



**PACER Plus**

Committee on Services, Movement of  
Natural Persons and Investment

**SECOND (VIRTUAL) MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRADE IN SERVICES, MOVEMENT OF NATURAL PERSONS AND INVESTMENT**

**THURSDAY, 5 MAY, 2022, 1.00-3.00PM SAMOA TIME**

**CHAIR: Mr Alexander Kahn, Assistant Director, Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**

**OUTCOMES SUMMARY**

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1. The second meeting of the Committee on Services, Movement of Natural Persons and Investment (SMNPI.02) and was attended by the following Parties: Australia, Cook Islands, Kiribati, New Zealand, Niue, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Tuvalu. One of the Observer States, Nauru, attended and Vanuatu conveyed apologies.
2. The meeting was chaired by Mr Alexander Kahn, Assistant Director of the Economic Growth Section, Office of the Pacific, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia.

**Opening formalities and Procedures**

3. The Chair called the meeting to order, and the meeting was opened with a prayer by the representative of the Solomon Islands.
4. The Agenda was adopted as presented. The meeting noted that the PACER Plus Implementation Unit (IU) would produce the summary of meeting discussions.

**Agenda Item 1: Update since the first Committee Meeting held on 12 August 2021**

5. The Chair provided a brief recap of the outcomes of the first Committee meeting held on 12 August 2021 as summarised in the table provided in the Chair's Update paper (*SMNPI.01 Chair's Update*).
6. The Chair noted the developments that took place since the last meeting, which included the finalisation of the Rapid Needs Assessment (RNA) Report, establishment of the PACER Plus Implementation Unit in Apia, Samoa, development of the 2021-2022 PPIU Annual Plan, and six (6) PACER Plus awareness workshops conducted by the IU in Cook Islands, Kiribati, Niue, Samoa, Tonga and Tuvalu. Furthermore, Tuvalu ratified the PACER Plus Agreement on 31 January 2022.
7. No comments were made by Parties and proceeded to adopt all recommendations in the Chair's paper.

**Action Items/Resolutions:**

**The Committee agreed to:**

1. Note the progress report of issues discussed at the first meeting of the Committee in 2021.
2. Declassify the meeting paper 'SMNPI.01 Chair's Update' for public release.

**Agenda Item 2: Update on activities under Services, Movement of Natural Persons and Investment**

**Chapters for current FY2021-2022**

- i. SMNPI.02/D.1 - FY21-22 Activity Update

8. The IU presented paper **SMNPI.02/D.1** and noted the slow implementation of activities over the past few months due to capacity constraints and the continued global effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The IU advised the Committee that the paper provides a summary of the work carried out over the past months. Annex to the paper highlights those activities that the IU has been working on in the last few months with next steps.
9. The Committee acknowledged the efforts of the IU to implement activities during this financial period and Parties provided the following comments:
10. Kiribati requested the IU to explore beyond the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) and engage other institutions in the implementation of activities specifically in regard to the Labour Mobility activity 026. The IU advised that this activity is ongoing and will be taken forward in Labour Mobility specific activities in the new Annual Plan for FY2022-2023.
11. Tonga sought clarity on who the stakeholders are for the activity on public-private partnerships (PPP) work (Act 030). The IU responded that there are a number of stakeholders who are keen to provide support in this space. ADB and UNCITRAL have shown interest to provide support and Tonga can reach out to the IU if they wish to progress this work in country.

**Action Items/Resolutions:**

**The Committee agreed to:**

3. **Note the content and details of the update on activities under Trade in Services, Movement of Natural Persons and Investment Chapters for the current financial year 2021-2022.**
4. **Declassify meeting paper SMNPI.02/D.1 for public release.**

ii. **SMNPI.02/D.2 – Memorandum of Understanding between SPTO and the IU**

12. The IU presented paper **SMNPI.02/D.2** regarding the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the PACER Plus Implementation Unit and the South Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO). The MoU commits (in principle) both Parties to effective collaboration, sharing of relevant information and coordination of joint activities and initiatives where opportunities arise.
13. Solomon Islands noted that it was interesting to see that one of the strategy priorities is marketing of the region. The IU advised that the priorities included in the activity were based on the Rapid Needs Assessment (RNA). It is noted that from its consultations with Parties in the last few months, a number of priorities in these sectors have changed for countries. The IU aims to work with Parties to identify which priority is most suited for the recovery of their country.

**Action Items/Resolutions:**

**The Committee agreed to:**

5. **Note the content and details of the MoU between SPTO and the PACER Plus Implementation Unit.**
6. **Declassify the meeting paper for public release.**

**Agenda Item 4: Activity Plans for 2022-2023**

**i. SMNPI.02/D.3 – Proposed E-Commerce development initiatives through the IU**

14. The IU presented meeting paper **SMNPI.02/D.3** providing a summary of the key focus areas for e-commerce activities proposed to be implemented by the IU under the DEC Work Programme.
15. The Chair requested for each Party to provide comment on the paper and proposals contained therein.
16. Cook Islands noted that they have been working with the IU to progress their national e-commerce assessment and are working on developing a Terms of Reference for this work.
17. Kiribati advised the Committee that they are keen to engage with the IU to secure funding support for e-commerce activities at the national level.
18. Samoa requested for more time to consider the papers.
19. Solomon Islands advised the Committee that they have undertaken a national assessment on e-commerce and currently in the process of developing a national e-commerce strategy with support from UNCTAD. Solomon Islands have been participating in PIFS facilitated discussions on a regional e-commerce strategy and would emphasize that the IU focus its support to national level e-commerce strategies noting different countries have different challenges and would be happy to work closely with the PPIU once Solomon Islands has an overview of their national e-commerce strategy At the national task force level, Solomon Islands noted the need for more awareness on e-commerce as it is a new concept to both the public and private sector. They will convey the proposed key focus areas for e-commerce activities to their national task force for their consideration and revert to the Committee and the IU should there be any comments.
20. Tonga advised the Committee that they have undertaken an e-readiness assessment and completed their national e-commerce strategy which has been endorsed by their Cabinet. Furthermore, a legal options paper has been submitted to Cabinet for policy directions. Tonga is looking to work with the IU to identify specific areas that the IU can support implementation of their e-commerce strategy.
21. Tuvalu advised the Committee that their work with the private sector is being undertaken by a consultant. They are currently undertaking a review of their legislative framework for e-commerce to better understand the environment available for e-commerce in Tuvalu.
22. Australia endorsed the IU pursuing the e-commerce priority of the. Focus areas are comprehensive and useful and Solomon Islands intervention confirmed the varying priorities of the Parties. Under Item 4, recommended the IU identify specific measures or partners the IU will be working with on this to avoid duplication of efforts.
23. The Chair recommended that the Committee be given until Wednesday, 11 May 2022 to provide feedback on the paper.

**Action Items/Resolutions**

**The Committee agreed to:**

- 7. Consider, provide feedback and confirm their endorsement (or otherwise) on the recommendations in the paper to the IU intersessionally, by Wednesday, 11 May 2022.**

**ii. SMNPI.02/D.4 – Strengthening National Qualifications Frameworks and systems under the DEC Work Programme**

24. The IU presented paper **SMNPI.02/D.4** which sought the Committee's endorsement of three priority areas of action for the IU to progress national qualifications work, in partnership with New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) and the Pacific Community (SPC).

**Action Items/Resolutions:**

**The Committee agreed to:**

- 8. Consider, provide feedback and confirm their endorsement (or otherwise) on the recommendations in the paper to the IU intersessionally, by Wednesday, 11 May 2022.**

**Agenda Item 5: Proposal to form Sub-Working Groups under the Committee on Trade in Services, Movement of Natural Persons and Investment**

25. The IU presented paper **SMNPI.02/D.5** which proposed to form two Sub-Working Groups under the Committee to enable greater scrutiny of the DEC Work Programme by thematic areas.
26. There was general support by Parties towards the proposal and they asked and to ensure there is no duplication of meetings. Some Parties noted that the proposal would allow for Parties to engage the most suitable people to discuss and make recommendations to the Committee regarding each thematic area.
27. Solomon Islands further noted that their contact points were the same people for all thematic areas under the Committee.
28. Australia supported the proposals in principle and noted that the Committee can review the benefits/progress of the sub-working groups once established and make decisions/amendments as required.

**Action Items/Resolutions:**

**The Committee agreed to:**

- 9. Consider, provide feedback, and confirm their endorsement (or otherwise) on the recommendations in the paper to the IU intersessionally, by Wednesday, 11 May 2022.**

**Closing Session**

29. The Committee noted that the IU will prepare an Outcomes Summary of the meeting.
30. The Chair conveyed appreciation to the membership and observers for their active engagement and views shared and to the IU for the work done in preparation for the meeting.
31. The representative of Solomon Islands closed the meeting with a prayer.