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NOTICE OF PUBLIC ADDRESS

Speaker	Robert Niko Aiono Counsellor, High Commission of the Independent State of Samoa
Topic	<i>The Sustainable Development Strategy of The Independent State of Samoa</i>
Date & Time	<u>Tuesday 19 September 2023 at 6 p.m.</u>
Location	Lecture Theatre, Old Government House (University of Auckland), Princes Street, Auckland. Choice of masks and distancing is Respected .
Synopsis	The Government of Samoa is committed to working within the “SAMOA Pathway” plan of the United Nations to address sea-level rise and other adverse effects of climate change. The commitment extends across sectors of society. The Pathway will impact upon some significant aspects of Samoan society, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The balance between the central power of the Government in Apia, and the traditional authority of <i>matai</i> (village chiefs) at the local level;• The role of women committees in decision-making in the local villages;• The structuring of the economy and society, which needs to fit within a development strategy that incorporates regional plans on climate change.

The context of the Pathway includes geopolitical stresses in the Pacific region. Such are not new in Samoan history, and are the genesis of the division of the Samoan cultural realm into two political entities. One is the (now) Independent State of Samoa, and the other is American Samoa, an “unincorporated territory” of the United States. The division results from the jostling among Great Powers from the late 19th century.

Biographical Details Mr. Aiono has been the Counsellor at the High Commission of Samoa in Wellington since 2020. Presently he is the Deputy Head of Mission.

Prior to this posting, he had served in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Apia, Samoa from 2017. In that time, he acquired a particular expertise and interest in climate change, human rights, and disarmament (including the control of small firearms).

While Wellington is his first overseas posting, he is very familiar with New Zealand. He studied here, and holds a B. Comm. degree from Otago University.

The Forum provides a space and an opportunity for discussion and consideration of topics of international affairs. The meeting is open to the public, without charge or seat reservation.

¹ World Affairs Forum Incorporated, # 50081789. Available from: <https://app.businessregisters.govt.nz>.
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