



REMARKS BY THE ACTING PRIME MINISTER,
HON TUALA TEVAGA IOSEFO PONIFASIO
ON THE OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL TRANSFER OF
DUTIES TO THE NEW HONORARY CONSUL OF GERMANY
TO SAMOA, MR AFOA STEFAN SZEGEDI,
Wednesday 13 November 2024 at 6.30.00pm
Roko's Restaurant, Malifa

Reverend Dr. Siaosi Salesulu
Members of Cabinet
Members of the Judiciary
Members of the Diplomatic Corp
Deputy Head of Mission from the Embassy of Germany in Wellington,
Mrs Winnie Switakowski
Invited Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen
Talofa and Good evening,

It is a pleasure for me to join you this evening in celebration of the official transfer of duties to the newly appointed Honorary Consul of Germany to Samoa. This occasion is even more special as the transfer of duties is from mother to son, from the previous Honorary Consul, Mrs Tagaloa Christa Szedegei to the new Honorary Consul of Germany to Samoa, Mr Afoa Stefan Szedegei.

I would like to acknowledge the presence of Mrs Winnie Switakowski, Deputy Head of Mission of the Embassy of Germany who travelled to Samoa from Wellington for the transfer of duties to the new Honorary Consul of Germany to Samoa. Your presence this evening reaffirms the prominence your country places on the appointments of honorary consuls and how vital their contributions are to your Embassy's work from Wellington.

Honorary Consuls play a significant part in our international relations and even more so in bilateral relations; although not replacing the roles of diplomats; they however facilitate multiple engagements with local communities, commercial and cultural engagements in Samoa. Mrs Szedegei has carried out her duties with diligence in promoting Germany's interests in economic, cultural and educational matters between Samoa and Germany.

The Government of Samoa issued an Exequatur on 26th July 2024 to Mr Afoa Stefan Szegedi, officially recognising him as the new honorary consul of Germany to Samoa and authorising him to perform in Samoa the functions and duties designated by the Federal Republic of Germany. Afoa Stefan is no stranger to the work of the Honorary Consul as he carried out duties of a project manager in previous grassroots assistance from Germany that fostered friendship and cooperation between our two countries.

Samoa and Germany have a shared history and long standing ties dating back to the 1900s. Our two countries have maintained and enjoyed cordial relations since the establishment of diplomatic relations in May 1972. Samoa and Germany are united in the pursuance of our common goals including peace, development and prosperity of our peoples and countries.

Samoa continues to benefit from the assistance through the European Union Development Fund in which Germany is a significant financial contributor for regional development channelled through the Pacific Islands Forum with a focus on climate change challenges.

We acknowledge with appreciation the continuous support by Germany through its Small Grant Programme that funds small-scale projects for NGOs in the areas of health, environment conservation, education and small-scale building renovation works which contribute overall to community development especially in education. Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, I would like to acknowledge the contribution by Mrs. Tagaloa Christa Szegedi as Germany's Honorary Consul in Samoa in the past. I wish her well in her future endeavours.

As one journey ends, one certainly begins and I am confident that Mr Afoa Stefan's appointment as of the new Honorary Consul will bring more opportunities for greater collaboration on matters of mutual interests. I wish you well in the execution of your duties as the new Honorary Consul of Germany to Samoa. Soifua