



HIGH COMMISSION OF THE INDEPENDENT STATE OF SAMOA WELLINGTON

PRESS RELEASE

OPENING OF THE NEW SAMOA HIGH COMMISSION CHANCERY

Whilst in Wellington for her first State Visit to New Zealand, the Prime Minister of the Independent State of Samoa, Hon. Fiame Naomi Mata'afa, unveiled the Plaque to mark the Opening of the new Samoa High Commission Chancery in Wellington on Wednesday 15th June 2022.

The Samoa High Commission in Wellington has been in operation for more than 45 years. The previous chancery building belonged to the British High Commission before it was purchased by the Government of Samoa to serve as Samoa's first overseas diplomatic mission in 1977.

After several years of increased maintenance to the aging chancery building which suffered visible damage from the 2016 Kaikoura Earthquake, the Samoa Government approved the construction of a new building to replace the old one and to provide a safer work environment for the staff.

The design of the new building from CCM Architects was approved by Cabinet in 2017 and, following receipt of the Building Consent in 2019, tenders were then invited from several construction companies in New Zealand with Wilson Construction Ltd of Wellington being awarded the building contract in early 2020.

Construction commenced in July 2020 and was expected to be completed at end-March this year. Unfortunately, due to the unprecedented adverse effects of COVID-19 on building material supplies, national lockdowns and worker unavailability the project encountered several disruptions and delays.

The new Chancery consists of four levels; three levels of office space and one level of underground car parks. The building portrays a number of Samoan cultural features which reflect Samoa's journey to independence in 1962 and the maturity of Samoa's special and longstanding relationship with New Zealand as we celebrate 60 years of Independence and 60 years of the Treaty of Friendship between our two countries.

In her address, the Prime Minister gratefully acknowledged the funding from the Unit Trust of Samoa (UTOS) which made the Project possible. Hon Fiame also acknowledged the hard work of the Project Team under the leadership of the High Commissioner, His Excellency Leasi Papali'i Scanlan.

The Opening was attended by a number of Religious Ministers, New Zealand Government Ministers, the Deputy Speaker, Members of Parliament, the former Prime Minister of New Zealand (Sir Bill and Lady Mary English), Dame Winnie Laban & Dr Peter Swain, City Mayors as well as many Members of the Diplomatic Corps, the Business Sector and the Samoan Community.

Samoa High Commission
WELLINGTON