

Fourth *Pacific Women Advisory Board Meeting* held in Apia

Regional Samoa

SHARE

April 6, 2016



Pacific Women Advisory Board. Back (L-R): Reverend Sereima Lomaloma (Fiji), Dr Audrey Aumua (SPC), Ms Lesieli Taviri (PNG). Front (L-R): Mrs Merilyn Tahī (Vanuatu), Ms Maere Tekanene (Kiribati), Hon Fīame Naomi Mata'afa (Samoa), Ms Yoshiko Yamaguchi (RMI), Ms Andie Fong Toy (PIFS), Ms Natalia Palu Latu (Tonga) and Ms Natasha Stott Despoja (Australia's Ambassador for Women and Girls). Absent: Dr Lawrence Kalinoe (PNG), Ms Jane Kesno (PNG) and Ms Savina Nongebatu (Solomon Islands). Photo: Shazia Usman, Pacific Women Support Unit.

The Advisory Board of Pacific Women held its fourth meeting in Apia on 4 April.

The Advisory Board comprises 12 eminent women and men from across the Pacific – Fiji, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. They work in a wide range of areas – government, bureaucracy, private sector and civil society – and are strong advocates for gender equality in their own communities. The Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and the Pacific Community are also represented on the Board. Australia's Ambassador for Women and Girls is an observer to the Board.

Chairing the meeting, the Hon Fiame Naomi Mata'afa said: "the Pacific Women Advisory Board provides advice to the Australian government on the direction of the program, ensuring it responds to the needs of Pacific island countries and takes into account Pacific Island beliefs and culture". She added that "it is a privilege to work with such passionate and experienced people who are working to improve the lives of women, men and children across the region."

Following the Board meeting members attended the Pacific Women Parliamentary Partnerships Forum, also held in Apia. They also visited the Samoa Returnees Charitable Trust and the Samoa Police where they learned from some of the flagship initiatives in Samoa to address violence, including towards women and girls.

Members also had an opportunity to speak with Supreme Court Judge, Justice Mata Tuatagaloa and head of the new Drug and Alcohol Court and Family Court, Judge Leilani Tuala Warren.

Minutes from the meeting will shortly be available on Pacific Women's website.