



March  
2021

## PARLIAMENTARY SITTING SUMMARY

### DISCLAIMER

This Report provides a brief of **'PART A'** of the Proceedings of Parliament on **Monday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021**. While all efforts have been made to provide an informative brief, this information must not be relied upon as an alternative to the official Hansard record of proceedings of Parliament. If you have any specific questions about **'PART A'** the Proceedings of Parliament on **Monday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021**, you should consult the official Hansard or seek assistance from the Office of the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly.

### PART A

Day 30

9:21am

Monday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021

#### I. GOVERNMENT ORDERS OF THE DAY

##### 1. SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION BILL (NO.1) 2020/2021- second reading & Debate on the Bill (cont.)

#### GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

##### i. Hon LOAU Solamalemalo Keneti Sio, Minister for Education, Sports And Culture (MESC)

The Hon Minister greeted Mr Speaker, Members of Parliament, Leader of the House, Cabinet and Associate Ministers, respective CEOs and Samoa in all her honorific salutations. He then addressed the HOS and his good lady, COD and his wife, CJ and Judges, LTC president and staff. Then greeted his constituency through its honorific salutations and acknowledged their support. The Hon Minister acknowledged the Ministries/agencies under his portfolio. (MESC, NUS, SQA). Hon Minister highlighted that he will speak on achievements and developments made throughout the parliamentary term in the national, regional and international levels and future aspirations by respective institution under his portfolio and responses thereto issues raised by certain Members. The Hon Minister also noted Government's prioritization of Education as is evidenced in the appropriation allocated to the Ministry each FY. Hon LOAU asserted that the reason MESC receives first opportunity is to ensure the future generation of Samoa is educated as 'education is indeed the key to success'; and jested that without education, members would not have been chosen to represent their respective constituencies as these are our the first teachers.

- **Afioga Hon FAUMUINA Tiatia Faaolatane Liuga, Member for Palauli le Falefa**

The Hon Member jested that his parents were his first teachers and church ministers who taught him the Samoan alphabet and highlighted that they should also be acknowledged.

**Afioga Hon LOAU Sola Keneti Sio - Minister for Education, Sports and Culture & Member for Sagaga le Falefa (cont.)**

The Hon Minister in response to the Member for Palauli le Falefa noted that the education system educates Church Ministers and Parents.

- **Tofa NAFOITOA Talaimanu Ketu - Member for Gagaemauga No.3**

The Member put forth the question who taught our parents and church ministers before us and clarified that it is provided in the bible that the beginning of wisdom is reverence of GOD.

**Afioga Hon LOAU Sola Keneti Sio - Minister for Education, Sports and Culture & Member for Sagaga le Falefa (cont.)**

The Hon Minister continued that the appropriation for the Ministry in 2016 was 89million and noted an increase in 2020 to 122million, reflecting the importance placed on the Ministry. Mr Minister noted that in the past, families and students sold coconuts and other products to pay school fees, whereas today children are being schooled freely, as it is one of Government's intentions to ensure all children of Samoa are educated. Hon Minister noted that 14 million was appropriated for education in the previous FY supplementary budget and has increased to 18 million. He noted 5million appropriated for church/private schools in the budget, this is to assist with school fees, additionally the provision of stationaries and payment of teachers in church/private schools.

Furthermore, the Minister highlighted that certain Members commended government's efforts in providing scholarships and assistance for students (from low income families) through SQA and NUS; noting a total of approximately 1000 students have been awarded scholarships to help with their school fees through the SQA and NUS.

In regards to school buildings; the Hon Minister noted donor nations such as Japan, China, USA and other countries have greatly assisted with the construction of new school buildings. He noted all the requests made by respective Members for new school buildings, sports fields and acknowledged CHINA AID for their assistance in funding for these developments. He provided stats and asserted that a total of 52 new school buildings have been constructed throughout

the parliamentary term and stated that construction continues to this day to ensure school buildings are safe and clean for students to be educated in a healthy environment.

- **Afioga FAUMUINA Asi Pauli Wayne Fong - Member for Urban West**

The Member queried the status of the new school for his constituency and asked when this project would be complete.

**Hon PRIME MINISTER – Point of Clarification**

*The Hon PM clarified that in the beginning, government was not responsible for school buildings, as this is the responsibility of the respective villages. Then recalled back in 1964 whereby a new church was erected for Aleipata and Lotofaga, simultaneously there was also a new school constructed called the Aleipata Secondary School for children living in Aleipata to Lotofaga. Hon PM further noted that in 1995, after the Cyclones Ofa and Val in 1991, the Government went out to the community to assess the damages caused by the Cyclones and noted more than 100 school buildings were damaged, which heightened Governments' need to assist with the development of school buildings (made possible with the assistance from the NZ Government). However, in the village of Neiafu the Government went on a follow-up visit to determine the progress of the schools, and discovered that the Neiafu school had not begun construction. The Government asked why the school building had not been constructed, and asked to see the building materials; it was then that the Government discovered there were no building materials as the village used it to construct the village Church. The PM then ordered the village to build the school, otherwise their school would be removed; Neiafu resulted to taking out a loan to build the school. The Hon PM asserted that Government's role in monitoring the projects is crucial in order to pick up errors and act accordingly.*

*The Hon PM noted that the Government provides funds for church/private schools and also for Early Childhood Education. Furthermore, Hon PM noted that countries who provide funding for schools, have planned estimates and timeframe to ensure development goes according to their budget. Hon PM acknowledged with much appreciation the assistance of JICA in funding most of school buildings and highlighted that JICA reviews blueprints for each building in order to determine the estimate cost for school buildings. He further accentuated that when a constituency requires a two-storey school building, JICA conducts an analysis on the foundation of the school building and considers all other factors specifically with the constant changes in climatic conditions.*

*The Hon PM touched upon the establishment of the Samoa Qualifications Authority and noted that SQA was established to ensure the integrity of the education system in Samoa was not compromised. He further clarified that the intention of establishing SQA was to monitor people who hold BA, Masters, Doctorate degrees with no records in passing their SSC and PSSC; to ensure accreditation and qualification is genuine.*

**Afioga Hon LOAU Sola Keneti Sio - Minister for Education, Sports and Culture & Member for Sagaga le Falefa (cont.)**

The Hon Minister confirmed that the FK has been approved for the Member's school building as requested, continued to speak on the literacy and numeracy programs and noted its importance in the development of the education sector – Hon Minister was pleased to that the 91.9% was achieved by the Ministry in enhancing these programs throughout the years. Hon Minister noted efforts undertaken by the Ministry during times of the measles and covid, incorporating into the school curriculum virtual learning to ensure the provision of education is not hindered due to unforeseen circumstances.

In regards to shortage of teachers, the Minister asserted that the Ministry endeavours to employ students undergoing teaching certificates/diplomas and degrees to teach in their village schools to be closer to their families and contribute to the development of their village schools. Hon Minister then mentioned that teachers are being schooled for free at the NUS.

- **Afioga ALIIMALEMANU Alofa Tuuau – Member for Alataua West**

The Member sought clarification from the Minister of Education in regards to teachers/lecturers that are afforded scholarships.

**Afioga Hon LOAU Sola Keneti Sio - Minister for Education, Sports and Culture & Member for Sagaga le Falefa (cont.)**

The Hon Minister clarified that these lecturers are studying in the Education Faculty and asserted that government has provided scholarships for 3-4 years to increase teachers (counter shortage of teachers).

**Hon PRIME MINISTER – Point of Clarification**

*The Hon PM touched upon the rational intention of establishing the NUS, was to provide and offer opportunities for Samoa's children to pursue their degrees locally, noting changes made to scholarship criteria and requirements made by the donor nations such as NZ and Australia. Therefore, if such dilemma occurs; for instance, this pandemic, Samoa is prepared to educate its own people, hence the establishment of Samoa's University. The Hon PM further clarified on the good impacts of students to pursue their qualifications locally such as: spend more time with families (prevent them from getting homesick), prevent them from committing suicide when depressed in school (case in point the Samoan scholar in Australia).*

**Afioga Hon LOAU Sola Keneti Sio - Minister for Education, Sports and Culture & Member for Sagaga le Falefa (cont.)**

The Hon Member mentioned the USP at Alafua and asserted that this is an opportunity for the children and youth of Samoa to further their studies in a regional University and stated the pros and cons of social media.

**Proceedings were suspended 10:47am**  
**Proceedings resumed at 11:36am**

**Afioga Hon LOAU Sola Keneti Sio - Minister for Education, Sports and Culture & Member for Sagaga le Falefa (cont.)**

The Hon Minister touched on the programs to assist teachers for upgrading their knowledge and skills (Teachers Upgrade Program); noting a total of 456 teachers who have completed their bachelor degrees. He further noted the recently developed Cultural Center which is nearing completion, is a great achievement especially in keeping Samoa's treasures and ancient artifacts safely stored.

In regards to Sports, the Hon Minister noted the successful hosting of the Pacific Games in 2019. And noted the 27 types of sports carried out in Samoa. Hon Minister expressed gratitude and appreciation to all the churches who assisted the government during the Pacific Games. Generally noted the improvement in students' results in SSC (Samoa School Certificate) and SSLC (Samoa Secondary Leaving Certificate). Then expressed thanks to his constituency, for their support and advise during his time in Parliament. Hon Minister acknowledged all the clergies in his constituency for the silent prayers and all the support received during the Term. Paid special acknowledgement to the Leadership team responsible for the Offices under his portfolio, such as the Chancellor of NUS, CEO of SQA and CEO of MESC and all the staff for their hard work and efforts throughout the parliamentary term.

***Hon PM Clarification***

*The Hon PM clarified on the rational reason behind the rearrangement of electoral boundaries provided in the Electoral Constituency Act 2019 and asserted that the arrangements were made depending on population density. The Hon PM used the American system, whereby there are 2 Houses (Senate and House of Representatives) and an electoral system to have two representatives from each constituency. Hon PM noted that there were*

*some constituencies with only one representative, the constituencies with two representatives gives the right to the people to have two votes.*

*The Hon PM highlighted that Samoa conducted a comparison jurisdiction with relevant parliamentary systems such as NZ. Therefore, Samoa concluded with having one Member per constituency, Samoa proposed the passing of the legislation namely, Electoral Constituency Act 2019. The Hon Minister also noted that the Police Station in Aleipata covers Aleipata itupa i Luga and Lalo, Lepa and Lotofaga and this also applies to the hospital. Furthermore the PM clarified that there are also boundaries that cover constituencies in terms of health, agricultural, and policing services. The intention of the Act is to standardise opportunities for constituencies and accentuated that this can be amended when the population density of constituency increases and that nothing is set in stone.*

**ii. Hon FAAOLESA Katopau T. Ainuu - Minister for Justice and Courts Administration, and Member for Vaimauga West No.2**

The Hon Minister greeted Mr Speaker, Leader of the House, Cabinet Ministers and their Associates, Chairpersons and Members of respective Parliamentary Committees. He also acknowledged, HOS, COD, CEOs and different denominations. He addressed Samoa in all her honorific salutations, and acknowledged the Speaker for his long service and forbearance during Parliamentary proceedings. He then commended all the CEO's and staff for their support, and acknowledged the Clerk and his office for their services. The Minister also conveyed condolences for the families of the Members who have passed on, such as the Member PA'U Sefo Pa'u and VAAFUSUAGA Toleafoa Ken Poutoa. The Hon Minister addressed his constituency for their support and entrusting him to be their Member. (The Hon Minister then highlighted on HRPPs projects during the parliamentary term).

**Mr. Speaker - Interjection**

*Mr Speaker advised the Minister to speak on matters pertaining to his Ministry and leave this*

**Hon FAAOLESA Katopau T. Ainuu - Minister for Justice and Courts Administration, and Member for Vaimauga West No.2 (cont.)**

The Hon Minister then spoke on the Ministry for Justice and Courts Administration: Hon Minister commended the work carried out by the Chief Justice, the CEO and the Ministry. In regards to the Office of the Electoral Commission, the Minister mentioned the achievements during the Parliamentary Term.

- established as an independent body.
- reconfirmed one man-one vote reflected in the Constituency Act 2019
- National Voter's Day celebrated by the Office
- two bi-elections conducted successfully this parliamentary term.

- early registrations for voters since the 2016 General Elections to date - 16,000 new registered voters.
- new building for OEC in progress
- construction of the MJCA branch at Salelologa (replace the old Branch at Tuasivi)
- commended on passing the legislation in Parliament for this parliament term including the three legislation: Constitution Amendment Act 2019, Judicature Act 2019, Land and Titles Court Act 2019.

The Hon Minister noted continuous opposition of the public on the three bills that were recently passed by Parliament and noted that this is the dream of our ancestors to ensure that culture is reflected in the Constitution. He then acknowledged the work and support of his Associate Minister Soalo Mene throughout this parliamentary term. He further acknowledged the constituency for bestowing him the honour to represent his constituency since the change of boundaries, he will no longer be a candidate for that constituency. Averted his speech to the new Constituency in which he will be running for and asserted that residents have given him the support and trust to representative them in Parliament in the next term.

The Hon Minister acknowledged the Government for a vision to build a wharf in Vaiusu as a solution to the problems faced in the Matautu wharf (congestion). The Minister stated that the reason he is stating this is that the member currently representing this constituency is opposing the development yet it brings more benefits to the residents.

### **Mr Speaker - RULING**

*Mr Speaker ruled for the Minister to speak on matters regarding his portfolio. The Wharf at Vaiusu is not included in your portfolio so refrain from discussing such matters. Then asked the Minister to resume his speech on matters pertaining to his Ministry.*

### **Hon FAAOLESA Katopau T. Ainuu - Minister for Justice and Courts Administration, and Member for Vaimauga West No.2 (cont.)**

The Hon Minister acknowledged his constituency of Vaimauga No.2 in all its honorific salutations.

### **iii. Hon AFAMASAGA Lepuiai Rico Tupai - Minister for Communication & Information Technology and Member for Aana Alofi No.3.**

The Hon Minister greeted the House.

**Proceedings were adjourned at 1:05pm  
Parliament will again reconvene at 6pm.**