



GOVERNMENT OF SAMOA



GOVERNMENT OF AUSTRALIA

**JOINT STATEMENT FROM THE HON FIAME NAOMI MATA'AFU, PRIME MINISTER OF SAMOA AND SENATOR PENNY WONG, AUSTRALIA'S MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**VISIT BY AUSTRALIA'S FOREIGN MINISTER TO APIA, SAMOA 2-3 JUNE 2022**

**2 June 2022:** Samoa was pleased to welcome Australia's new Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator the Hon Penny Wong, from 2 to 3 June 2022 in her second bilateral visit to the Pacific region as foreign minister. During her visit, Minister Wong had the honour to meet with Head of State, His Highness Tuimalealiifano Vaaletoa Sualauvi II and the Honourable Prime Minister Fiame Naomi Mata'afa and listen to the opportunities and challenges facing Samoa.

As a close friend and partner, Minister Wong offered Australia's warm congratulations to the people of Samoa in celebrating 60 years of independence on 1 June. Prime Minister Fiame welcomed the Australian Government's commitment to address the climate crisis and listen to the concerns of our Pacific family.

Minister Wong was pleased to announce a new eight-year partnership between Australia and Samoa to address its human development and social inclusion priorities. This new partnership, 'Tautua – Human Development for All', will seek to foster collective action in health, education, gender, disability and social protection, addressing areas most critical to Samoa.

Building on a 30-year partnership in maritime security, Australia was also pleased to strengthen its support for Samoa's management of its precious oceans through the provision of a new Guardian Class Patrol Boat. The new vessel will be delivered within the next 12 months. In support of the regional *Boe Declaration*, this will help Samoa to respond to increasingly complex threats in the region, including transnational crime and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.

Minister Wong met with representatives of Samoa's Cabinet and private sector and community leaders to hear Samoa's aspirations for its future and ways we can work together to ensure our Blue Pacific remains strong and prosperous. She listened to the challenges and successes for Samoan families under Australia's labour mobility programs and undertook to ensure settings continue to be of mutual benefit to Samoa and Australia.

Minister Wong said she hoped this visit would be the first of many during her time as Foreign Minister. Prime Minister Fiame wished her well in her new role, and looked forward to working closely together as members of the Pacific family.

