
PRESS RELEASE

Samoa Ombudsman outlines strategic priorities during courtesy call on UN Resident Coordinator

Tuanaimato, Samoa – August 19, 2026

Newly appointed Ombudsman of Samoa, Vui Clarence Nelson, recently paid a courtesy call on Ms. Karla Robin Hershey, the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Samoa, at the UN Headquarters in Tuanaimato. The meeting served as a platform for the Ombudsman to outline the Office's immediate and long-term priorities while strengthening institutional ties with the United Nations.

During the briefing, Ombudsman Nelson highlighted his key priorities, including development and design of the Office's new 5-year strategic plan; digital literacy and online safety education for children; and promotion of the right to a healthy and sustainable environment (the "R2HE"). Ombudsman Nelson also shared with Ms Hershey his long-term vision for a regional human rights charter in the Pacific.

Seeking a deeper understanding of the Office's powers and responsibilities, Ms. Hershey inquired about the Ombudsman's work monitoring conditions in Samoa's prisons and correctional facilities. The Ombudsman's team explained the Office's mandate under the Ombudsman (*Komesina o Sulufa'iga*) Act 2013 to receive, investigate, and determine complaints about police officers, prison officers, or officers of other prescribed disciplined forces; and its powers to enter and inspect prisons and correctional facilities.

Ms. Hershey warmly congratulated Ombudsman Nelson on his appointment and reaffirmed the United Nations' commitment to supporting his Office. Ms. Hershey confirmed that the UN stands ready to provide technical expertise, advisory services, and strategic assistance wherever it can add value to the Office's work.

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