



FORTY-NINTH SESSION

Hansard Report

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TUESDAY 17 DECEMBER 2019

MADAM SPEAKER took the Chair at 1.00 p.m.

OPENING PRAYER

MADAM SPEAKER (N. RATTLE): Please be seated Honourable Members.

I would like to express my thanks to our Chaplain this afternoon for the beautiful message extended to us all and all the encouragement and his wishes to all of us for the Christmas and New Year festive season.

Kia Orana – greetings to all the Members of this House this afternoon. Today is a beautiful day and we look forward to the final day of our Sitting for this year.

Greetings to all our people listening in to our Parliament meeting today.

MADAM SPEAKER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Honourable Members, at 10.30 this morning I, with the Honourable Prime Minister, Henry Puna, Cabinet Ministers, accompanied by the Deputy Clerk, Jeannine Daniel delivered the Address in Reply to His Excellency, Sir Tom Marsters.

This is the Reply to the Speech addressed to Parliament at the Ceremonial Opening of the 49th Session of Parliament. His Excellency, Sir Tom Marsters was pleased to receive the Address in Reply from this dignified House.

He also extended seasonal greetings to each and every Member in this House and your families. I was also very pleased to see our Cabinet Ministers and Assistant Ministers who were present at the ceremony this morning. So, I thank you very much for a job well done in completing this job that was due to be done.

The second announcement I would like to make is that there has been an invite extended to Members of Parliament from the New Zealand High Commission for a Memorial Service for the late Her Excellency Tessa Temata. At 9.30 it will begin. So, if you are wanting to go please be seated before 9.30 this morning.

I also believe as indicated to me that your speeches to your constituencies this afternoon, your Christmas greetings will be ten minutes each Honourable Member.

So, we will begin with the Business of the Day.

First up today is our Question Time for 30 minutes.

QUESTION TIME

The Floor is now open for questions.

I beg your pardon. When we finished yesterday, you had the Floor, the Honourable Terepai Maoate and you may continue.

MR T. MAOATE: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Greetings to all of us this afternoon, and to our people listening in to Parliament.

My question this afternoon is posed to the Prime Minister. In fact, it is two questions. One is on the issue of foreigners married to locals under immigration laws. I posed this question in our last Sitting and I am just following it up, regarding the issue of Permanent Residence. I would like to extend my thanks to commend the Prime Minister for his time in Aitutaki. He met with the potential PR applicants. However, time has passed and they are now trying to follow up. As to what is happening and I have spoken to those in Immigration and there is no answer yet, to my inquiry.

My question on this is and I am told there is no cap for foreigners married to Cook Islanders. So, I would like the Prime Minister to explain where this lies?

And the second question is related to the Bill regarding foreign workers wanting to work in our country?

MADAM SPEAKER: Thank you. I see the Honourable Prime Minister.

HON. H. PUNA: Thank you Madam Speaker and thank you Honourable Member for Amuri/Ureia for raising this very important matter.

I am actually a bit embarrassed getting up to provide an answer to the question because I myself believe that the time is well overdue for something to be done decisively about this issue.

My embarrassment is compounded by the fact that as the Honourable Minister said, I did meet with four couples in Aitutaki to talk about their desire for things to be put on a proper footing for their partners who have been residents of the Cook Islands for quite a while. In all the terms of our PR policy, these people actually qualify to be granted Permanent Resident status. And I did tell them that I will do my best to expedite this status for them.

However, the concern from Immigration is that a new Legislation is actually almost finished and we need to wait for the Legislation to be in place. So, that we can treat all applications for PR and for work permits consistently and according to the same rules and as Minister Responsible for Immigration I was actually pushing for the new Immigration Bill to be presented to this Parliament.

Any Member can check with the Solicitor General and Crown Law Office how hard I was pushing for that Bill to be brought before this House. In fact, it was on my priority list and Government's priority list for presentation to this Parliament.

However, fairly late in the piece I was advised that the Bill would not be ready because on advice from the drafting office in Wellington. There were a few issues that they were not too happy about and they needed more time to make sure that everything was proper and consistent in the Bill.

So, that is why the Bill is not before the House this Sitting and that is why unfortunately Honourable Members, Members of this House the PR issues cannot be dealt with until the new Bill is in place. But I can guarantee this House that when Parliament sits again early in the new year, that Bill will be before Parliament and as soon as that Bill is passed, Honourable Member these applications will be processed promptly.

But thank you for not telling these people that we were going to be in Aitutaki yesterday because they did not come and bother me yesterday. But thank you for asking.

MADAM SPEAKER: Before I take your question Honourable Member; there was a question yesterday you asked that needs to be answered if I may ask the Minister Mokoroa to answer the question.

HON. V. MOKOROA: Thank you, Honourable Speaker and greetings to everybody this afternoon. I rise to answer the question raised yesterday with regards to the Police salaries.

We met this morning with the Secretary of Finance to go through the procedures for the pay rise. Firstly, the Financial Secretary explained that it is quite difficult going through the procedures of the Police salary.

Of course the Member of Parliament for Matavera understand the procedures as he has been through this as being Head of the Environment Ministry. Although there is an allocation for \$320,000 for this matter. However, there are several procedures that has to go through with applications and so forth. I am happy to tell this House that the Ministry of Finance, PSC and the Police are working together to sort these matters out before they deal with the rise in the pay for the Police Officers.

One of the areas to be dealt with is to pay the Police Officer from 1 July 2019. It has been found out from MFEM that 1.1 million is required for this purpose for the Police Department. That is why I mentioned earlier they are going through some difficulties in adjusting the Police salaries and increase but they are working hard to make sure that this is paid out by the end of this month.

Lastly, in the email from the Financial Secretary, I believe we are in a position to provide the data to Police for their review and to submit a proposal today. In my email to the Police Commissioner, the Financial Secretary and the Public Service Commissioner, I asked and I want to tell this House if this will be paid, today, tomorrow, next week or next year.

Therefore, I am happy with what the Financial Secretary said that the review of the salary increments for the Police will be completed and the Police Commissioner will finalise that before payment is processed sometimes this week or early next week. Thank you, Honourable, Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: Thank you, I see the Honourable Member, Vaitoti Tupa, you have the Floor.

MR V. TUPA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Acknowledging to the Minister for your answer to the House of Parliament the reason being Minister because the staff of the Police who are not working this morning are listening in to the Sitting. I must say thank you to you and also the Prime Minister.

However, I have another question for you Minister of Internal Affairs. I am not quite sure how heavy or difficult or light my question is to you. However, we have a friend just returned back and I can recall that the same question was asked some years ago. He has lived here for five years and now he is sixty years old. My question here Minister is I am not quite sure whether to qualify for the pension is ten years. If that is the case, I have a request.

MADAM SPEAKER: Honourable Member, can you ask your question please then we will know what it is you want to know.

MR V. TUPA: This is the question whether this person will qualify to collect the pension, he has been here for five years. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER: Thank you and I see the Minister of Internal Affairs.

HON. V. MOKOROA: Thank you, Honourable Speaker and thank you to the Member for this good question. This question has been raised in the past and we are also aware there are many people in our districts going through the same problem. We are all aware under the policies whether you have lived in the Cook Islands for some time and you travel overseas for twenty years and when you return you have to live here for ten years before you qualify for the pension.

If you are married to a foreigner a non-Cook Islander, then you have to wait for twenty years before you qualify for a pension. These are the areas of difficulty for four people.

In the village of Nikao there is a gentleman, fifty-five years of age and he has lived in Rarotonga now for ten years. Although he will be sixty-five years in five years' time he will have to wait until then to be able to collect the pension. This should serve as an example to all of us because one day this will be related to your Constituency.

So, that is the request from the Member to review this Legislation because I believe it was passed in 1972. As I said in the last few days our pension scheme is under review and I believe it is appropriate this idea be included in the review today. So, if consultations come by your way to please get involved and let us look at whether we should change the Legislation or not to assist our people in this area in the future.

The gentleman in Nikao that I referred to is a former army member and he married his wife and he has lived here for some years. It is difficult for him to seek for a solution for his situation because he has to wait for 10 years before he qualifies for the pension.

I thank the Honourable Member for raising this good question. I also believe that this answer is appropriate for his question.

MADAM SPEAKER: Thank you and I see the Honourable Member, William Heather. Welcome back it is good to see you again.

MR W. HEATHER: Madam Speaker my question is directed to the Minister of Health. Yesterday we heard the Minister of Finance talking about the economic situation of our country which is good. We also heard the request by the Honourable Member for Mitiaro asking for a medical doctor for their island.

My question then for the Minister, has this matter been discussed in Cabinet and what has been done with the issue about having medical doctors on the Outer Islands. Has there been a decision made for some medical doctors to go to these islands and can you identify who these islands are.

MADAM SPEAKER: Thank you and I see the Minister Rose Toki-Brown and you have the Floor.

HON. R. TOKI-BROWN: Thank you Madam Speaker and Kia Orana to all Honourable Members of this House and to our people listening in to our broadcast. Now, I come back to the question. Yes, the Cabinet has discussed this matter and have not forgotten about it.

As you are aware we have started the flying doctors for the Outer Islands. And I would like to let this House know that we have covered our Outer Islands in the Cook Islands for this flying doctors and dentist program. We have nearly completed visiting all of the islands. Concerning the matter about permanent doctors for each of the Outer Islands.

We have problems in recruiting doctors to live permanently on the Outer Islands. We have tried and this is their response to the issue; it is too long for them to stay on the islands and because of the low population on the islands. The doctors are not in agreement with what we have been proposing to them to stay on the islands in the Outer Islands. The island of Aitutaki has a permanent doctor and for the rest of the islands we have Doctor Uka visiting these islands and other doctors also including dental doctors.

And the response from these islands, they are happy with the services that has been provided for them. But we have not forgotten the proposals that we find a permanent doctor for all the Outer Islands. We are still trying our best and I want you all to know because the Government did not want to send the doctors to one of the islands. We have discovered that some of the standards of these doctors are not good. We are therefore, trying to get doctors from New Zealand. Right now, Honourable Member we are trying our best to do this.

I trust I have given you a good response to your good question.

MADAM SPEAKER: Thank you and I see the Honourable Tamaiva Tuavera.

MR T. TUAVERA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have a quick question. My question yesterday was to the Minister Mokoroa regarding the \$34 level for poverty line and I believe your side stepped by this question yesterday.

You did not answer my question about the level of poverty line for caregivers, infirm and disabled because my calculation tells me that they are being paid \$6.57 a day. That is way below the poverty line and the question to you then is this. When will you be making the adjustment to this matter and is it going to be during your time.

MADAM SPEAKER: Thank you and I see the Minister of Internal Affairs.

HON. V. MOKOROA: Thank you, Honourable Speaker. I do not pass the ball away. The question that I take from yesterday is, given that we are to follow the benchmark by UNICEF when can we see an alignment of an increase from \$34 per day for caregivers, infirmed and the destitute. That was the question if I take it from yesterday.

And I think my answer was that we will put this as a part of the scoping exercise by the team that is doing the survey. The calculation that the Member has done working out by digits, I suggest that he gives that to the consultants when they come and visit next year.

MADAM SPEAKER: Thank you very much Honourable Members and that completes our Question Time. We will now go to – Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Orders of the Day, is the Cook Islands Investment Corporation Amendment Bill interrupted debate. The Floor is open for debate. I see the Honourable Vaitoti Tupa.

MR V. TUPA: Thank you very much Madam Speaker for the opportunity given to me to speak.

I would like to give my views on this five Bills before this House. What I see these five Bills they are trying to correct issues that has not been addressed. For example, the establishment of the Board and how many years the member can stay on it. We did our Opposition discussion this morning and we were all present. This is a positive thing to me because they are keen to contribute to this Bill.

We would like to thank the lawyer, Lloyd Miles for making time to come and explain to us about these Bills and including the Members of the Opposition to raise some good questions. That is when we received the clear understanding of these Bills. I now refer to the elections of the Board members to CIIC.

There is not much difference to me but it has identified what they are required to carry out in their duties and, in addition, for these Board Members to be appointed there are criteria that they need to meet and because of that I am satisfied that the amendments

that we are doing to the CIIC Bill are good and I do believe that the Minister of Finance is aware of these things and that is why he has brought these Amendments to the House.

I know in some of the Boards I understand there are no limits to their Terms of Reference but in these Bills we can see that there are limits for the terms that they can serve because I see in the Amendment not above three years. I also see in this amendment there is a term of twelve years for them to serve but because in the previous Boards that I know some of them have served for over twelve years. Through this it has been made robust that a maximum of twelve years. After this then you are out of the Board.

So, I would like to commend the Minister because he knows this is an area of issue within this. As I have mentioned before, those who will be on these Boards we know in the past it was like a guess who - we already know who is going to be on the Boards but under the new legislation it is clear that if you do not hold any qualifications or proficiency in this area, you should not be on the Board.

So, when I do consider the five Bills before us where these areas are being strengthened, that is why I expressed the notion that I have no issues with these amendments. The explanations given to us to amend this I support those.

However, in our consultation this morning there were some ideas that came through. The idea of remuneration for the Board Members. The notion of limiting Board Members not above seven. However, we should be aware of some of the provisions under this legislation especially for the new incentives. Hence, I give my full support to the new proposals. However, we should, over time, monitor these proposals that we put forward to Lloyd Miles as they are developed.

We also look at the notion of appointing those on the Board from outside of the country. Before I say we should give this careful consideration maybe it is time for a review of all those of us here in the country because when I look at all of us Members of Parliament, if we are no longer Members of Parliament I am sure we shall be suitable for these Boards.

However, Madam Speaker, what the Deputy Prime Minister has done in strengthening these legislations I have no problem with it as well as reviewing those who will be appointed to the Boards. And reviewing the five SOEs, CIIC provides oversight on these SOEs. I think this is highly appropriate with the terminology of watchdogs on the performance of these SOEs.

This is why I am happy about these amendments in these legislations.

Therefore, Madam Speaker, I repeat my full support for the amendments to these five Bills before the House.

MADAM SPEAKER: Thank you. And before I acknowledge our next speaker, I would like to welcome the CIIC CEO, Tamarii Tutangata who is in the House this afternoon.

I now give the Floor to the Honourable Member, Agnes Armstrong.

MRS A. ARMSTRONG: Greetings Madam Speaker, Honourable Members and those listening in today.

I stand to support this CIIC Amendment Bill 2019 and also the remaining four SOE Amendment Bills. The amendments stipulated in the Bills would seemingly cut out the “job for the boys” or “girls” syndrome that we have seen so often in the past. We need to stop this practice and ensure that the right person is appointed for the job, no matter their political affiliation or gender.

The new standards and criteria as outlined in the Amendments provided clear guidelines in how Board Members are to be chosen and these should be adhered to. Involving our younger and upcoming business people is also a great incentive for this generation to become involved in having a say with new ideas, innovative ways in the way forward.

Remuneration should be consistent across all Boards but to be fair we should pay accordingly for those that demonstrate better achievements. Performances of CEOs and Board Members will need to be better managed as we have seen excessive remuneration being paid for non-productive outcomes.

I would also like to see candidates from the Pa Enua involved on some of these Boards. We do have some good people out there and as we strive to work collectively for the betterment of all our people then why not. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER: Thank you Honourable Member and I see the Honourable Selina Napa. You have the Floor.

MRS S. NAPA: Thank you Madam Speaker and greetings to all of us in this House.

I would like to direct my thoughts to the five Bills before this House. I would say that there are many more things being discovered in Government Ministries so these extra Boards that will be established, I believe that they will have a lot of contribution to the way our Government is run. Even though my brother and my sister have given their thoughts on these Bills, I still insist that I will say my part in regards to the appointments of Board Members.

I would say that the CIIC Board is one of the strongest Boards in the work of Government and it appears that a lot of our people wants to get into the CIIC so that they can help with the governance. I want our people to hear that CIIC and the State Owned Enterprises – the State Owned they are answerable to the CIIC and the CIIC is answerable to Cabinet.

My only difficulty with these Bills before the House is the position of giving out to those from outside of our country. I would say that all of these Directors positions should be held by our people living here in the Cook Island because they are here with us. It appears to me that if we appoint outsiders from those living here we are saying that they are the only ones suitable to hold these positions and our people here are not.

I also see that a lot of our children are graduating from University and are working in Government Ministries and they are capable to do the work. So, they are the rightful people to hold this Board positions.

One of the other areas that I have difficulties that was explained. My difficulty is why are the Board Members living outside the Cook Islands get more than the ones resident here.

I hope and to what my sister had raised before that this appointment should not be buying of supporters. And may this not be a way for the Government to give those who have lost their seats to hold a Board position but if they fall within the criteria that is set out then maybe. I am not just directing these thoughts to the Government even for us in the Opposition we should be aware of this.

So, I would direct my thought to our Leader of the Opposition so when we get into Government in the next election we should consider what is outlined.

When you look at the appointment of five to seven Members of a Board, out of these SOEs there will be twenty-five Board Members to be appointed and that is just the minimum and the maximum will be thirty-five members. This small country of ours they have a lot of Board Members. And in considering that I can see that there will be more Board Members than us Members of Parliament.

Maybe our people are looking at reducing our Members of Representatives in the House and this is what we are trying to do to increase the Board Members and I think because our work load is increasing in Government we are doing things.

Finally, I would like to make reference to their term in office. For me I will say that the Directors are not to sit on the Board for more than twelve successive years. To me this term is too long because this term to me it appears that they can claim this is our seat and I would say that twelve-year term is too long because we need to have new ideas.

Like what my Honourable brother have said, it is like a bullet when it leaves the barrel it moves fast and then eventually it slows down. That's what happens to someone who will sit on this Board for twelve years. In the beginning they are vigorous, they are strong and eventually it fades away.

Like I said before we have a lot of good people coming through the ranks, always, all the time.

My final thought is directed to the data base that will be created so that we can appoint people from it. We have been asking how can our people get onto this data base? Whether it will be advertised or notices will be given out and application forms to be filled. What we have been told is that you will shoulder tap them.

(Minister interjects)

MRS S. NAPA: The Minister is saying scratch my back. So, if it is based on this idea that we shoulder tap someone or scratch their backs, how can we get a good collection of people on this data base. So, we will therefore wait for the reply from Government to see who are the rightful people who qualifies to be on this data base or are we still using this system of shoulder tap.

I am very happy to see all the amendments that is brought before the House, they are for a good purpose but what I wonder is whether we will exercise and put those acts into good practice. I would say that if we follow to the letter of the law then our people will not have any problems with it. So, those are my thoughts on the five Bills that is before this House.

MADAM SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Member and I see the Honourable Member Tina Browne, you have the Floor.

HON. T. PUPUKE BROWNE: Thank you Madam Speaker. Firstly, I would like to commend the Prime Minister for allowing us the time to rest Parliament to give us some time to have consultations of these five Bills before the House.

As explained before we had a good consultation this morning especially all the Members of the Opposition Democratic Party attended. And you can hear the usefulness of the consultations like this because everything was made clear on the five Bills before the House.

Next I am proud to support the comments of the Members of the Opposition before me. I believe those of you on the other side of the House listening to our comments, I believe you all know there is substance in what we are saying.

I will not repeat the comments; however, I have two issues to raise. Firstly, on the matter of appointing overseas Directors. I understand in some cases we do realise we do not have any person within the country qualified for these positions. My plea to Government is to consider this matter properly because it is my firm belief that we have people in the country suitable for position on these Boards. Let us not look down on our own because we want to develop the capacity of our own people in our country.

The other issue is that I just learned this morning or we learned that we could make our recommendation for somebody to be elected on these SOE Boards. So, my request to the Minister is if can ask you please request recommendations from us because I do have a list of people who I firmly believe are suitable and qualified to be on these Boards. If you do not ask me by the end of next week I will send you this list.

On that basis, I along with Members of the Opposition are happy to support the amendment to the Bill before the House. Please do not only consider those with the gold and green flag to be elected on these Boards. You are also bound to consider those with a blue and red flag. Thank you, very much.

MADAM SPEAKER: If there are no further speakers. I will ask the Minister Responsible to conclude the debate please.

HON. M. BROWN: Thank you very much Madam Speaker. Thank you for the support from the Members of the Opposition. And rightly so that the relevant officials were able to provide you with a quick briefing and a workshop on the amendments to this Bill. I had mistakenly thought that had already been done yesterday.

To just lay the concerns of the Members that have raised some of the specific points in this amendment Madam Speaker. I can assure the Members that what we are following is international best practice in terms of the membership of our Boards.

We have seen the impact of small boards with only three members and the weakness of the governance involved in these boards or the pressure being placed on the governance of these boards. By the same token we have seen the impact that having more people on the board has had in being able to provide more experience and more qualifications and more thinking to the governance of those boards that have up to seven members.

So, standardising the board memberships to a minimum of five and maximum of seven ensures that there is more people on the board that need to reach consensus on important governance decisions rather than concentrating that decision making to a few numbers.

In terms of the remuneration of the boards again we have taken into account international best practice and I know the investment corporation engaged the company called Strategic Pay, to determine what a fair and appropriate remuneration is for all our board members.

I am pleased and I know that our board members and chairs of our SOEs are very pleased that Investment Corporation under the guidance of one of our board members, Karen Rangi is conducting directors training for all our board members to help lift their level of governance on our boards.

I think it is a mistake to say that the overseas members that we have on our boards are brought on because we do not have anybody capable enough that is quite wrong. The reason why we have cast our net wide and brought in directors that reside overseas is to strengthen the governance capabilities of these boards.

Let us not forget Cook Islanders do not just live in the Cook Islands we have a huge population that resides in New Zealand and Australia with a lot of capabilities and a lot of experience in these particular fields of the SOEs.

And I am particularly pleased with a number of our new appointments from overseas who are adding value to these boards and I mentioned them yesterday. Rightfully increasing the number of boards or standardising the numbers on our boards will allow us to appoint more of our people that are capable and able to play a key role in the governance of our State Owned Enterprises.

I look forward to receiving the list from the Leader of the Opposition on potential candidates for board positions. Potential members that we may tap on the shoulder or scratch on the back.

So, Madam Speaker I think it is very clear to everybody that the amendments a quite standard across the boards they do lift the level of governance. Also let me be clear that the appointment of our board members for our subsidiary SOEs is done by the Investment Corporation.

I think Madam Speaker with those words that concludes my statements on these amendments. Thank you very much.

MADAM SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Minister. I will now put the Question and the Question is:

That the Bill be now read a Second time?

Motion agreed to

CLERK AT THE TABLE: Long Title: An Act to amend the Cook Islands Investment Corporation Act 1998 by:

- (a) modernising the requirements for the appointment of Directors of the Corporation and,
- (b) making other reforms to the arrangements governing directors and the board of the Corporation.

MADAM SPEAKER: Honourable Members, that nicely brings us to our suspension for lunch and return at 3.00 p.m.

Sitting suspended at 2.30 p.m.

Sitting resumed at 3.00 p.m.

MADAM SPEAKER: Honourable Members, please be seated.

Parliament is resumed.

I will now resolve Parliament into the Committee of the Whole House to go through the Bill.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE

MADAM CHAIRMAN: We will begin with the Clauses.

Clause 1: Title.

Clause 2: Commencement.

Clause 3: Principal Act amended.

I put the Question:

That Clauses 1, 2 and 3 stands part of the Bill?

Motion agreed to

Clause 4: Section 2 amended – Interpretation.

Clause 5: Section 3(a) repealed.

Clause 6: Sections 9 and 10 repealed. Replaced, I beg your pardon.

I put the Question:

That Clauses 4, 5 and 6 stands part of the Bill?

Motion agreed to

Clause 7: Section 20 replaced – Chief Executive Officer.

Clause 8: Section 22 amended – Directors.

Clause 9: Savings provisions.

I put the Question:

That Clauses 7, 8 and 9 stands part of the Bill?

Motion agreed to

Long Title.

I put the Question:

That the Long Title be adopted?

Motion agreed to

I put the Question:

That the Bill be reported to Parliament without amendments?

Motion agreed to

Parliament is resumed.

MADAM SPEAKER: I call the Minister in Charge to report the Bill to Parliament.

HON. M. BROWN: Thank you Madam Speaker. I am pleased to report:

**That the passage of the Bill went through the Committee Stage
with no amendments**

MADAM SPEAKER: I put the Question:

That the Report be adopted?

Report adopted

I call the Minister to move for the Third Reading of the Bill.

HON. M. BROWN: Thank you Madam Speaker.

I move:

**That the Cook Islands Investment Corporation Amendment Bill
be read a Third time**

MADAM SPEAKER: I call for a Secunder.

Seconded by the Honourable Member, Tingika Elikana

I put the Question:

That the Bill be read a Third time?

Motion agreed to

CLERK AT THE TABLE: Long Title: An Act to amend the Cook Islands Investment Corporation Act 1998 by:

- (a) modernising the requirements for the appointments of Directors of the Corporation; and,
- (b) making other reforms to the arrangements governing Directors and the Board of the Corporation.

BILL READ A THIRD TIME

MADAM SPEAKER: Honourable Members, that completes the First, Second and Third Reading of the Cook Islands Investment Corporation Amendment Bill 2019.

We go back to Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

And that is on the Airport Authority Amendment Bill 2019.

And I call the Minister responsible to move for the Second Reading.

HON. M. BROWN: Thank you Madam Speaker.

I move:

That the Airport Authority Amendment Bill be read a Second time

I have no further comments. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER: As there are no further speakers, is there a Secunder for the Motion?

Seconded by the Honourable Member, Tingika Elikana

There are no further questions and comments so I will put the Question.

The Question is:

That the Bill be read a Second time?

Motion agreed to

CLERK AT THE TABLE: Long Title: An Act to amend the Airport Authority Act 1985 by:

- (a) modernising the requirements for the appointment of Directors of the Authority; and
- (b) making other reforms to the arrangements governing Directors and the Board of the Authority.

BILL READ A SECOND TIME

MADAM SPEAKER: I now resolve Parliament into the Committee of the Whole House to go through the Clauses of the Bill.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Clause 1: Title.

Clause 2: Commencement.

Clause 3: Principal Act amended.

Clause 4: Section 2 amended – Interpretation.

I put the Question:

That Clauses 1, 2, 3 and 4 stands part of the Bill?

Motion agreed to

Clause 5: Section 4 replaced – Board of Directors of Authority.

Clause 6: New Sections 5(a) and 5(b) inserted.

Clause 7: Sections 6 to 9 replaced – Meetings of Authority.

Clause 8: Section 13 amended – Compliance and directives.

I put the Question:

That Clauses 5, 6, 7 and 8 stands part of the Bill?

Motion agreed to

Clause 9: Section 13(a) amended – Social responsibility.

Clause 10: Sections 14 to 16 replaced.

Clause 11: Section 19 replaced on Liability of Directors and Employees.

Clause 12: Savings provisions.

I put the Question:

That Clauses 9, 10, 11 and 12 stands part of the Bill?

Motion agreed to

Long Title.

I put the Question:

That the Long Title be adopted?

Motion agreed to

I put the Question:

That the Bill be reported to Parliament without amendments?

Motion agreed to

Parliament is resumed.

MADAM SPEAKER: I call the Minister to report the Bill to Parliament.

HON. M. BROWN: Thank you Madam Speaker. I am happy to report:

That the passage of the Airport Authority Amendment Bill went through Committee with no amendments

MADAM SPEAKER: I put the Question:

That the Report be adopted?

Report adopted

I call the Minister to move a Motion for the Third Reading of the Bill.

HON. M. BROWN: Madam Speaker, I move:

That the Airport Authority Amendment Bill be read a Third time

MADAM SPEAKER: I call a Seconder.

Seconded by the Honourable Tingika Elikana

I put the Question:

That the Bill be read a Third time

Motion agreed to

CLERK AT THE TABLE: Long Title – An Act to Amend the Airport Authority Act 1985 by:

- (a) modernising the requirements for the appointment of Directors of the Authority.
- (b) making other reforms to the arrangements governing Directors and the Board of the Authority.

MADAM SPEAKER: Honourable Members, that completes the First, Second and Third Reading of the Airport Authority Amendment Bill 2019.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Orders of the day is on the Bank of the Cook Islands Amendment Bill 2019 and I call on the Minister Responsible to move for the Second Reading of the Bill.

HON. M. BROWN: Madam Speaker, I move:

**That the Bank of the Cook Islands Amendment Bill
be read a Second time**

I have no further comments.

MADAM SPEAKER: And as there are no further speakers, I seek a Secunder please?

Seconded by the Honourable Tingika Elikana

As there are no further comments in the conclusion, I will put the Question:

That the Bill be read a Second time?

Motion agreed to

CLERK AT THE TABLE: Long Title: An Act to Amend the Bank of the Cook Islands Act 2003 by:

- (a) modernising the requirements for the appointment of Directors of the Bank of the Cook Islands, and
- (b) making other reforms to the arrangements governing Directors and the Board of the Bank of the Cook Islands.

MADAM SPEAKER: I now resolve Parliament into the Committee of the Whole House to go through the Clauses of the Bill.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE

MADAM CHAIRMAN: I will go through the Clauses of the Bill.

Clause 1: Title.

Clause 2: Commencement.

Clause 3: Principal Act Amended.

I put the Question:

That Clauses 1, 2 and 3 stands part of the Bill?

Motion agreed to

Clause 4: Section 2 amended – Interpretation

Clause 5: Section 7 replaced – Board of Directors

Clause 6: Section 12 replaced – Personal Liability

I put the Question:

That Clauses 4, 5 and 6 stands part of the Bill?

Motion agreed to

Clause 7: New Section 13 (a) and 13 (b) inserted.

Clause 8: New Section 19 (a) inserted.

Clause 9: Savings Provisions.

I put the Question:

That Clauses 7, 8 and 9 stands part of the Bill?

Motion agreed to

Long Title.

I put the Question:

That the Long Title stands part of the Bill?

Motion agreed to

I put the Question:

That the Bill be reported to Parliament without amendments?

Motion agreed to

Parliament is resumed

MADAM SPEAKER: I call the Minister in Charge to report the Bill to Parliament.

HON. M. BROWN: Yes, thank you Madam Speaker. I am happy to report:

That the Bank of the Cook Islands Amendment Bill has passed through the Committee Stage with no amendments

MADAM SPEAKER: I put the Question:

That the Bill be adopted?

Motion agreed to

I call the Minister to move for the Third Reading of the Bill please.

HON. M. BROWN: Madam Speaker, I move:

That the Bank of the Cook Islands Amendment Bill be read a Third time

MADAM SPEAKER: Thank you and I call for a Secunder.

Seconded by the Honourable Tingika Elikana

I put the Question:

That the Bill be read the Third time?

Motion agreed to

CLERK AT THE TABLE: Long Title: An Act to Amend the Bank of the Cook Islands Act 2003 by:

- (a) modernising the requirements for the appointment of Directors of the Bank of the Cook Islands, and
- (b) making other reforms to the arrangements governing Directors and the Board of the Bank of the Cook Islands.

MADAM SPEAKER: That, Honourable Members completes, the First, Second and Third reading of the Bank of the Cook Islands Amendment Bill 2019.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Orders of Day is on Ports Authority Amendment Bill 2019. I call the Minister to move for the Second Reading of the Bill.

HON. M. BROWN: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I move:

That the Bill be read a Second time

And I have no further comments.

MADAM SPEAKER: As there are no further speakers, I call for a Seconder.

Seconded by the Honourable Tingika Elikana

As there is no conclusion to the Bill, I will now put the Question. The Question is:

That the Bill be read a Second time?

Motion agreed to

CLERK AT THE TABLE: Long Title: An Act to Amend the Ports Authority Act 1994/95 by:

- (a) modernising the requirements for the appointment of Directors of the Authority, and
- (b) making other reforms to the arrangements governing Directors and the Board of the Authority.

Parliament is resolved into the Committee of the Whole House.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE

MADAM CHAIRMAN: We will go through the Clauses of the Bill.

Clause 1: Title.

Clause 2: Commencement.

Clause 3: Principal Act Amended.

Clause 4: Section 2 Amended – Interpretation.

Clause 5: Section 6 Replaced – Board of Directors of Authority.

I put the Question:

That Clauses 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 stands part of the Bill?

Motion agreed to

Clause 6: Section 7 Replaced – Remuneration of Directors.

Clause 7: Section 9 Replaced – Extraordinary Vacancies.

Clause 8: Sections 10 and 11 Replaced.

Clause 9: Section 13 (a) Amended – Authority's Social Responsibility.

Clause 10: Section 14 Replaced – General Manager.

Clause 11: Section 16 Repealed – Other Employees.

I put the Question:

That Clauses 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 stands part of the Bill?

Motion agreed to

Clause 12: Section 17 Replaced – Delegations.

Clause 13: Section 19 Replaced – Personal Liability.

Clause 14: Section 67 Amended – Statement of Corporate Intent.

Clause 15: Section 69 Amended – Fiscal Updates.

Clause 16: New Section 69 (a) Inserted.

Clause 17: Savings Provisions.

I put the Question:

That Clauses 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17 stands part of the Bill?

Motion agreed to

Long Title.

I put the Question:

That the Long Title stands part of the Bill?

Motion agreed to

I put the Question:

That the Bill be reported to Parliament without amendments?

Motion agreed to

I call the Minister to report the Bill to Parliament please.

HON. M. BROWN: Thank you Madam Chairman. I am happy to report:

**That the Ports Authority Bill has passed through the Committee Stage
with no amendments**

MADAM CHAIRMAN: I put the Question:

That the Report be adopted?

Motion agreed to

Parliament is resumed.

MADAM SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I am beginning to get cross-eyed in the front here. I just jumped the line just like the Minister jumped the line with the Bills and we will just do this and get this correct now.

We will now resume Parliament. I will then ask the Minister to please report the Bill to Parliament so Parliament can endorse that. Thank you.

HON. M. BROWN: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Now, that we are actually back into Parliament I am pleased to report:

That the passage of the Ports Authority Amendment Bill went through the Committee Stage with no amendments?

MADAM SPEAKER: Thank you and I put the Question:

That the Report be adopted?

Motion agreed to

I now call on the Minister to call for the Third Reading of the Bill.

HON. M. BROWN: Thank you Madam Speaker. I now move:

That the Ports Authority Amendment Bill be read a Third time

MADAM SPEAKER: I call for a Secunder.

Seconded by the Honourable Member, Tingika Elikana

I put the Question:

That the Bill be now read a Third time?

Motion agreed to

CLERK AT THE TABLE: Long Title: An Act to Amend the Ports Authority Act 1994/95 by:

- (a) modernising the requirements for the appointment of Directors of the Authority, and
- (b) making other reforms to the arrangements governing Directors and the Board of the Authority.

MADAM SPEAKER: Thank you Honourable Members. That completes the First, Second and Third Reading on the Ports Authority Amendment Bill 2019.

We will now go back to Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Te Aponga Uira o Tumutevarovaro Amendment Bill 2019. I call on the Minister Responsible to move for the Second Reading of the Bill.

HON. M. BROWN: Madam Speaker, I move:

**That the Te Aponga Uira o Tumutevarovaro Amendment Bill
be read a Second time**

And I have no further comments.

MADAM SPEAKER: I look for a Secunder as there are no Members wanting the Floor.

Seconded by the Honourable Tingika Elikana

As there are no further speakers I will put the Question:

That the Bill be read a Second time?

Motion agreed to

CLERK AT THE TABLE: Long Title: An Act to Amend the Te Aponga Uira o Tumutevarovaro Act 1991;

- (a) modernising the requirements for the appointment of Directors of the Authority, and
- (b) making other reforms to the arrangements governing Directors and the Board of the Authority.

MADAM SPEAKER: Thank you and Honourable Members I now resolve Parliament into the Committee of the Whole House.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE

MADAM CHAIRMAN: We will go through the Clauses of the Bill.

Clause 1: Title.

Clause 2: Commencement.

Clause 3: Principal Act Amended.

I put the Question:

That Clauses 1, 2 and 3 stands part of the Bill?

Motion agreed to

Clauses 4, 5, 6.

I put the Question:

That Clauses 4, 5 and 6 stands part of the Bill?

Motion agreed to

Clauses 7, 8, 9.

I put the Question:

That Clauses 7, 8 and 9 stands part of the Bill?

Motion agreed to

Long Title.

I put the Question:

That the Long Title stands part of the Bill?

Motion agreed to

I put the Question:

That the Bill be reported without amendments to Parliament?

Motion agreed to

Parliament is resumed.

MADAM SPEAKER: I call on the Minister Responsible to report the Bill to Parliament.

HON. M. BROWN: Madam Speaker, I would like to report:

That the Bill has passed through the Committee Stage with no amendments

MADAM SPEAKER: Thank you Minister and I put the Question:

That the Report be adopted?

Motion agreed to

I call the Minister to move for the Third Reading of the Bill.

HON. M. BROWN: Madam Speaker, I move:

**That the Te Aponga Uira o Tumutevarovaro Amendment Bill
be now read a Third time**

MADAM SPEAKER: I call for a Secunder for the Motion.

Secinded by the Honourable Tingika Elikana

I put the Question is:

That the Bill be now read a Third time?

Motion agreed to

CLERK AT THE TABLE: Long Title: An Act to Amend the Te Aponga Uira o Tumutevarovaro Act 1991;

- (a) modernising the requirement for the appointment of Directors of the Authority, and
- (b) making other reforms to the arrangements governing Directors and the Board of the Authority.

MADAM SPEAKER: Honourable Members that completes the First, Second and Third Reading of the Te Aponga Uira o Tumutevarovaro Amendment Bill 2019. Thank you very much we will now go to Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

On Control of Prices Amendment Bill 2019 and that's the final Bill on our Orders of the Day. I call on the Minister Responsible to move for the Second Reading.

HON. M. BROWN: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I move:

That the Control of Prices Amendment Bill 2019 be read a Second time

If I may make a couple of comments, please.

The Control of Prices Amendment Bill that is before us makes a number of much needed amendments to the Control of Prices Act of 1966. The Act provides for price controls to prevent exploitation of the public. It also establishes the Price Tribunal currently constituted by Fletcher Melvin as the President and Catherine Evans and Louis Enoka as Members.

This Tribunal currently controls the prices for petrol, diesel, LPG and white bread. Madam Speaker, the Control of Prices Act 1966 is showing its age and has not been amended in a long time. For example, it has penalty provisions that are designated in pounds sterling and also imperial measurements rather than metric measurements. In addition, the offences and penalty provisions are inconsistent throughout the Act and are so low as to have no deterrent value.

The Amendment Bill will make several changes to this Act. Firstly, the Bill will modernise the offences and penalties provision to make them more consistent. It will increase the maximum financial penalties and ensure they provide an appropriate deterrent. It will also bring the current imprisonment terms in line with the times.

The Bill will provide a regulations making power to deal with matters such as setting prescribed fines, the supply of information to the Tribunal, follow up requests if the information is not supplied and the powers to enter and search premises and seize documents.

The Bill will also increase the fines payable for the measurement of scales and other instruments and for certificates of verification so they are more cost reflective. The Bill will convert outdated imperial measurements into metric and the Bill will also provide a legal basis for the secretariat services recently transferred from Internal Affairs to the Ministry of Finance.

In conclusion, Madam Speaker, I commend this Bill before the House. This Bill will ensure that the Price Tribunal has 21st century powers and penalty levels. It needs to effectively do its job of protecting the Cook Islands community from price exploitation.

MADAM SPEAKER: I call for a Secunder to the Motion for the Second Reading.

Secinded by the Honourable Member, Patrick Arioka

And I see the Honourable Tina Browne. You have the Floor.

HON. T. PUPUKE BROWNE: Madam Speaker, the Opposition does not oppose the Bill. The Opposition recognises the need to bring ourselves into the 20th century given that this legislation was enacted way back in 1966.

The Opposition accepts that the penalties should be modernised as well but we would like to think that, that is the extreme - \$15,000 and \$60,000. That is the maximum. So, that when these matters come before the Court, the Court will obviously consider the difference between CITC and Turamatuitui Store.

My point here is that there should be some recognition in penalising any offenders under this amendment and the intention of the Bill as prescribed in the Bill, they are all for the good reasons and the Opposition supports this Bill.

MADAM SPEAKER: As there are no further speakers, do you have a conclusion Honourable Minister?

HON. M. BROWN: No conclusion.

MADAM SPEAKER: Right. I will put the Question: The Question is:

That the Bill be read a Second time?

Motion agreed to

CLERK AT THE TABLE: Long Title: An Act to:

- (a) modernise the offences and penalties provisions of the Control of Prices Act 1966; and
- (b) enable the conversion of imperial measurement in that Act into metric measurement; and
- (c) enable the making of regulations and make other minor reforms to that Act.

BILL READ A SECOND TIME

MADAM SPEAKER: Thank you and I will now resolve Parliament into the Committee of the Whole House.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE

MADAM CHAIRMAN: To go through the Bill in Clauses. We will begin with.

Clause 1: Title.

Clause 2: Commencement.

Clause 3: Principal Act.

Clause 4: Section 2 – Amended Interpretation.

I put the Question:

That Clauses 1, 2, 3 and 4, stands part of the Bill?

Motion agreed to

Clause 5: Section 3 replaced – Financial Secretary to administer Act.

Clause 6: Section 13 amended – Registered and Secretarial Services.

Clause 7: Section 22(i) amended – Inspection of Scales and Measures Instruments.

Clause 8: Section 22(j) amended – Verified Weights and Measures.

I put the Question:

That Clauses 5, 6, 7 and 8 stands part of the Bill?

Motion agreed to

Clause 9: Section 23 amended – Profiteering, black marketing etc.

Clause 10: Section 24 amended – Breach of Price Orders.

Clause 11: Section 24(a) replaced – Breach of Trade Practice Restriction Order.

Clause 12: Section 25 replaced – Default of Witnesses.

I put the Question:

That Clauses 9, 10, 11 and 12 stands part of the Bill?

Motion agreed to

Clause 13: Section 25(a) amended – Offences under Part 11(a) Weights and Measures.

Clause 14: Section 26 amended – Other offences.

Clause 15: Section 30 amended – Delegation of Powers of Tribunal.

Clause 16: New Section 32(a) inserted – Regulations.

I put the Question:

That Clauses 13, 14, 15 and 16 stands part of the Bill?

Motion agreed to

Long Title:

I put the Question:

That Long Title stands part of the Bill?

Motion agreed to

I put the Question:

That the Bill be reported to Parliament without amendments?

Motion agreed to

Parliament is resumed.

MADAM SPEAKER: I call the Minister responsible to report the Bill to Parliament please.

HON. M. BROWN: Madam Speaker, I am happy to report:

That the Bill has passed through the Committee Stage with no amendments

MADAM SPEAKER: I put the Question:

That the Report be adopted?

Motion agreed to

Third Reading, I call the Minister to move for the Third Reading of the Bill.

HON. M. BROWN: Thank you Madam Speaker. I move:

That the Control of Prices Amendment Bill be now read a Third Time

MADAM SPEAKER: Can we have a Seconder for the Bill please.

Seconded by the Honourable Patrick Arioka

I put the Question:

That the Bill be now read a Third time?

Motion agreed to

CLERK AT THE TABLE: Long Title: An Act to:

- (a) modernise the offences and penalties provisions of the Control of Prices Act 1966;
- (b) enable the conversion of imperial measurements in that Act into metric measurements;
- (c) enable the making of Regulations and make other minor reforms to that Act.

MADAM SPEAKER: Honourable Members, that completes the First, Second and Third Reading of the Control of Prices Amendment Bill 2019.

Honourable Members we are just discussing at the front here if I can seek your leave if you would like to if you would like to consider the only Paper that we have otherwise it will go on to next year. It is the only Paper that we have, it is the Public Service Commissioner's Report. I see the Honourable Selina Napa.

MRS S. NAPA: Madam Speaker, from the Opposition side we would like the Paper to be deferred to next Sitting because we have not had a chance to read it please.

MADAM SPEAKER: Thank you very much. We normally consider Papers on Thursdays but since we are not Sitting on Thursday and you are quite right and it is a big Paper and it would be nice to have a look at it and be able to consider it so we will consider the first Thursday we come back next year being consideration day.

For the ten minutes Christmas greetings we have agreed that no interpretation so you can take the flow and go through till you have finished from the beginning to the end of your speech because it really not business of the House it is just greetings to your Constituencies and I see the Prime Minister has the Floor.

HON. H. PUNA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I was hoping to see you earlier during the afternoon recess to suggest respectfully that perhaps instead of ten minutes we should consider say five minutes per Member of Parliament.

Madam Speaker, the reality is if we were to afford each Member of Parliament ten minutes we will be here till after eight p.m. tonight. Six Members in one hour, 24 Members that is four hours and the fact that we will not have any interpretation means that each Member should have sufficient time to say hello, Merry Christmas, Happy New Year.

I notice that we have a confirmed programme following the conclusion of the Sitting today and some of us have already made commitments, Madam Speaker. So, I will be grateful if the Members of this Honourable House would support that and you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: I see the Honourable Tina Browne.

HON. T. PUPUKE BROWNE: Madam Speaker, the Opposition supports this proposal by the Prime Minister but when you look on our side we have two Members who are not in the House with us so I have then assumed their five minutes.

MADAM SPEAKER: Thank you very much and I believe that we have leave of the House to be able to just do five minutes so I have decided that the Deputy Speaker and I are going to swap seats now.

So, before I step down from my seat I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and I shall think of you while I am in Manihiki eating *paua* and fish and *korori* and the rest of it. I will be going to Manihiki tomorrow morning at 6.00 a.m but maybe we will miss your sausages and steak and all that as well. So, all the best to you and your families for the festive season. Kia Orana e Kia Manuia.

(Applause)

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER (T. TURA): Kia Orana to all of us this afternoon.

Honourable Members the order of the rest of our Sitting regarding our Christmas greetings is before you. I have been told that each Member is to speak for 5 minutes and if you have nothing to say please do not stand. Give the time for other Members. I recognise the Member for Tupapa-Maraerenga, Honourable Minister, George Angene.

HON. G. ANGENE: Kia Orana Deputy Speaker. My wife is ringing me on the phone asking me to sing this special song to the House.

(The Member sang two lines of a Maori Song)

Merry Christmas to all the people in my constituency of Tupapa-Maraerenga. I wish you all a peaceful end of the year festive period and may we be surrounded by love for one another.

Kia Orana and May the Good Lord Bless us all.

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Minister and I see the Honourable Member for Matavera, Vaitoti Tupa.

Kia Orana to all of us in the Name of the Lord. Firstly, I would like to thank the Lord for giving me the privilege to represent my constituency of Matavera in this Honourable House. Kia Orana to all the people of my constituency of Matavera, all the different denominations, the Revival church, the Catholic church, the Seventh-day Adventist church, the CICC church, the Cornerstone church, and the Apostolic church. To all the church ministers that are pastoring your church, I greet you all.

Kia Orana to the Aronga Mana – our village leaders, the Ui Mataiapo and Ui Rangatira; may God guide you in your position as leaders of our village. I greet all those that have been Members of Parliament for our village, I thank you for your past good leadership which have brought our village to where we are today.

I greet you Sir Frederick Goodwin and your good wife because you have in the past been the Queen's Representative of our nation and of course you reside in the village of Matavera. Greetings to all our old people especially my own Papa Motu Kora and Mama Tu and the old lady is not well and is in the hospital today. Not forgetting all our old people in our village of Matavera; may God bless you and strengthen you during these times.

I have a special greeting to my own mother, Mama Ngai who is also in the hospital today. I know my older brother is taking good care of her during this time.

Kia Orana to all the families that have lost dear loved ones during the course of this year – Papa Rupe Rima and Mama Tai. The recent passing away of Papa Nito in New Zealand and we anticipate the return of his body back home.

Kia Orana to our village committee who has been active in working for the benefit of people – God Bless you all. Kia Orana to all the village planters, just like me planting good crops in our village; may God continue to bless us all. Kia Orana to all the business people in the village; may God guide you in serving our people.

And again, a special mention to all our English speaking friends – Kia Orana in the Name of Our Lord and Jesus Christ, including our Pacific families that are living in the village of Matavera. Our Pacific families from Samoa, Fiji, Tonga and also Indonesia, Philippines. These are people that are doing our work in the village of Matavera and also those who have been enjoying the hospitality of Matavera. Kia Orana to you all.

I have a special greeting to extend to all my supporting committee that enabled me to enter this Honourable House – Kia Orana to you all. My last greetings are to thank my good wife and our children for their strong support to get me here to Parliament. May the Good Lord Bless us as we continue to serve Him and our village people.

Lastly, to all the Honourable Members in this House, all the staff of Parliament, new and old. Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year to us all. Kia Orana and Kia Manuia.

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Member and I see the Honourable Member for Arutanga-Reureu-Nikaupara.

MR T. KAVANA: Kia Orana to the capital city of Aitutaki, Arutanga-Reureu-Nikaupara.

Greetings to all the different denominations in my constituency and there are 6 different churches in my electorate – Kia Orana to you all. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all. You are the servants of God and your prayers are for me and all the leaders of our nation; prayers of divine guidance so that our governance is for the benefit our people. Thank you very much to you and all your membership.

Kia Orana to the Ui Ariki, the two title holders of Teurukura Ariki, Mama Tiura Tearetoa and Papa Makiroa Haurua. Kia Orana to you both and your Ui Mataiapo. Greetings to the not yet appointed Tamatoa Ariki and I greet all those that are claiming for the title. The Minister of the CICC church in his message last Sunday said shame on you the ariki family of Tamatoa if by the year 2021 you have not appointed a person to be Tamatoa Ariki. I would like to encourage those concerned to please elect someone to the title before we enter the year 2021.

Greetings to my committee in my three villages, thank you for your good work this past year. I would like to thank all the people in my three villages that are Cook Islands Party supporters and I greet you all from the top – our patron, Mama Kuraono Henry, who is currently sick, I pray that you will recover from your illness very soon. And also my Chairman, Papa Tupuariki Puna and my campaign manager, Papa Toma Marsters and all the committee members. I am happy because there are no Democratic Party supporters in my electorate they are all Cook Islands Party supporters. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you all in Arutanga-Reureu-Nikaupara.

As the President for our Sports Club for Arutanga-Reureu-Nikaupara I thank you all for being the best teams and not losing any of the sports competition on our island this year. I thank you for electing me to this position and leading our villages in the sports field. Thank you to all our village planters for doing so well in this area and for feeding our families with good wholesome island food. Thank you to the Cook Islands Party Government for giving funding to assist my village growers in their planting activities. There are other projects that Government have completed on our island and I know the island people is well aware of these. Like the streetlights that has lighted our roads and only my constituency is still to be completed.

Our water intake, Vaitaparoro will soon be ready to be dedicated and that will supply most of the island. Just recently our public toilets were dedicated and this week the Manatua Cable landed on our island. Our solar power is now servicing our island and the power bills are now less for the people to pay. Many good projects are being achieved by the Government for my island of Aitutaki. I would suggest that the Government slow down.

Thank you also for the boat Te Kukupa which helped the Aitutaki people transport the island food to Atiu to feed the CICC conference that was held there a few months ago. Thank you again to the Government for all the good things that was done for my people of Aitutaki. I have come to the end of my speech, thank you.

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Member and I see the Honourable Member for Ivirua, Agnes Armstrong.

MRS A. ARMSTRONG: Tangi Ke, Tangi Ke, Tangi Ke rava. Kia Orana to the two Kavana, and to all the leaders and Ministers of the Gospel for all the different denominations in my constituency. All the Rangatira and Council members and all the people of Ivirua and the whole of Mangaia – greetings to you all.

I humbly thank each of you for your support and look forward to continuing to work closely together to make our village an even better place to live. My children and I extend to you all a Christmas bless with lots of love, fun, peace, joy and happiness.

To all my people on Auau enua; May you all have a very Merry Christmas. I look forward to the new year of working towards fulfilling our dreams and serving my people of Ivirua and our country. Wishing you all the best of health, happiness and prosperity for the New Year. May you realise your hopes and aspirations for 2020.

Deputy Speaker, Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, my Leader and all Honourable Members of this Honourable House and your families, the staff of Parliament and your families and to all our people in our great nation. I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and Prosperous New Year. Be safe, love one another and be kind. God Bless you all.

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Member from Ivirua and I see the Honourable Member from Nukuroa you have the Floor.

MR T. TANGATAPOTO: Deputy Speaker since my voice is not being heard by my people of Nukuroa. I consider it a waste of my time when I greet them but only the air will hear me and not my people.

It is better that I wait until I return to my island and I greet them face to face and give them my festive season greetings in person. However, I still want to say something to you all today. To the Prime Minister, Cabinet Ministers and all in Government and those in the Opposition, the Leader and all the Members of the Opposition. I would like to thank you all for your kind words and sincere encouragements for the time I was suffering with my foot injury.

Many people were wondering as to what I was suffering from whether it was sprained ankle or a gout. However, the many was thinking it was gout. The truth is I had a foot injury that required surgery here in Rarotonga hence I was in crutches for sometimes.

I was proud when the Prime Minister's announce in his speech a few days ago that our Miss Cook Islands who has Nukuroa blood won the Miss World Oceania. I want to assure the Prime Minister that he is definitely right the young woman has the Nukuroa blood that is why she is beautiful. I give my proud appreciation to the organisers of the pageant and the many strong supporters behind her. The leader of the Opposition was telling us that this young woman visited Nukuroa and I was not there to welcome her. But our Tumu Korero assisted her in her research while she was in Nukuroa.

A few weeks ago I was present at the nurse's graduation, two of our young ladies, Nga Manea and Marianne Pakitoa was awarded their nurses degrees. Also, four young men from Nukuroa received their diplomas in dental services. I have been reminiscing of the past when I come to Rarotonga and meet up with my good friend Teariki Heather, I convey to you my friend and your children my gratitude for your care and help to me and my family. I also give my best wishes to Junior Aerei a very good friend to me.

Lastly, I give to all my people of Nukuroa here on Rarotonga and back home on Nukuroa my best wishes – Merry Christmas and Happy Prosperous New Year to one and all. Kia Orana and Kia Manuia.

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Member and I see the Honourable Member for Vaieka-Vaipae-Tautu.

MR M. KITAI: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. Kia Orana to all of my people on the island of Aaura. The Ui Ariki, traditional leaders, the churches and the Government. The Mayor and your Council members, EO and all Government workers – I greet you all.

I greet now the people of my constituency – to all the church leaders, Manarangi Ariki and Ui Mataipo plus the Island Council Members in my three villages. The elderly older people, the widows – both men and women, the destitute and old and young – Kia Orana. On behalf of myself, my wife and our children we convey to you all our Merry Christmas and New Year greetings.

My special greetings to all of us in this Honourable House; May God cover us all with His care during this festive season, a time of reuniting children with parents, friend with friend. God Bless us all and Kia Orana.

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Member and I see the Honourable Minister Rose Brown.

HON. R. TOKI-BROWN: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. Kia Orana to all of us in this Honourable House and our people listening in to our broadcast. Also to those watching our sitting on the internet – livestream; to all the Cook Islands people watching this sitting around the world, Kia Orana to you all.

Firstly, greeting from the two Members of Parliament from Enuamanu going out to all the people living on our island of Enuamanu, we extend our warm greetings to all those with titles and position, the old to the young – Kia Orana in the Name of our Lord. The Good Book says, "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless His Holy Name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits."

I will not say too much; however, Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year to all our people and to all the Honourable Members and to our Speaker and all the staff of Parliament. And all the public servants in my many Ministries, to the HOMs and all the many staff in these Ministries. And to the Prime Minister, Cabinet Ministers and all the Members of Parliament.

I would like to make a plea to our young people and parents as we enter this festive period we do not want to go through what has happened last night losing a young life in a road accident. To our young people, be careful and be wise and not a fool during this time. To our parents I appeal to you all not to be weary in counselling our children to go the right way, and let us continue to pray for them.

Lastly, I together with the Honourable Member Te-hani extend our greetings to our families on Enuamanu, Rarotonga, the Cook Islands and the world. From myself, my husband and all our children we give you all our – Christmas and New Year greetings.

Take good care of yourselves during this festive period until we meet again in the New Year. God Bless Us All. Kia Orana and Kia Manuia.

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you and I see the Honourable Member from Tamarua.

MRS T. MATAPO: Fear not: behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. “For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.” Luke 2:10,11. God sent into the world a unique person a Saviour with the power to love, to forgive and to save. This is the business, spirit of the Cook Islands based on the birth of Jesus Christ.

Greetings and Tangi Ke to my constituency of Tamarua. To the three pillars of Puna Tamarua, the Aronga Mana, denomination and churches and the Government – Tangi Ke, Tangi Ke rava. We welcome our new Pastor Taravei William and your dear wife and family, assistant Pastor and your wife, the church deacons and your wives, our church members and all organisations in the village. My family and I extend to all of you our heartfelt greetings at this special time of the year.

To our children please stay safe throughout this festive season you are the future of our village of Tamarua and the beautiful island of Mangaia. To my Mamas who have left for medical care in New Zealand, Mama Amy, Mama Teatuanui, Mama Ere, Mama Oiaua, Mama Ngamatapo and Papa Ngauraiti. Our prayers and thoughts are with you. The CICC Pastor who have served in Mangaia and have just left, Papa William Tereora and family, Papa Mata Kere and family. Thank you for your time serving the people of Mangaia. Papa Maa and Mama Lasaro – thank you to the both of you.

At the same time, I extend a warm welcome to the new Pastor Papa Tereora Tereora and your family. Not forgetting all the other Pastors on the island of Mangaia and your families of the different denominations.

Greetings also to our Mayor and your good wife, the Executive Officer and your wife and our Island Councillors and your families. Mangaia school principal, Michael Papatua, your wife, your staff and your students of Mangaia school. All Managers and Government workers I greet you all in the Mighty Name of our Lord. All business owners – Tangi Ke.

To all the families who have lost loved ones during this year and years passed better gain strength in supporting each other, our neighbours and our relations from overseas and celebrate the festive season. We are all proud descendants of our Auau Enea. Let

us do our part to take care of each other and make life better for everyone that is what the festive season is all about.

It is my prayer that during this Christmas period we might all find room in our lives and in our hearts for the message of the angel and the love of God through our Lord Jesus Christ – Tangi Ke to all of us.

I also wish to extend special greetings to all our special needs children in Tamarua, Mangaia and the whole of the Cook Islands and all your caregivers and all our elderly people and your caregivers also. Mama Tuaine Parima be strong in the good work that you are doing for our elderly people and all your workers in Oneroa and Ivirua and your leader Mama Gill Vaiimene.

Special greetings to our leader Honourable Tina Browne and your husband. And to all Honourable Members in Government and the Queen's Representative, Sir Tom Marsters and Lady Tuaine Marsters and your families. Merry Christmas to you all.

(The Honourable Member ended by a traditional chant.)

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much. I recognise the Honourable Member for Murienua.

MR P. ARIOKA: Kia Orana, to all the people of my electorate Murienua listening to our broadcast this afternoon. Kia Orana to the Queens Representative, Sir Tom Marsters and Lady Marsters who resides in my constituency and all your families.

Kia Orana to all the Aronga Mana of Murienua and all denominational leaders, I thank you all for upholding peace, cooperation and solidarity in supporting the plans for our constituency and the country as a whole. I thank God for this good spirit found among us which benefitted the businesses and comforted the less fortunate and the grieving families in our villages.

I greet our elderlies, youth and children in our villages as we move into the festive season. I would just like to encourage our young people to be mindful of their activities and movements during this happy times that we do not do anything that may bring sadness to our families.

I join together with the other two Honourable Members for Puaikura, the Honourable William Heather and Honourable Nooroa Baker in conveying our festive season greetings to all the people of Puaikura because all of us are representing to the whole of our district of Puaikura. We are encouraging our Puaikura to remain united as we are all representing the district as a whole, yes – we are here for our people and that is very important.

To our people listening in to our broadcast, I would like to thank you all in Murienua for working together in unity and gladness for the benefit of us all. I believe this is the time when many of our families from overseas will be joining us for many reasons apart from the festive season. My wife and I convey our Christmas greetings to you all and God Bless us all.

Finally, Madam Speaker, Deputy Speaker, Leader of the House, the Clerk and Deputy Clerk and all the staff of Parliament we thank you all for the service as well as the continuous commitments to make sure that we are here in Parliament. We thank you all for the hard work and well done.

Please accept our message of Christmas and may God Bless the Cook Islands and our society. Kia Orana.

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much to the Honourable Member for Murienua and I see the Honourable Member for Ngatangia, Tamaiva Tuavera.

MR T. TUAVERA: Here stands Vaka Takitumu, the Vaka Taunga, the Vaka Ariki of Tangia – i-e-ko-ko. You heard the head of the fish of Tangia deliver his speech and now you will hear the belly of the fish of Tangia talk to you.

Kia Orana to my people of Ngati-tangia, from Taura-roa to Rao-ia. I greet the three pillars of our village, our two chiefs, Pama Kainuku – Kia Orana, I know that you are not well hence you are overseas and not in our village. The Ui Mataiapo, Ui Rangatira, Ui Taunga, our elderly, youth and children – Kia Orana to you all. The many denominations in our village, LDS, SDA, AOG and CICC. We welcome our new appointed CICC Reverend Takaikura Marsters and your wife to our village church. We are saddened by our outgoing Reverend Tereora Viniki who is now transferred to Mangaia because he spent 8 years pastoring our Ngatangia CICC church, we pray the Lord will bless their ministry in Mangaia.

I convey my appreciation to my Democratic Committee of Ngatangia for electing and supporting me back into the House of Parliament. I am thankful for the strong support by my Democratic Committee to me as the Member of Parliament for our village. I thank Aunty Miti and Uncle Tauira because they opened their house and their heart to the Democratic Party of Ngatangia.

I also want to thank the Sea Eagles because the battlefield is just around the corner and I see the boys begin their training. I thank my Vice-President, Lydia Nga who is nicknamed Mama Eagle and she is always in action never sleeps. I also make mention of all our sponsors, as we all know in sports we need the sponsors because when there are no sponsors the team cannot move forward. Thank you to our sponsors from Matavera and Ngatangia.

I thank our super coach, Bobby Henson and his history making premier team, as you all know this is the first team ever to win the championship without losing a game. It is the first club to ever win the championship without losing. So, I congratulate my champions. Our PNG connection Bennie, Mel and Stan will be back to repeat and also our Terekia three brothers and Tereinga Maoate, they will be back to do battle again for the Sea Eagles in the next that is coming up.

And also to our Sea gels, our netball girls, Ngatangia was a club that was going down in the netball sport but they have picked it up. I want to thank the coaches and also the parents that have supported the Sea gels, Ngatangia netball team. It is now slowly coming up, thank you very much to everyone and well done!

I want to also thank my family, the Tuavera family, Goodwin family, Brown family, Toa family and my close friends. And to all the people that I have come into contact with over the years – Kia Orana to you all. And to Miss World Oceania, Tajiya Sahay, the Captain Tama girl, the world is your oyster girl – go for it. Remember yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery and today is a gift.

From my wife Lynn and my daughter Avaarii and my son Teariki to all of you that I have not mentioned, please accept my deepest apologies. Have a safe festive season with your families and friends – be safe, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. May God Bless us all and even in this House, Madam Speaker, Deputy Speaker and to all the staff, Clerk, Deputy Clerk, Interpreters, Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister and our Leader of the Opposition and all Honourable Members. Thank you.

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you Honourable Member, I now see the Honourable Member Tingika Elikana.

MR T. ELIKANA: Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker. I rise to move a Motion.

That the Standing Orders 54 (2) be suspended to enable the continuance of this Sitting until such time that all Members have given their greetings to their constituency

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Leader of the House. Can I call for a Seconder?

Seconded by the Honourable Member for Titikaveka, Selina Napa

I put the Question:

That the Motion be agreed to?

Motion agreed to

We may continue with our Christmas greetings. I see the Honourable Mac Mokoroa and you have the Floor.

HON. V. MOKOROA: Thank you Honourable Deputy Speaker. Let me start by quoting, 2 Peter 1:2, Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

Kia Orana to both sides of the House, Madam Speaker, Deputy Speaker, Clerks, staff and Interpreters of the Parliament. Thank you to our Members in the Opposition, the Leader for your support in enabling us to pass all these Bills tabled before this House. Personally, this is an awesome result.

Kia Orana to all of us listening to this session. To all our people living in the Outer Islands and watching from overseas – Kia Orana in the Name of the Lord.

Let me take this opportunity to convey my sincere greetings to the capital of Rarotonga, Oire Nikao the hub of the nation. Kia Orana to all those from Rangiriura and all the way

to Pokoinu. The Aronga Mana, Ui Rangatira, Ui Mataiapo living in the village of Nikao – Kia Orana.

To our church minister Reverend Oirua Rasmussen, your good wife Margery, your family and the CICC church of Nikao, Assistant pastor, Vai Peua who has been conducting our parliament prayer service and your good wife, elders, deacons and all holding different church office – Kia Orana.

To other denominations within Nikao and to all our elderlies, youth and children living in Nikao – Kia Orana.

To our public servants and business people living in Nikao – Kia Orana.

Honourable Speaker let me take this opportunity to thank the Government of the day for the many, many blessings that we in Nikao is reaping. I think it is fitting to quote from Psalm 118:1, Praise to God for His everlasting mercy, give thanks to the Lord for He is good, for His mercy endures forever.

Honourable Deputy Speaker these blessings are not restricted to Nikao; it is impacting not only us here in Rarotonga but as well as in the Outer Islands. It is in New Zealand as well as in Australia, our successful team that qualified for the world rugby league, followed by our Member of Parliament, Tama Tuavera announcing our placing as number 12 in the Miss World pageant competition.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, last week and this week we tabled in this House the increase for the pensioners for over 70 years, as well as the increase for the basic minimum wage. I think all the Members in this Honourable House as many of us are putting strong emphasises that our elderlies are looked after. I also mention that they will also receive an added bonus as part of the Government contribution as a Christmas bonus, for all, not only our elderlies but as well as our child benefits, our destitute, our infirmaries and our caregivers.

I thank the hard working staff of Internal Affairs for not only delivering this aspect of your deliverables but as well as other output within Internal Affairs. I thank the staff of the Police, the Ombudsman, the Punanga Nui and last of all my good support staff. My wife and family and I would like to wish all of us here, those listening and more so those overseas, a very Merry Christmas and Prosperous New Year. Kia Orana and Kia Manuia.

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you Honourable Minister. I see the Honourable Wesley Kareroa and you have the Floor.

MR W. KAREROA: First of all, Kia Orana Deputy Speaker, Clerk and Deputy Clerk and on the Government side – Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister and our Opposition side – the Leader, Mrs Tina Browne and Deputy. Kia Orana also to our Madam Speaker, the staff of Parliament and our Interpreters.

In the case that our radio is not working and the people of Mangaia is not receiving our broadcast but I think they can pick us on Facebook but the elderlies cannot but I know the coconut wireless will get the news and my greetings to them.

My first thank you is to the Almighty God because I believe He bought me into this House. Secondly is to thank the people of my constituency both to those who elected me into this Parliament House and to those that did not elect me. I greet you all and thank you for bringing me here. The greetings to the various sector of our island Mangaia. My two sisters have already conveyed these and if I give my greetings then that will be threefold and that is overwhelming and what has been given is sufficient.

To end my speech, I wish to convey, my seasonal greetings to everyone in the House - Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Thank you.

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you Honourable Member. I see the Honourable Member Tingika Elikana.

MR T. ELIKANA: Kia Orana to all of us in the Name of the Lord. First of all, Kia Orana to you Madam Speaker and Deputy Speaker for the good leadership that you both applied in our House of Parliament. Thank you to the Clerk and Deputy Clerk and also to the Interpreters for your good work.

Kia Orana to our Queens Representative, Sir Tom Marsters and Lady Tuaine and your family. To the Prime Minister, your good wife and family. To all the Cabinet Ministers, your wives and family. To the Leader of the Opposition and all your Honourable Members, your spouses and families – Kia Orana.

Greetings to all my people on Pukapuka and Nassau. Kia Orana to our Teuru Ariki, Tetio Kaisara Pa-ki-Tonga Paulo Ariki, and your family. All the island traditional leaders, all the people both old and young, I greet you all in the Name of our Lord.

I also greet our many churches on our islands of Pukapuka and Nassau, I encourage you to continue your good work for our people to remain faithful with God.

I greet the Government workers, the Mayor and Island Councillors and your families, continue to serve our people and our island well. The EO and your officers I greet you and thank you for your good work.

I now would like to thank and greet previous and retired Members of Parliament for Pukapuka that are still living, Papa Tiaki Wuatai and family, Papa Tamaiti Peua and family, Papa Tekii Lazaro and family.

I now greet the Tere Party from New Zealand and Australia that is to visit Pukapuka, I welcome you all back home. Again I thank you my people for trusting me to be your representative into this House of Parliament.

Lastly, I thank you my wife Tetuanui Takai for supporting me in this role that we are carrying at this stage of our lives.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all. Thank you everyone.

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you Honourable Member and I see the Honourable Member from Teimurimotia.

MRS S. NAPA: *[Member began her speech with a traditional chant].*

My Teimurimotia during this festive period has become the place to go to the beaches to swim for most of the people of Rarotonga. On behalf of Teimurimotia I welcome you all to visit our beautiful beaches during this time of the year and enjoy a swim with us.

Takitumu has a protocol to follow and it goes like this. If someone comes to Takitumu they have to come to the head of the fish first which is Matavera and then through the belly which is Ngatangiia and finally to the tail, which is my constituency of Teimurimotia. That is the reason I am the last Member from Takitumu to give my Christmas greetings because I am the tail of the fish.

I greet all the people of Teimurimotia, the traditional and business community, the religious sector and to all the people from the elderlies right down to our new born babies which includes our young people. My husband and I and our children convey to you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year best wishes.

This is the time when the youth of Titikaveka are very busy organising village programs and we would like to invite all of Rarotonga to a drug and alcohol awareness Christmas concert under the stars on Sunday at the CICC church grounds. The program will focus on ways to encourage our young people not to get into drugs and alcohol. And on Christmas Eve there is an open air concert and tomorrow there is a fundraiser for the wife of Papa Funigi for her medical needs at the Papaaroa SDA Hall. We are working hard in Titikaveka for the community as a whole to help each other with our needs.

Last night one of youth in Titikaveka passed away and a few week ago another youth also passed away. What shall we do for our youth? This is our Members of Parliament appeal to you all our young people. Do not be overcome by the senseless amusements of this world, please be careful of your actions, be not like the fools but like the wise.

To all of our people listening in to our parliament broadcast, Teimurimotia sends their Merry Christmas and Happy New Year greetings to you all.

Lastly to my Democratic Committee and supporters, and the Mama Bulldogs I thank you all for your strong support for our village people. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you all.

A special greeting to my Papa Bill Hosking and Mama Keu Iro who is not well and they have reached this Christmas time. May God keep you until you reach the age of 100 years.

I extend to the Speaker and Deputy Speaker and all the staff of Parliament, the Government side – Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, Cabinet Ministers and all your Honourable Members, Merry Christmas wishes.

To our Leader of the Opposition, Mrs Tina Browne and all our Opposition Members, Merry Christmas to you all. From Teimurimotia – we love you all from the bottom of our hearts.

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Member and I see the Honourable Member Albert Nicholas and you have the Floor.

MR A. NICHOLAS: Thank you, Deputy Speaker, if I may wish His Excellency the Queens Representative, Sir Thomas Marsters and his family and his staff. The Speaker of the House, your staff and all your families. Also the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition and all the Honourable Members of this Humble Wonderful House we call Parliament aka, Crown Beach and your families.

To the Aronga Mana and all the people of my constituency of RAPPa, may I wish you all a Prosperous Humble Safe Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year for 2020.

Last but not least, Deputy Speaker to my chart topping history making and legendary team called the mighty eels aka the blue and gold army for setting a historical 15 grand finals back to back chart topping record. Thank you very much to this wonderful team that I have been a part of and I know that it is a record that will go down in history, as one that will be so difficult to break. Now, if one wants to talk about history, this is history. Fifteen years, fifteen grand finals back to back. So, to that wonderful and legendary historical team, the mighty eels, thank you for having me be part of that historical setting moment.

Once again to all of us and everyone that is listening to our broadcast may you all have a safe and wonderful Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you Honourable Member. I now see the Honourable Member Tereapii Maoate from Amuri-Ureia.

MR T. MAOATE: Thank you, Deputy Speaker, Kia Orana to you and all Honourable Members this afternoon. I would like to add my festive greetings to my two Honourable Members from Aitutaki who have spoken earlier to our people in Aitutaki.

To all the leaders of our island and all the people of Aitutaki, I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

To all the staff of Parliament and all the public servants and our staff in the Opposition office and all our people listening to our broadcast – Kia Orana to you all.

To all the people in my constituency of Amuri-Ureia, Deputy Mayor and the two Island Council Members, all the staff of the Island Council. The youth leader, and all your young people – Merry Christmas & Happy New Year.

Our churches in the two villages, your church pastors and the church members – Kia Orana to you all. We all know that this year it is the turn for Ureia village on Christmas and Amuri village on New Year's day to do the round the island dance visit. We look forward to those events and I wish us all safety during those times.

I welcome our families returning home to Aitutaki for the year end period and wish them all a good time while they are home – Merry Christmas and Happy New to you

all. I extend my special festive greetings to the many business owners in the two villages may you have a Prosperous New Year.

My special greetings to my wife and family and together we wish everyone in this House and in our nations a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Kia Orana.

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Member and I see the Honourable Minister from Tongareva.

HON. R. TAPAITAU: Kia Orana everyone in the Name of our Lord. To my people of Tongareva I greet you all and I will not stand too long with my greetings because I know you know me very well and how I feel about you all.

So, to the three pillars of our community, our traditional leaders, the churches and the Government I greet you all. The elderlies, our youth and children – Kia Orana to you.

From me, the Honourable Robert Tapaitau, Member of Parliament for Tongareva and my wife we want to thank the Speaker, Deputy Speaker, the Prime Minister of this country, the Deputy Prime Minister and also the Cabinet Minister of the Crown, all the Members of Parliament, the Honourable Tina Browne, the Member of Parliament for Rakahanga and all those that stand in their position.

The Clerk and all the staff of this Honourable House, you have done a great job. There is one thing if I look at we say we are giving our greetings for Christmas to our families. I also want to have this opportunity while I got it now to my ICI family who have worked hard, Diane Charlie Puna and the staff, you have done a great job. Have a good break and stay safe. Also to my family at NES, National Environment Services, Nga Puna and your staff, stay safe.

And also to my other portfolios, the Ministry of Transport, it has been a rough year for all my portfolios and it has been a good year. These are the challenges we face and we take it. For me I am proud to have all these portfolios these people working under me. I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

I also want to mention and thank my beautiful Meali Tapaitau. If it wasn't for you I couldn't be here. We will still be in Australia.

To my people in Tongareva I will be arriving on our island soon and we will meet and greet you in person with festive greetings so we will be celebrating our Christmas and New Year together. And also one last thing I would like to mention because the Member of Parliament for Matavera forgot to mention this person. So, to my old lady, my mum that I love dearly, Mrs Miera Tapaitau, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. So, from me to the House, everyone and our people of the Cook Islands – Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Kia Orana and Kia Manuia.

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Minister and I now see the Deputy Minister, the Honourable Mark Brown.

HON. M. BROWN: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. Kia Orana to all of my people in my constituency of Takuvaine, Tutakimoa and Teotue.

(Member delivered a traditional chant, specific to his villages)

Kia Orana to all the Chiefs in my constituency, George Karika Ariki and Joseph Vakatini Ariki & your people – Kia Orana in the Name of the Lord. Our traditional leaders, Ui Mataiapo and Ui Rangatira. Our church leaders and the various denominations in our villages – Kia Orana.

Special greetings to our elderlies living in our village homes, Papa Maeva Karati, Mama Tete, Mama Ngai, Papa Tai and Mama Teara up inland – Kia Orana in the Name of the Lord. I extend to all my best wishes for a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Special acknowledgement also I would like to make to the Ministries under my portfolio. This year has been a tremendous year, tremendously busy year for the officials in the Ministry of Finance in particular but also the ministries of the Cook Islands Investment Corporation and the huge amount of work that has been carried out this year. But also a special mention of the Crown Law Office who has been busy working closely with the Investment Corporation and in particular with the Telecommunications Bill and the Competition and Regulatory Authority Bill and the huge number of hours that the Solicitor General and his staff has put through over the last few months in particular has been enormous.

A special Christmas greeting also goes out to the Seabed Minerals Authority and its outgoing Commissioner, Paul Lynch who I would like to pay tribute for his terrific work since the establishment of this office, the Seabed Minerals Commissioner in 2013. For the work he has done in bringing this particular sector to where we are today. I know that Paul will play and continue to take part in the Seabed Mineral sector in different roles moving into the future.

We would like to welcome the new Commissioner for the Seabed Minerals Authority, another one of our well qualified young Cook Islanders, Alex Herman. Who will take on the post next month, once she finishes her term at Crown Law. But I would like to extend to you all in these departments a great big Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Enjoy your break because you have certainly all earned it.

Special Merry Christmas greetings goes out to my good friends and my family in particular because as I said this year has been a tremendously busy year for me in particular. So, there are times that we missed our family meetings, we missed our get together but there is a lot to make up for over the Christmas and the New Year period. So, we will be there in the 100 percent and full attendance right the way through. So, we look forward to that.

To my people in my constituency of Takuvaine and Tutakimoa, may we all have a safe and enjoyable festive season. Look after yourselves, be safe – Merry Christmas to you all. I look forward to catching up with everyone in these next few days before the Christmas break and continuing on with our good work that we are doing within our village over the next couple of years.

Special Christmas greetings to my hard working committee in my constituency. Thank you very much again for your strong support to me as your representative in this

Honourable House of Parliament. Happy New Year to you all and a very Merry Christmas to us all.

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Deputy Prime Minister. I see the Leader of the Opposition, the Honourable Tina Browne.

HON. T. PUPUKE BROWNE: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. Kia Orana to my people of Tahuahua in the Name of our Lord for this festive period – Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Kia Orana to our three churches on the island, your church ministers and your wives and all your church members – Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Kia Orana to the Island Mayor, your wife and family; Deputy Mayor, your wife and family. All island Councillors, your wives and families – Kia Orana this Christmas and New Year. Kia Orana to the island Executive Officer and all Government workers – Kia Orana this Christmas and New Year. To all the people of Tahuahua, the elderlies, the youth and all our children – Kia Orana this Christmas and New Year.

The Bible tells us in 1 John 4:10 “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us.” I would like to convey on behalf of my husband and family our Merry Christmas and Happy New Year greetings to you all my people in Tahuahua. I pray that the Good Lord guide us into the New Year so that we all will have a good prosperous year.

I am happy to combine all the love and best wishes of the democratic party and convey it to all the people that live on all the islands of our little nation – the Cook Islands. Special greetings to our Queen’s Representative, Sir Tom Marsters and Lady Tuaine Marsters – Kia Orana in the Name of our Lord. To all the Ui Ariki and all the Aronga Mana on our various islands – Kia Orana in the Name of our Lord. To all our Christian churches this is a special time for us to remember the birth of our Saviour Jesus Christ. It is right that we pay reverence and worship our Lord Jesus Christ because He is the foundation of our peace and joy respecting the right of each other.

Kia Orana to you all in Government, the Prime Minister and your good wife, your Cabinet Ministers and their wives, all Honourable Members on the Government side and your spouse. The Independent Members and your spouses and the OCI Members and your wives. Special greetings to the new political party the Cook Islands United Party who is yet to be represented in this House of Parliament, however they contested in the last by-election.

Kia Orana to the staff of Parliament, Madam Speaker, Deputy Speaker, Clerk, Deputy Clerk, all the staff of Parliament including the Interpreters and the Hansard staff – Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you all. I also extend greetings to the staff of the Opposition Office, Kia Orana in the Name of the Lord.

The festive season is now upon us and another year draws to a close. When we reflect on the year that we have had, what is important to remember as we approach the anniversary of our Lord’s birth is that we are so fortunate to live in this paradise. We continue to be committed to the growth and prosperity of our country and most

importantly our people. We remain committed to our strong plan for the future of our people and our country because we in the Democratic Party hold true to our commitment that it is our people who are our priority.

I want to congratulate the private sector the tourism industry, the hotels, restaurants, shops and all associated businesses which have made this country grow in wealth and wellbeing. I congratulate the business, big and small for carrying this nation.

To all who will be driving on our roads and I want to emphasise this. Please take the utmost care and be mindful of your safety and that of others. Do not drink and drive, I urge our young people and the old people to, to be safe and respectful drivers and keep uppermost in mind that drinking and driving do not mix.

On behalf of my family, the Democratic Party Caucus, executive and all members, I extend a very warm and sincere “aroa” to all. May you all have a happy, peaceful, and safe Christmas and may we all rejoice in a glorious 2020. A year of positive change and growth. Thank you very much.

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition. I see the Honourable Prime Minister, Honourable Henry Puna.

HON. H. PUNA: Kia Orana Deputy Speaker and to all Honourable Members in the House and all our people listening to our broadcast. I have four constituencies, Manihiki, our nation and all the Government ministries under my leadership, added to that is the parliamentary services. So, to the four, Kia Orana in the Name of the Lord.

Firstly, to my island of Manihiki, Kia Orana in the Name of the Lord especially during this festive period. Kia Orana to you Mama Mayor and your husband, I believe you are now on Rarotonga and you two are going to Melbourne to visit your children. Kia Orana to Papa Deputy Mayor and all Island Councillors, thank you all for taking care of our people during this cyclone season and the festive period.

To all our church ministers of all our churches of the island and your congregations, men and women, the youth and all our children – Kia Orana in the Name of the Lord. Thank you for all your donations for our friends in Samoa for the epidemic they had over there. I believe you are all well and happy and will continue to do so. I am jealous that the Speaker of Parliament, Mama Niki Rattle who will be coming over tomorrow and spending a whole month in Manihiki. I hope the island is prepared to receive her tomorrow at the airport. To you Madam Speaker, enjoy the family reunion on our island and all the very best in meeting all your loved ones from all over the place.

Kia Orana to all of us in this House. I want to make a special greeting to all our new staff to Parliament. I also greet our returning Member of Parliament, Honourable Tehani Browne after a two year wait. Thank you to Atiu for your patience in this matter.

To all the Government ministries under my office. I want to thank all the Heads of Ministries and all the staff in these ministries. There were many new and major tasks that were completed last year. The new appointment of the HoM for Marine Resources that came back home from the Forum Fisheries Agency, Pamela Maru. I have every

confident in this young lady. She is doing so well and fisheries is doing so well. Bringing into our Government funding about \$20million a year.

To our Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tapaeru Herman, she is also one of the best HoM doing her job, not surprising that these are women leaders, they are standing up and putting their hands up and actually doing very, very well. Not just for yourselves but also for our country - Congratulations.

To all my HoM's, Ben Ponia is in a very difficult position as chief of staff to the Prime Minister's office with so many challenges facing us but I believe that together we can overcome these challenges.

To the Public Service Commissioner, our High Commission Office in Wellington, Mrs Liz Koteka and also to Mrs Rosie Blake in Auckland. They are doing a good job in looking after these two offices for our Government.

To us in this Honourable House, congratulations to the Opposition and thank you for your support throughout the course of this sitting. The view that when the Members understand the intentions of a Bill, its passage through the House will be smooth. Madam Speaker thank you for the new initiative to run workshops for Members of Parliament, to familiarise them with the Bills to enter Parliament. So, Members of Parliament can have the opportunity to ask questions and to come to grips with the essences of these new proposed Bills. I believe we have set the trend today and may that continue into the future.

Some major things are happening in our country. I am surprised when some people say that the economy is going down. They must be burying their heads in the sand. Just look at this Honourable Member sitting opposite me today, Captain Tama. He is doing so well with his business and this country is doing well. Come on, get your hands out of the sand and join in and let us all work together.

Deputy Speaker, finally the Word of God says, "Love your enemies and bless them that curse you." I want to greet my enemies and those out there who think they are my enemies. People like Norman George, Teokotai George, John Scott – what is happening? The Word of God teaches us to love our enemies. If you consider yourself as my enemy, I greet you today. May you be blessed. To all our people listening – May God Bless us all.

Before I sit down I would like to offer my words of comfort to the Koteka family in Arorangi for the passing away of their daughter, Teatuanui Koteka last night. For the counsels that we are advising our young people to be careful during the festive period – that is all we can do. To our parents, please these are our children, let us exercise our responsibility and look after them and take care during this special time. Because this is family time, a time of sharing, being with family, while we celebrate the festive season.

Our Member for Akaoa that is not in the House today, I know this is their family bereavement. May God comfort you and all the family. But despite that to all the Cook Island people, may this be a happy time for all as we reflect on the birth of Christ and what it means for us as Christian people.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and Kia Orana to all. Thank you.

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER: *[Deputy Speaker began his speech with a traditional chant, specific to Mauke.]*

Kia Orana to you, Akatokamanava – Kia Orana in the Name of the Lord. Kia Orana to our churches on the island, the church ministers, elders and all your congregations.

Kia Orana to our traditional leaders, Ui Ariki and your people and all the combined different districts of Mauke – Kia Orana in the Name of the Lord. May the Good Lord Bless us all for the Christmas and the New Year.

On the side of the Government, Kia Orana to the Papa Mayor and all the Island Councillors, the EO and all the Government workers on Akatokamanava – Kia Orana in the Name of the Lord. May the Good Lord Bless us all for the Christmas and the New Year.

I will be returning home this Thursday and we will meet together before the festive season. Please accept my words of greetings to you all. To all our visiting people from overseas – greetings to you all, may you have an enjoyable time on our island.

Again, May the Good Lord Bless us all for the Christmas and the New Year period. Kia Orana and Kia Manuia.

Secondly, I extend to you Madam Speaker our best wishes as you travel home to Manihiki tomorrow. Thank you for all your hard work for our Parliament during this year. May the Good Lord Bless us all for the Christmas and the New Year.

I now call upon the Leader of the House.

MR T. ELIKANA: Deputy Speaker, I rise to move a Motion:

That this Honourable House adjourn *Sine Die*

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER: Can I call for a Seconder please.

Seconded by the Deputy Prime Minister, Honourable Mark Brown

I put the Question:

That the Motion be agreed to?

Motion agreed to

I call upon the Leader of the House to say our closing prayer.

CLOSING PRAYER

Parliament is now adjourned *Sine Die*.

Sitting adjourned at 5.45 p.m.