



**Prime Minister's Remarks – Hon Fiame Naomi Mataafa**  
**Address at the 247<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Independence of the USA**  
**Hosted by Ambassador Udall**  
**U.S. Embassy Residence, Vailima**  
**Thursday, 6 July 2023 at 6.00pm**

Lau Afioga, Tuimalealiifano Vaaletoa Sualauvi II and Masiofo

Member of the Council of Deputies

Ministers of Cabinet,

The Chief Justice and Members of the Judiciary,

The Speaker and Members of Parliament,

Your Excellency Ambassador Tom Udall & Mrs. Jill Cooper

Members of the Diplomatic Corps,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Thank you, Your Excellency, Ambassador Udall and your good lady for inviting us to celebrate with you this evening the 247<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence of the United State of America.

On behalf of the Government and the people of Samoa, I wish to convey to the Government and the people of the United States our warm congratulations on the celebration of your Independence signed on 4 July 1776. We offer our best wishes for the continued prosperity of the United State and all its citizens especially those present here this evening.

This year marks 52 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations between our two countries. This is an important milestone that demonstrates our close relations, based on our shared values of democracy, sovereignty, peace and security, and equal opportunities.

We continue to foster meaningful cooperations in the areas of health, education, environment, EEZ security and Fisheries, and importantly, the Peace Corps programme. Earlier this year in February we welcomed the return of the Peace Corps to Samoa and the region since disruptions of the COVID-19 pandemic. We are delighted to note the arrival of the next cohort of eleven (11) Peace Corps trainees on Monday next week to assist with work underway to build the number of skilled teachers and promote the efficacy of the program.

We note the renewed efforts of the United States to consolidate its engagement in the region in terms of presence and security networks as well as targeted support to address the challenges of climate change including the conservation of our livelihoods, the ocean and its resources.

Samoa appreciates the maritime surveillance services of the US Coastguard particularly in our waters given the situation when we were without a patrol boat. We are also seeing a rising interest in tactical training for our modest police force in view of our international hosting obligations in the future; however, such as much as possible, we would like to maintain the stability and peacefulness of the Pacific region.

The US has been engaged in social infrastructure over recent years and one example of such projects is the upgrade of the Faleolo Medical Center that would assist in our preparations for hosting the CHOGM 2024.

Before closing, I understand that the Nevada National Guard delegation are here with us to formalize a partnership with our Ministry of Police, Prisons and Corrections. I wish you well in your meetings and hope you will converge on mutually beneficial outcomes.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I invite you all to join me in proposing a toast:

**“Happy Independence Day to the people of the United States”.**

Soifua and God bless.