



Secretary General

**WELCOME ADDRESS**

Pastor Lenny Solomona,  
Honourable Afamasaga Rico Tupai, Minister of Communications and Information Technology,  
Government of Samoa,  
Mr. Charles Punaha, Chairman of the APT Policy and Regulation Forum for Pacific (PRFP),  
Ms. Unutoa Fonoti, Vice-Chairman of PRFP,  
Mrs. Giza Fuatai Purcell, Acting Secretary General, Commonwealth Telecommunication  
Organization (CTO),  
Distinguished Guests, Speakers and Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning!

It is my great pleasure to welcome you all to the 11th APT Policy and Regulation Forum for Pacific (PRFP-11) to be held from 27 to 29 November 2018, here in the beautiful city of Apia, Samoa.

First of all, on behalf of the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT) and all delegations to this PRFP, I would like to express my profound gratitude and appreciation to Honourable Afamasaga Rico Tupai, Minister of Communications and Information Technology of Samoa for presiding over this Opening Ceremony. It is a great honour and privilege for all of us here.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology as well as the Office of the Regulator, Government of Samoa for accepting to host this PRFP-11 and for the excellent arrangement made by their officials. This is the first PRFP being held in Samoa. I have learnt that back in 2013, the APT/ ITU Pacific Forum had been organized at this same venue.

I would also like to thank the Department of Communications and the Arts, Australian Government, and the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, Government of Japan, which have also provided the support for this forum.

Distinguished Delegates,

I wish to take this opportunity to mention three important events of the APT that had taken place after the last PRFP in Fiji and are relevant to this Forum.

The first event is the 14th Session of the General Assembly of the APT (GA-14), which was held in Bangkok in November last year. GA-14 adopted the Strategic Plan of the APT for the year 2018-2020. The Strategic Plan emphasizes five Strategic Pillars and identifies a number of strategic actions to be implemented by all work programmes of the APT including PRFP.

I would also like to mention that the General Assembly last year also re-elected me the Secretary General of the APT for the second term. My new term started on 9 February this year and will be until 8 February 2021. I am grateful for the trust that APT Members have placed in me once again. I would like to assure you that I would do my best as the Secretary General of the APT to enhance the activities of APT and uphold the interest of APT members.

The second event I would like to refer to is the 41st Session of the Management Committee of the APT (MC-41), which was held back-to-back with GA-14 in Bangkok. MC-41 instructed all work programmes of the APT to align their activities with the Strategic Plan of the APT for the year 2018-2020 and also approved the holding of this PRFP-11 to be held in 2018.

The third important event had been taken place this year in early October in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. I would like to mention the 42nd Session of the Management Committee of the APT (MC-42). MC-42 approved the holding of the Asia-Pacific ICT Ministerial Meeting 2019 to be held on 25 and 26 June 2019 in Singapore. MC-42 established a Correspondence Group for the Asia-Pacific ICT Ministerial Meeting 2019 (CGMM) to prepare for the Ministerial Meeting. CGMM will work mostly through correspondence and will have two physical meetings next year. The first physical meeting will be held from 15 to 17 January 2019 at APT Headquarters in Bangkok. I look forward to having strong engagements and contributions from our Members in the Pacific. MC-42 also approved the holding of PRFP-12 next year.

More details of the outcomes of GA-14, MC-41, and MC-42 will be presented in the first plenary session.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

For more than 10 years, PRFP has provided an important platform to deal with unique issues faced by the Pacific island countries. The programme for this year takes into account five Strategic Pillars of the Strategic Plan of the APT for 2018-2020 and covers various topics including Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Internet of Things (IoT) for the Pacific, Internet Connectivity of the Pacific and its beyond, Securing Critical Information Infrastructure, Natural Disaster preparedness, risk reduction and mitigation, Spectrum Management in the Pacific and its challenges, and so on. This Forum will also discuss issues to be the inputs for the Ministerial Meeting next year.

I hope the programme for PRFP-11 will provide insights on the policy and regulatory issues of the region and the sharing of views and experiences of each other will enable all delegates to contribute to the policy and regulatory issues in your home countries.

In the last session of this PRFP, the meeting will consider the nomination of Chairman and Vice-Chairmen of PRFP for the next term. At PRFP-9 in Papua New Guinea in 2016, the meeting nominated Mr. Charles Punaha for the Chairman of PRFP and Mr. Shivnesh Prasad and Ms. Unutoa Fonoti for the two Vice-Chairmen of PRFP. Mr. Punaha and Mr. Prasad will complete their second term and Ms. Fonoti will complete her first term. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Chairman and both Vice-Chairmen of PRFP for their kind support to guide the Forum to success.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In conjunction with this year PRFP, “Internet Connectivity Workshop on Ensuring Sustainable Connectivity in Pacific” was held successfully yesterday. I would like to thank all speakers

from international and regional organizations as well as from Member administrations and industries. I would also like to extend my sincere gratitude and appreciation to ISOC and APNIC for co-organizing the workshop, and to ICANN, as a partner organization.

In addition, there will be another one-day event, the “ITU-APT-PITA Sub-regional Workshop on Enabling Policies and Regulations for Catalyzing e-Application in the Pacific” will be held on Friday, 30 November. This Workshop is also supported by Department of Communications and the Arts, Australian Government. I hope all of you will also attend the workshop.

Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen

I sincerely hope that this PRFP-11 will be valuable to all delegates and countries in the Pacific. Please actively participate as this is how you will derive the greatest benefit from this Forum. The secretariat will do our best to ensure the smooth running of the Forum.

Allow me once again, express my heartfelt gratefulness to Honourable Minister Afamasaga Rico Tupai for inaugurating the ceremony today, and to our host, Ministry of Communications and Information Technology as well as Office of the Regulator, Government of Samoa, for the excellent preparations and the warm hospitality extended to all of us.

I wish you all a productive and successful forum.

Thank you very much.

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