# POLITICAL AND LEGAL CHALLENGES OF A PACIFIC PARLIAMENT

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*This paper is part of a larger project providing an account of the inaugural Pacific Parliamentary and Political Leaders Forum held in Wellington, New Zealand 18-22 April 2013. This paper specifically looks at the political and legal issues that must be overcome to ensure that the concept of a Pacific Parliament is sustainable. The political factors include the many different systems of government in the region and how to determine the participants, particularly whether representatives from civil society groups should be included and what issues are to be discussed. The legal challenges would be the legal framework that would be put in place to regulate a Pacific Regional Parliament and also what actions are taken from collective resolutions made by participants. Experiences from different models of regional and international parliaments such as the European Parliament and the United Nations General Assembly provide useful comparisons.*

*Cet article reprend partie d'une étude plus large qui porte sur les travaux du 'Pacific Parliamentary and Political Leaders Forum' qui s'est tenu à Wellington (Nouvelle Zélande) du 18 au 22 avril 2013. Les principales observations et réflexions des auteurs portent sur la viabilité de la mise en place d'un futur Parlement du Pacifique. Ils relèvent les nombreuses difficultés qui s'attachent à ce projet. Sur le plan institutionnel, ils observent qu'il conviendrait d'arriver à harmoniser les différents systèmes de gouvernement en vigueur dans le Pacifique, d'envisag Cet article reprend partie d'une étude plus large qui porte sur les travaux du 'Pacific Parliamentary and Political Leaders Forum' qui s'est tenu à Wellington (Nouvelle Zélande) du 18 au 22 avril 2013. Les principales observations et réflexions des auteurs portent sur la viabilité de la mise en place d'un futur Parlement du Pacifique. Ils relèvent les nombreuses difficultés qui s'attachent à ce projet. Sur le plan institutionnel, ils observent qu'il conviendrait*

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*d'arriver à harmoniser les différents systèmes de gouvernement en vigueur dans le Pacifique, d'envisager la présence ou non de membres de la société civile au sein de cette nouvelle institution, et de définir avec précision les pouvoirs susceptibles de lui être dévolus. Sur le plan légal, les auteurs expliquent que les obstacles ne sont pas moindres car il s'agira de prévoir un cadre juridique strict de nature à efficacement encadrer l'action et les pouvoirs du futur 'Pacific Regional Parliament'. Les auteurs suggèrent alors que les Pays du Pacifique s'inspirent utilement des expériences régionales ou internationales déjà existantes, telles que le Parlement Européen ou l'Assemblée générale des Nations Unies.er la présence ou non de membres de la société civile au sein de cette nouvelle institution, et de définir avec précision les pouvoirs susceptibles de lui être dévolus. Sur le plan légal, les auteurs expliquent que les obstacles ne sont pas moindres car il s'agira de prévoir un cadre juridique strict de nature à efficacement encadrer l'action et les pouvoirs du futur 'Pacific Regional Parliament'. Les auteurs suggèrent alors que les Pays du Pacifique s'inspirent utilement des expériences régionales ou internationales déjà existantes, telles que le Parlement Européen ou l'Assemblée générale des Nations Unies.*

## I    INTRODUCTION

In December 2010, the New Zealand Parliament's Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee produced a report to its House of Representatives entitled Inquiry into New Zealand's relationship with South Pacific countries. It recommended that the House expand its relations with Pacific parliamentarians, setting aside a week of the New Zealand's time to host them and discuss issues, especially of common regional interest.[1] The recommendation resulted in the inaugural Pacific Parliamentary and Political Leaders Forum held in Wellington, New Zealand from 18 to 22 April 2013 (the Forum). According to John Hayes, the chairperson of the Committee, New Zealand seeks to strengthen its relationship with the Pacific countries and facilitate greater cooperation in the region.[2] Proposals for bringing together Pacific Parliamentarians has been something that New Zealand leaders has promoted in the past. The Pacific Parliament was an idea advocated by a former New Zealand Member of Parliament Mike Moore in his book, *A Pacific Parliament, A political*

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1    New Zealand Parliament's Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee  produced a report to its House of Representatives entitled Inquiry into New Zealand's relationship with South Pacific countries, at 33.

2    John Hayes, interview with Radio Australia <www.radioaustralia.net.au/international/radio/ program/pacific-beat/pacific-leaders-gather-in-wellington-to-promote-regional-ties/1118058>.

*and economic community for the South Pacific*.[3] This paper specifically looks at the political and legal issues that must be overcome to enable a Pacific Parliamentarians forum to evolve into a Pacific Parliament and become a sustainable concept.

It is interesting to note that Sir Mekere Morautu, former Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea and Review Chair of the Pacific Plan, when addressing the Pacific Island Forum Leaders' Meeting in Majuro states:[4]

> In short, regionalism has lost its political direction, and it became clear to me at an early staged of this review that the solution lies in re-establishing a robust political process around regionalism, as opposed to – simply – refreshing a technocratic shopping list of Pacific Plan priorities.

Perhaps a regional parliament may meet this challenge of a robust political process.

## II    KEY QUALIFICATIONS

The views here are tentative and subject to be further refined as we are in the beginning of the project. There therefore are a number of key qualifications we would like to state at the outset. These qualifications are important and will have to be addressed if the idea of a Pacific parliament becomes a reality. Our focus is on the political and legal challenges.

Pacific is a broad concept and may be contested as to who is included in this region. We take the approach of Crocombe in his book on the South Pacific, to refer only to Pacific Islands mainly the tropical island nations and territories, including New Zealand and Australia.[5] It may be that realistically speaking, it would only be the Pacific Island Forum nations that would participate in such an initiative.[6]

The question of costs of such an exercise is probably the most important aspect. It is not addressed here. Firstly, we do not feel qualified to comment on costs and

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3    Mike Moore, *A Pacific Parliament, A political and economic community for the South Pacific* (Asia Pacific Books and Institute of Pacific Studies, University of South Pacific, Suva, 1982)

4    Presentation on the Pacific Plan Review by the Rt Hon Sir Mekere Morauta, Review Chair, Majuro, 4 September 2013.

5    Ron Crocombe *The South Pacific* (University of South Pacific, Suva, 2001) 16.

6    The Pacific Island Forum nations are Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Marshal Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

secondly, it may be too early to raise the issue of costs. An example of this challenge is geographic breadth of the Pacific community. It is about 10,000km west to east and by about 5,000km north to south with small areas and small population.[7] The costs effectiveness of a parliament would no doubt account for the costs involved.

There are three main ethnic groups in the region as we envisage it – Melanesia, Polynesia and Micronesia. The impact of colonisation has seen the population dynamics change to include European and Asian peoples. There are also sub-regional groupings such as the Melanesian Spearhead group, Micronesia Council of Chief Executives and Association of Small Island States. How these are played out into this idea of regionalism is an important and interesting area, but we also do not have the space and time to engage into these dynamics. An example of this dynamics is the recent suggestion by the Solomon Islands Prime Minister, Gordon Darcy Lilo, for the MSG to consider a regional parliament for Melanesian states.[8]

## III    THE POLITICAL CHALLENGES TO A PACIFIC PARLIAMENT - WEAVING DIVERSITY

A core objective of the Forum was to promote stronger cooperation, collaboration and political cohesion amongst new and emerging political leaders from the South Pacific and to strengthen their relations with New Zealand Parliamentarians. This was seen as something positive for the reason that many leaders in the Pacific have changed and new leaders emerge, and as a result do not know each other as well as the previous generation of leaders such as Michael Somare of Papua New Guinea and Albert Henry of Cook Islands.[9] There have been questions raised as well of the usefulness of present regional initiatives such as the Pacific Island Forum.[10]

There are a number of administrative challenges to bringing together leaders from such a diverse region.

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7    Crocombe, above n 4, at 591.

8    Radio    New    Zealand    International,    20    June    2013    <www.rnzi.com/pages/ news.php?op=read&id=76955(accessed 7 September 2013)>.

9    John Hayes, interview with Radio Australia <www.radioaustralia.net.au/international/radio/ program/pacific-beat/pacific-leaders-gather-in-wellington-to-promote-regional-ties/1118058>.

10   John Hayes, interview with Radio Australia <www.radioaustralia.net.au/international/radio/ program/pacific-beat/pacific-leaders-gather-in-wellington-to-promote-regional-ties/1118058>.

## A  Styles of Government

According to the Institute of Democracy and Educational Assistance (IDEA) electoral systems are viewed as one of the most influential of all political institutions, and of crucial importance to broader issues of governance:[11]

> It is increasingly being recognized that an electoral system can be designed both to provide local geographic representation and to promote proportionality; can promote the development of strong and viable national political parties, and ensure the representation of women and regional minorities; and can help to 'engineer' cooperation and accommodation in a divided society by the creative use of particular incentives and constraints.

It is therefore important to pay close attention to electoral systems. On this point, the Pacific Island Region is one of the most diverse regions in terms of systems of government, often referred to as a "mixing pot" of electoral systems. Electoral systems in the Pacific, as elsewhere, reflect a mix of historical circumstance and political calculation.[12] Appendix 1 to this paper contains a summary of the electoral systems of the Pacific.

The Pacific has been described as a 'natural laboratory' for electoral systems analysis and experimentation. The region includes a constitutional monarchy (Tonga), a state where only customary chiefs or family heads (matai) may stand for parliament (Samoa), and a territory with a cabinet composed of three kings and three members appointed as representatives of the French President (Wallis and Futuna). It includes the only country in the world to adopt a ranked-candidate system of voting (Nauru), one of the few remaining democracies that still uses the single-non-transferable-vote (Vanuatu) and a unique variant on the French-style two round system with multi-member districts and a directly elected president who is nevertheless required to maintain the confidence of parliament (Kiribati). The Pacific also has countries that use the Anglo-American first-past-the-post (plurality in single member districts) and block vote (plurality in multimember districts), and others which use list system proportional representation methods of the sort common in Western Europe.[13] Representatives from each of the countries and territories

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11  <www.idea.int/publications/esd/>.

12  Stephen Levine and Nigel S Roberts "The constitutional structures and electoral systems of Pacific Island States" (2005) 43(3) Commonwealth & Comparative Politics 276-295 - 289

13  Ibid.

One of the goals of sustaining a Pacific Parliament is to learn from each other member's experiences. The diversity of government systems would be an important contribution to enable the process of building on members different challenges.

## B   Challenges of Weaving Together Different Parliamentary Proceedings

How parliamentary proceedings are conducted is an important consideration to sustaining the idea of a Pacific Parliament. There must be a coherent set of guidelines created and adhered to by participants in order for debate to flow efficiently and effectively. The guidelines should be simple and easy to understand. They would most likely be in English and French, the two most widely spoken languages.

Our observations of the debates at the Forum in New Zealand were challenging at times because of the uncertainty of debating protocol and points of order. For example The New Zealand Parliament follows the Westminster tradition of parliamentary practice and procedure, although some aspects of our practice and procedure have been adapted to suit New Zealand requirements. An important part of the Speaker's role is ruling on matters of procedure known as 'Points of order' based on Standing Orders and previously made Speaker's Rulings. Included in these rules are certain powers available to the Speaker to ensure reasonable behaviour by Members of Parliament, including the ability to remove disruptive MPs from the debating chamber.[14]

Understanding the debating protocol is particularly important in a Pacific Parliament. This ensures the Speaker can maintain authority when sensitive issues are discussed and participants understand their rights to speak.

## IV   DETERMINATION OF PARTICIPANTS - WHO CAN ATTEND?

Another challenge to a Pacific Parliament is the determination of participants. The Forum in New Zealand invited all Pacific countries along with leaders from states like Fiji, Tokelau and New Caledonia which do not have parliaments. Invitations were extended to emerging leaders, women and younger parliamentarians.[15] However the nature of a Pacific Parliament is to replicate the proceedings of a national parliament, passing motions in order to make substantive

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14   <www.parliament.nz/en-nz/about-parliament/how-parliament-works/speaker/speakers-role/
      00SpeakAdminSpeakerSpeakersRoleRole1/role-of-the-speaker>.

15   <www.parliament.nz/en-nz/about-parliament/how-parliament-works/relationships/
      00SCOHowPWorksRelationshipsPPF2013_1/pacific-parliamentary-and-political-leaders-forum>.

change. In this sense, the participation from leaders outside of official government or parliament was seen by some participants as inappropriate.

Other participants saw the Forum as a positive arrangement to address ongoing common issues. The Hon Pelenike Tekinene Isaia from Tuvalu neatly articulated the benefit of the Forum for all participants:[16]

> We are a small region in the world, but we can collectively work together hand in hand to address our common issues for the betterment and the future of our people. I believe that this is one of the underlying objectives for having this forum.

In-addition to collective action, the attendance of community leaders and younger politicians can diversify debate and present opportunities that would otherwise not exist.

Perhaps a practical means of responding to this challenge of non-elected leaders participation would be to strictly limit the power to vote on and amend motions to Forum participants who are politicians or government members in their own country, while community leaders and aspiring politicians can only address and observe debate.

This limitation would still allow diversity but has the potential to aid legitimacy to the concept of a Pacific Parliament still in its infancy.

## V    DETERMINATION OF ISSUES DISCUSSED

The way agendas are set for discussion is an important point that will enable likely participants to see the benefit of coming together as it will enable their voices to be heard. The experience at the Forum is worth highlighting.

The Forum held in New Zealand, was a mix of seminars and debates between New Zealand MPs and those from the region. Participants debated a number of issues of significant importance to the Pacific Region. These issues were chosen based on the feedback from Forum participants who were asked about the main social, economic and political factors that were affecting their country.[17] There were a number of resolutions reached from the Forum.[18] They are set out in Appendix 2. But in brief and generally, they relate to the following:

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16   Pacific Parliamentary and Political Leaders Forum: Transcript of debates: Wellington, New Zealand 18 – 22 April 2013, (18).

17   <www.parliament.nz/en-nz/about-parliament/how-parliament-works/relationships/ 00SCOHowPWorksRelationshipsPPF2013_1/pacific-parliamentary-and-political-leaders-forum>.

18   Motions agreed: sourced from Appendix 1: PP outcomes statement <www.parliament.nz/resource/0000262032>. Set out in Appendix 1.

- Gender equality – the need to lift the status of women;
- Climate change and environment – countries should adopt strategies to address climate change;
- The importance of a free and open media to parliaments;
- The importance of parliament to local communities;
- Problems of isolation and delivery of services to remote communities;
- The need to educate people about preventable life-style diseases;
- Global economic outlook in terms of developing sustainable development whilst retaining cultural identity; and
- The role of sound governance in business development and job creation.

The general thrust of the resolutions was that there are common issues in the Pacific and that each member country should make a general commitment to addressing these issues. Whether that will happen or not, is a question that remains to be seen. There are many implementation hurdles such as specific policies of the executive government, resource constraints and corruption. A regional approach to addressing these issues is an ongoing challenge.

Many common issues in the Pacific are being addressed through regional efforts. One of this is the Pacific Island Forums initiative to set up the South Pacific Bureau of Economic Co-operation. Some of these common issues are the tremendous challenges of service delivery and the negative impacts of climate change on small island states and coastal areas of larger islands. On the latter issue of climate change, it may seem that existing regional cooperation is proving incapable of dealing with the issue.

## VI   LEGAL ISSUES

Mike Moore provides a compelling case for a Pacific Parliament from an economic justification and very broadly touches on two models that the Pacific can consider – the European Parliament and the Nordic experience. It was a very general comparison, so a little more detailed analysis is needed to look at the mechanics of a Pacific parliament. There is also the experience of the Caribbean regional effort or Caricom (Caribbean Community), which consists of small island developing states whose experience may be relevant to the Pacific context.

This part of the paper considers some legal challenges that must be overcome to enable the concept to become sustainable.

The development of the term "Parliament" to an institution arose out of the English experience, now known worldwide as the Westminster political system. It has been adopted in many parts of the world including some Pacific island states. The main focus of the Parliament has been in the domestic context of those

countries providing an outlet for democratic expression of views and as a symbol of sovereignty. As a result, to adopt the idea of a Parliament for a regional context questions our understanding of how the term parliament can be used.

Parliament in the traditional Westminster model has two main roles – law-making and holding the executive to account.[19] If a forum such as the recent Pacific Parliamentary and Political Leaders Forum held in Wellington is to evolve into a regional Parliament, the use of the concept of the Parliament should be carefully examined and applied to the specific regional needs of the Pacific. Immediately the twin role of Parliament as law-maker and holding the executive to account may not be a possibility in the short term unless something more permanent like the European Union Parliament is envisaged in the long term.

Yet there are important aspects about the concept of a Parliament that are quite useful. Law-making and keeping the executive accountable, may not be possible at this early stage, but free speech and robust debate in Parliament has powerful persuasive effect. Such an engagement of leaders seems attractive to allow participants to freely debate wide ranging issues.

Parliament is also an expression of sovereignty. So to have a regional parliament would mean in some way, each of the member country considering the question of how such a cooperation will impact on sovereignty and domestic objectives, in terms of the effect of the resolutions reached. Perhaps the best way of dealing with this is through the establishment of a treaty. Such a treaty would then set out to address the various concerns of each member country.

Obviously the first step is for heads of government to commence discussion as a pre-cursor of a constituent assembly, setting the agenda for wide consultation in the region. Consultation ensures political legitimacy and wide acceptance of the outcomes.   Discussions would relate around the objectives, the composition, functions, debating procedures, powers and the secretariat.

The first part of the treaty would be to agree to a set of core principles underlying the treaty. In international law, treaties are usually interpreted in light of their objectives and purposes, providing its context.[20] It would require wide consultation amongst the states in the Pacific to determine general principles considered of importance. Owing to the diversity of the region, culturally, this may

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19  Graham Hassall and Cheryl Saunders *Asia-Pacific Constitutional Systems* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2002) 77.

20  Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, art 31.

perhaps be the start to get the process off the ground. Once the objectives of the Parliament are put in place, a more guided discussion on the terms of the treaty can take place.

After discussing the objectives, a detailed comparative analysis would need to take place of present regional initiatives such as the European parliament and the framework it has to influence domestic political and policy process of member states domestic affairs should be studied to see how it can be adopted to local circumstances. What is important to note is that it evolved as a concept, and was not created in a single moment. For this reason current regional initiative can be evolved. For example the Pacific Island Forum can be considered to provide secretariat support.

If a Pacific Parliament is to be the ultimate objective, regional efforts such as Caricom that began through heads of government cooperation and later adopted a regional parliament may offer useful lessons. The Treaty of Chaguaramas which established the Caribbean Community including the Caribbean Common Market came into effect on 1 August 1973.[21] The Treaty established the Caribbean Community, but the Common Market had a separate identity to the Community and its existence comes as a result of an annex to the Treaty. The Community instrument addressed economic issues, issues of foreign policy coordination and functional cooperation.[22]

The Caribbean initiative of a regional parliament began on August 3, 1994, when the Inter-Governmental Agreement entered into force and consultations began with Barbados to host the Inaugural Session of the Assembly of Caribbean Community Parliamentarians (ACCP). The Assembly consists of representatives of Member States of the Community elected or appointed by their Parliaments. Each Member State is entitled to not more than four (4) representatives at meetings of the Assembly and each Associate Member not more than two (2) representatives.

The objectives of the ACCP are to:[23]

a. to involve the people of the Community, through their representatives, in the process of consolidating and strengthening the Community;

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21  It was signed by Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago on 4 July, 1973, in Chaguaramas, Trinidad and Tobago. There are now 15 members and 4 associate members.

22  Issues of economic integration, particularly those related to trade arrangements, were addressed in the Common Market Annex.

23  Agreement for the Establishment of an Assembly of Caribbean Community Parliamentarians, Article 4.

b. to provide opportunities for involvement in the issues of the integration process by members of Parliament in each Member State and Associate Member, in addition to those who now participate;

c. to provide a forum for people of the Community to make their views known through their representatives;

d. to provide more frequent contact in the monitoring of the policies of the Community;

e. to provide enhanced opportunities for the coordination of the foreign policies of Member States;

f. to promote greater understanding among Member States and Associate Members for the purpose of realising and safeguarding the ideals and principles of democratic governments in the Community and facilitating the economic and social advancements of their peoples;

g. to encourage the adoption by the Governments of Member States of the Community of a common policy on economic, social, cultural, scientific and legal matters deliberated upon by the Assembly.

In carrying out its functions, the ACCP may make recommendations to the Conference, the Council and the various institutions of the Community and the Secretariat.[24] However, the ACCP is not allowed to discuss or adopt resolutions on matters which fall exclusively within the domestic jurisdiction of a Member State or Associate Member of the Community.[25]

The ACCP despite its motivation for democratic expression of views faced many challenges. These were documented in the *Report of the Technical Sub Group on the Assembly of Caribbean Community Parliamentarians*. One of the main findings was the cost implications to sustaining the idea. The Report also insisted that the Assembly continue to have consultative and recommendatory functions. It may suggest to the Pacific from the Caribbean experience that countries with similar geographic and economic conditions view the idea of a regional Parliament as useful, but it does come with financial commitment from member states.

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24  Agreement for the Establishment of an Assembly of Caribbean Community Parliamentarians, Article 5.

25  Caribbean Community Secretariat website <www.caricom.org/jsp/community/accp.jsp?menu=community> (Accessed 31 October 2013).

For regionalism in Europe, the institutional structures of the European Union include the European Parliament, the European Council and the European Court of Justice. Its executive body is the European Commission. It originally began for economic reasons as the European Coal and Steel Community with six (6) countries and evolved to its present state. As an entity it is quite costly, but there are areas where general comparison can be made to help develop the concept for the Pacific. A few points will be made on this later in the paper.

The next major part of the treaty would be to consider the question of membership. Who would become a party to the treaty and would there be any conditions to membership. Would there have to be a commitment to a need for a particular system of government, such as democracy for a state to be a member? Further, should self-governing territories be included? A more contentious issue is self-determination, for example the West Papua and New Caledonia issue. There is at present application to join the Melanesian Spearhead Group by West Papua. There would have to be rules developed around the status of entities intending to be members. There should also be the possibility of a country exiting from membership either voluntarily or as a result of a decision of the parliament.

The question of representation is another significant consideration. The treaty would have to provide for how representatives from each of the member states are sent to attend parliament. They could be directly nominated by the representative bodies of each of the member states. This was suggested by Mike Moore as a possibility.[26] The other related fact would be the number of representation each country would be entitled to.

One important consideration would be the status of the resolutions reached by the parliament. The basic premise would be that states would have a duty of good faith to comply with the resolutions as a result of being a party to the treaty. Several models from other regional groups can be considered for adoption with necessary modifications to suit the requirements of the member states. Would the model of the directives of the European Union be a useful model? This is where the European Parliament issues directives and each member country is required to legislate on the subject with a level of discretion for its local circumstances. The United Nations General Assembly has options to make recommendations, decisions (mainly for internal purposes), organisational resolutions, operational resolutions and declaration of principles, for example the 1948 Universal

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26  Mike Moore, above n 3 at 42.

Declaration of Human Rights.[27] The experience of ACCP is for consultation and recommendations. This is an important issue, as it will deal with the problem of many international forums where much discussion takes place with too little action on addressing issues. Setting out clearly the effect of resolutions reached will help countries see the utility of such an initiative.

## VII  CONCLUSION

This paper considers the challenges that may be faced if the idea of a Pacific Parliament was to be sustained. It considers the political and legal challenges to such a concept. Obviously the diversity in the region, not only in terms of the culture, but the political and legal systems, can present barriers. But on a positive note, it may be that due to these diversities, a common forum is necessary to allow, greater cooperation to deal with common issues. And there are many common issues, as the recent inaugural Pacific Parliamentary and Political Leaders Forum suggested.

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27  Benedetto Conforti *The Law and Practice of the United Nations* (Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, Leiden, 2005) 291-311.

## *APPENDIX 1 DIVERSITY SHOWN IN COUNTRY PROFILES*[28]

| Country | Population | Government | Legislative Branch | Federal/ Unitary | Political Status | Electoral System |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| American Samoa | 69,543 (2011) | Presidential | Bicameral | Unitary | Unincorporated Territory | First Past the Post (FPP) |
| Australia | 21,507,717 (2011) | Parliamentary | Bicameral | Federal | Independent | Single Transferable Vote(STV) |
| CNMI | 53,883 (2013 estimate) | Presidential | Bicameral | Unitary | Unincorporated Dependent Territory Association | FPP |
| FSM | 106,104 (2013 estimate) | Presidential | Unicameral | Federal | Independent | FPP |
| Fiji | 858,038 (2011) | Parliamentary | Bicameral | Unitary | Independent | AV (Alternative Vote) |
| French Polynesia | 267,000 (2011) | Parliamentary | Parliamentary | Unitary | French Territory, Dependent | (List Proportional Representation) List PR |
| Cook Islands | 14,153 (2006 census) | Parliamentary | Unicameral | Unitary | Self-governing in free association | FPP |
| Guam | 182,111 (2011) | Presidential | Unicameral | Unitary | Non-self-governing Territory | Block Vote (BV) |
| Kiribati | 101,093 (2011) | Hybrid | Unicameral | Unitary | Independent | Two-round system (TRS) |
| Marshall Islands | 54,816 (2011) | Hybrid | Unicameral | Unitary | Independent | Hybrid: FPP and BV |
| Nauru | 9,322 (2010) | Hybrid | Unicameral | Unitary | Independent | BV |
| New Caledonia | 25,4024 (2011) | Parliamentary | Unicameral | Unitary | Territory of France (Unique | List PR |

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28  Information Sourced From: Stephen Levine and Nigel S Roberts "The constitutional structures and electoral systems of Pacific Island States, Commonwealth & Comparative Politics" (2005) 43(3) 276-295, 278, and "Pacific Women In Politics": Country Profiles: <www.pacwip.org>.

| | | | | | Status) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| New Zealand | 4,468,200 (2011) | Parliamentary | Unicameral | Unitary | Independent | Mixed Member Proportional System (MMP) |
| Niue | 1,398 (2009) | Parliamentary | Unicameral | Unitary | Self-governing in free association | Hybrid: FPP and BV |
| Palau | 20,956 (2011) | Presidential | Bicameral | Federal | Independent | FPP |
| Papua New Guinea | 7,059,653 (2011) | Parliamentary | Unicameral | Unitary | Independent | Limited Preferential Voting System (LPV) |
| Samoa | 183,874 (2011) | Parliamentary | Unicameral | Unitary | Independent | Hybrid: FPP and PBV |
| Solomon Islands | 552, 267 (2011) | Parliamentary | Unicameral | Unitary | Independent | FPP |
| Tonga | 103,036 (2011) | Monarchical | Unicameral | Unitary | Independent | FPP |
| Tuvalu | 11,200 (2012) | Parliamentary | Parliamentary | Unitary | Independent | FPP |
| Vanuatu | 224,564 (2011) | Parliamentary | Unicameral | Unitary | Independent | Single Non-Transferable Vote (SNTV) |
| Wallis and Futuna | 15,289 (2009) | Hybrid | Unicameral | Unitary | French Island Collectivity | List PR |

## *APPENDIX 2 – RESOLUTIONS REACHED AT THE FORUM*

### *1 Gender Equality*

That steps be taken in all of our countries to lift the status of women in the Pacific to empower them to be active participants in economic, political and social life – we should promote the equality of opportunity for all people in the Pacific region.

### *2 Climate Change and Environment*

That given the challenges Pacific Island countries and especially atoll states face regarding climate change, all countries must adopt strategies to meet the challenges expected to arise from global warming. We acknowledge the importance of reducing imported energy and placing higher reliance on sustainable energy production, for example, solar power generation.

### *3 The Importance of a Free and Open Media to our Parliaments*

That members note that the information technology revolution is penetrating the remotest corners of the Pacific and presents opportunities and challenges – it should be used to promote democracy and the value of a free and open media, and to advance public debate and political accountability.

### *4 The Importance of Parliaments to Local Communities*

That because Parliaments have a key role in supporting the economic and social development of Pacific Island communities, Pacific Island countries take steps to promote stronger engagement and participation as a norm between parliaments and the communities that politicians and community leaders represent.

### *5 Problems of Isolation and Delivery of Services to Remote Communities*

That we acknowledge the vast scope for improving the delivery and the creation of services to small isolated communities, but acknowledge that the internet, phone, scientific advances and regional transport could be better used to help remote communities overcome difficult challenges they may be facing.

### *6 Health*

That given the rapid increase in the proportion of our national budgets, being consumed in the treatment of preventable diseases, that Pacific Governments educate their people to encourage change in their lifestyles so that quality health care especially for communicable, non-communicable, and reproductive and sexual health can be afforded.

## 7  *Global Economic Outlook*

That given our countries' vulnerability to shifts in the global economy, we should take steps to respond to new technology and develop our economy, trade and investment in a manner that ensures sustainable development for Pacific peoples; while still retaining cultural identity and sovereignty.

## 8  *The Role of Sound Governance in Business Development and Job Creation*

That sound governance from our Parliaments is essential to expand sustainable businesses and to create jobs for our young people. We acknowledge the need for balance between the size of our economies, the cost of our political structures, and the size of the public sector.