



PRESS RELEASE

Samoa National Human Rights Institution re-accredited with 'A status'

Apia, Thursday 4 November 2021:

The Office of the Ombudsman also the National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) was recently re-accredited as an 'A status' Institution by the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI). The Office submitted its statement of compliance in June 2021 and was reviewed during the GANHRI Sub-Committee on Accreditation (SCA) session held virtually from 18 to 29 October 2021. The recommendation by SCA was publicly released on 2 November 2021.

GANHRI is a network of NHRIs from all around the world which coordinates the relationship between NHRIs and the United Nations (UN) human rights system. It is the only non-UN organization whose internal review accreditation system grants access for an NHRI to various committees within the United Nations, including the UN Human Rights Council.

The 'A' level rating means that Samoa's NHRI retains its credibility as an NHRI and can continue to engage and independently participate in various UN human rights bodies including the UN Human Rights Council and its subsidiary bodies. It also means that the Office's participating rights in GANHRI and in the Asia Pacific Region as a full member of the Asia Pacific Forum (APF) of National Human Rights Institution remains.

Ombudsman, Luamanuvao Katalaina Sapolu says "the Sub-Committee's decision is the culmination of efforts by this Office over 5 years (since the last accreditation in 2016) reflecting persistence and tenacity in delivering results that are compliant with the Paris Principles against numerous challenges and meager resources." Ombudsman, Luamanuvao Sapolu.

She further adds, "while we are delighted with the outcome there is a lot of work to be done going forward to ensure that we deliver on recommendations put forward by the SCA Committee before the next re-accreditation process which is in 5 years from now" Ombudsman, Luamanuvao Sapolu.

The result comes as Samoa completed the Universal Periodic Review by Government this week which is a reflection of Samoa's tremendous efforts to meet her international obligations on human rights.

The Office acknowledges the support of APF throughout its preparation for the re-accreditation process and over the 5 years to ensure that we consistently work to

strengthen our compliance with the Paris Principles the standards governing the independence, jurisdiction, mandate and composition of NHRIs.

The Office is in the process of submitting its 7th State of Human Rights Report to the Legislative Assembly on the status of freedom of opinion and expression in Samoa.

ENDS.