work. Congratulations Hamani.

5) Staff

1. **New Recruitment: Siasoi Liongitau 'Atiola, a NZ trained Lawyer joined.**

We welcome Siasoi to our legal team! Congratulations, let us achieve great things together.

2. **Study Leave: Mr. John Paul Loloa**

As you step away to focus on completing your studies, we wish you all the very best in this important journey.

Office of the Ombudsman Tonga, Quarterly Newsletter for July—September, 2025.

Published by the Office of the Ombudsman, Tonga. Editor, Content, Photos & Layout—Douglas 'Akau'ola (IT Officer), Latu Vehikite (System Administrator).

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