

14 SEPTEMBER 2021

SAMOA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

**PARLIAMENT PROCEEDINGS FOR THE NEW PARLIAMENT
(PARLIAMENT XVII)**

[The first meeting of the Legislative Assembly was held on the 24th of May 2021, pursuant to the provision stipulated under Article 52 of the Constitution of the Independent State of Samoa. However, only 26 Elected Members of the Faatuatua I le Atua Samoa ua Tasi (FAST) had convened. There was no attendance from the Members of the Human Rights Protection Party.

This change originated from a Proclamation submitted from His Highness the Head of State on the 23rd of May 2021, to revoke his Proclamation presented on the 20th May 2021, for Parliament to convene in its first Sitting.

These steps were undertaken to officially approve the first Sitting of Parliament XVII together with the new Administration in accordance to the Decision made on the 23rd July 2021 by the Supreme Court, and to officially open the first XVII Parliamentary Sitting on the 24th May 2021, and the newly appointed Government that was sworn in on the same day.

TUESDAY, 14 SEPTEMBER 2021

The Legislative Assembly met at 9.32am in accordance to the Message from His Highness, O Le Ao o le Malo received on the 31st of August 2021.

Prayer.

MR SPEAKER: I announce the resumption of Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly on its Parliamentary Term XVII.

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MESSAGE FROM O LE AO O LE MALO

MEMORANDUM for:

Mr Speaker:

Pursuant to Article 59 of the Constitution of the Independent State of Samoa, I hereby give consent to the Legislative Assembly to consider the following Bills:

1. Appropriation Bill 2021/2022.

GIVEN under my hand on this day 13th September 2021.

Signed: Tuimalealiifano Vaaletoa Sualauvi II
O LE AO O LE MALO

NOTICE FROM THE LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Pursuant to Parliament Standing Order 76 I hereby give Notice to the Legislative Assembly for the consideration of the following Bill:

1. Electoral Amendment (No.2) Bill 2021.

GIVEN under my hand on this day Monday 13th September 2021.

Hon. FIAME Naomi Mataafa
LEADER OF THE HOUSE

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NOTICE FROM THE LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Pursuant to Standing Order 100(2) I hereby give Notice to the Legislative Assembly for the consideration of the following Bill given under a matter of urgency:

1. Electoral Amendment Bill No.2 2021.

GIVEN under this 13th day of September 2021.

Hon FIAME Naomi Mataafa
LEADER OF THE HOUSE

**OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS BY MR SPEAKER
NOTICE ON VACANT SEATS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

MR SPEAKER: For the information of Parliament I announce the vacant seats for the following electoral constituencies.

1. Electoral Constituency of Aana Alofi No.2.
2. Electoral Constituency of Aleipata Itupa I Lalo
3. Electoral Constituency of Falealili No.2
4. Electoral Constituency of Falealupo
5. Electoral Constituency of Safata No.2.
6. Electoral Constituency of Sagaga No.2.
7. Electoral Constituency of Sagaga No.4.

For the information of this House, I have in my hand the Warrant of Reports and Rulings of the Supreme Court on the Electoral Petitions relating to the General Elections of the 9th April 2021 for the following Electoral Constituencies:

1. Electoral Constituency of Aana Alofi No.1.
2. Electoral Constituency of Aana Alofi No.2.
3. Electoral Constituency of Aana Alofi No.3.
4. Electoral Constituency of Aana Alofi No.4.
5. Electoral Constituency of Aiga i le Tai.
6. Electoral Constituency of Aleipata Itupa i Lalo.

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Presentation of Papers

7. Electoral Constituency of Anoamaa No.2.
8. Electoral Constituency of Faasaleleaga No.1.
9. Electoral Constituency of Faasaleleaga No.2.
10. Electoral Constituency of Falealili No.2.
11. Electoral Constituency of Falealupo.
12. Electoral Constituency of Falelatai and Samatau.
13. Electoral Constituency of Gagaemauga No.1
14. Electoral Constituency of Gagaifomauga No.2.
15. Electoral Constituency of Lefaga aand Faleaseela.
16. Electoral Constituency of Palauli No.1.
17. Electoral Constituency of Safata No.1.
18. Electoral Constituency of Safata No.2.
19. Electoral Constituency of Sagaga No.2.
20. Electoral Constituency of Sagaga No.4.
21. Electoral Constituency of Salega No.1
22. Electoral Constituency of Siumu.
23. Electoral Constituency of Vaimauga No.1
24. Electoral Constituency of Vaimauga No.3
25. Itumalo Palota o Vaimauga Nu.3

Since the total number of notable members could affect the decisions of Parliament or the required quorum of 51 members. Therefore, 26 members excluding the Speaker must be present to verify a decision by Parliament. However, we now have 7 vacant seats reducing the number of Parliament to 44. The total number that must be present to pass any Legislation in Parliament is 23. Currently there are 25 members in Parliament. These Rules and provisions are stipulated in Section 57 of the Constitution and Standing Order 34.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

The Deputy Clerk read out to the Assembly the sequence of Papers in accordance with S.O.49 (2).

1. S.R.2021/8, Land and Titles Act 2020 – Notice of Commencement (Clause 43 and 44).
2. P.P.2021/2022 No.3, Annual Report of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment 2019/2020.
3. P.P.2021/2022 No.4, Annual Report of the Electric Power Corporation 2019/2020.

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Introductory Statement by the Speaker

4. P.P.2021/2022 NO.5, Annual Report of the Office of the Regulator 2019/2020.
5. P.P.2021/2022 NO.6, Samoa Shipping Services Ltd Statement of Corporate Objectives 2021-2024.
6. P.P.2021/2022 No.7, Annual Report Samoa Shipping Services Ltd 2019/2020.
7. P.P.2021/2022 No.8, Annual Report Accident Compensation Board for the Financial Year 2020.
8. P.P.2021/2022 No.9, ACC Annual Report for the Financial Year 2019/2020.
9. P.P.2021/2022 No.10, Electric Power Corporation Statement of Corporate Objectives 2021-2024

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

MR SPEAKER: Out of courtesy I extend greetings to the distinguished members of Parliament gathered here in good health and also recognising the prayerful support of our people. Our invocation to the heavens have been said for this new dawn in the history of our Independent State of Samoa through its Parliament session today.

Hail this House and this Court, hail the four sides of this House of Samoa, hail Tiafau the Grounds where the grievances of the beloved people are sorted. With respect I am of the view that the flower and the tree are now connected symbolising the grace of God which has enabled the elected paramount chiefs and orators of the country to meet here today. The sacredness and ceremonial salutations of Samoa from east to west.

Hail the court at Maauga and Nuuausala, Malie and Vaitoelau, Hail Lalogaufua, and also Fuifatu and Vaituutuu, Finao and Matia ma MatiaItuau, Hail Faletoi and Vailoa. The origins of the wisdom and vision guarding the Royal families and the royal sons, the oratory group of Tumua and Pule, Ituau and Alataua, Aiga i le Tai and Vaa o Fonoti.

I must also mention the House that was filled with honour and the court Malaetele. Talamoa towards Talisau, the principal courts at Laloifi, Falesau and Faleomavaega which all refers to Laau na amotasi, tootoo o le Faleula and the salutations pertaining to Manuatele. Sua and Vaifanua, Fofu and Aitulagi, Saole and Saleaumua and the Launiu saelua and the Nofo a Maopu.

I acknowledge the support of His Highness O le Ao o le Malo and his good lady, the member of the Council of Deputies and his consort. The Hon Prime Minister and Cabinet and Associate Ministers and the members of Parliament.

I also bid greetings to the Chief Justice and the Judiciary.

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Introductory Statement by the Speaker

I recognise the Governor and Lieutenant Governor and Cabinet, the President and Senate and the Speaker and the House of Representatives, the Chief Justice and the Judiciary of American Samoa.

I accord respect to the Clergy of the various Christian denominations in Samoa, they are the anointed servants of God preaching the good word. They are responsible for evangelising the holy word for the welfare of Samoa. I will not dare make judgement on the unfortunate events that have unfolded as it could possibly be my shortcoming in the end.

But I do feel that we must all show a sense of gratitude to God for He has sheltered us. For despite the troubles we encountered and it is the first time political parties have become embroiled in a fracas. I feel that we must bury the terrible consequences of disaster. Since we are now basking in the glory of blessings from above as we made it through adversity, our ship is now in open waters so to speak due to the grace of the God of all nations. We must rejoice and return praises to our one God who loves us freely, a Living God forever and ever more.

May I say to the dignitaries of Samoa recognising the prayerful support of Samoa our beloved country. The esteem wisdom has been revealed and so blessings is abundance over Afioga Sa'o Faapito and her party Samoa United in Thee becoming the government during this term. I do believe that it is the will of God. My advice is that, and I have no intention of instructing members e le aoaia foi e le matapia le manaia but let us exercise mutual respect. As long as we keep the connection with God, the solution lies with Him. But if we are divided our ship will eventually become unsteady.

I recommend that we move forward striving for progress and success for the sake of our people tuning in. We are after all representatives of the people chosen and composed by God for His glory through our calling. I too am not perfect but constructive results can only be achieved through cooperation.

May I say to the support of the public, right from the titular heads to the least of all people that our hopes and aspirations would be meaningless if it were not for your prayers and loyalty. I applaud and appreciate your prayers and support. You provide stability in times like this, and you are elders with compassion and we are overwhelmed and pleased to finally view the precious stones and the falling stars depicting good fortunes and prosperity. If you have witness shortcomings on our part, we are sincerely apologetic.

But do give us your support because I know that our responsibilities will be successful when you are behind us. May God's grace be upon you and His peace on this Parliament.

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Ministerial Statement by the Hon Prime Minister

Madam Hon Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister and Cabinet and distinguished members perhaps in due course all the members will take their rightful places in this House. Let us all unite in prayer to seek God's providence upon us all so that we may exercise forgiveness and do away with blaming each other. So that we the representatives of our people elected from amongst the many to collaborate in harmony understanding and uniting for the common purpose of achieving prosperity for Samoa. May the Heavens pour blessings upon this Parliament in its 5year journey now starting. May providence be upon the dignitaries present today to witness our proceedings today.

May God's grace be upon the Chief Executive Officers of Ministries and Public Enterprises. Also the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly and staff who are serving Parliament. Only Gods provide totality in everything we do. He is our only refuge helping us with our shortcomings and weaknesses. May we have a constructive sitting today.

The House showed appreciation by clapping their hands after the Introductory Statement by the Speaker.

SPEAKER: This is the opportunity for the Ministerial Statement from the Hon Prime Minister.

I respectfully call upon the Prime Minister for her Ministerial Statement.

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT BY THE HON PRIME MINISTER
Afioga Hon Fiame Naomi Mataafa**

Afioga Hon FIAME NAOMI MATAAFA (Prime Minister): Mr Speaker thank you for the opportunity to make this initial Ministerial Statement during the course of the second sitting of this XVII Parliament. I must firstly concur with the invocation which you have voiced for the love and grace of our Heavenly Father whom our nation is founded upon.

The honorific salutations pertaining to the representatives of the constituencies within this Assembly and the dignitaries throughout all government appointments you have acknowledged. Such are the protocols of the sacred support of Samoa right throughout the spectrum from the most venerable and revere to the young generation.

With the prayerful support of Hig Highness Le Ao o le Malo and the member of the Council of Deputies and the oversight of the Judiciary. The adage pertaining to the inland area of the constituency of Lotofaga is such that, "I stand at the edge of the mountain top but shiver with the overwhelming notable presence."

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Ministerial Statement by the Hon Prime Minister

Our thoughts and concepts evolve from the past and our generation must now continue the mission, whilst our ancestors whom were responsible for our independence and paved the way for us to look on. I salute you all for making the journey for we are now in this XVII Parliamentary term of the Legislative Assembly of Samoa.

The boat that had been making the journey arrives to the boat on shore. Such is the nature of our journey and those who make it. For there are new comers and those from before and the majority giving support. We also take turn with the responsibilities. Mr Speaker this is a unique Parliamentary term and we all see this today with some of the seats of Parliament unoccupied which is unusual from the usual first sittings of parliament in previous terms. It has been over four (4) months since April 9th when the country went to the polls to elect its representatives and choose its government.

This is the first day the sworn in members for the country's significant forum are able to enter this building here at Tiafau. It has been rather difficult to eventuate the results of the general elections in April. It has been over three (3) months since implementing the results of the general elections, to which the courts confirmed 26 seats for the Faatuatua i le Atua ua Tasi Samoa Party and 25 seats for the Human Rights Protection Party. During the ensuing three (3) months an exchange of verbal slander and arguments between political parties were evident:

- (1). A proclamation was issued to add another female member to make up six (6) women members.
- (2). A proclamation was issued for another General Elections to be held and that the results of the general elections that were held on April 9th void.
- (3). Issuance and withdrawal of a proclamation for the convening of Parliament whereby elected members will be sworn in.
- (4). Swearing in of Members and conferring Government positions (Prime Minister and Cabinet) on the 24th May 2021, all of whom are members of the Faatuatua I le Atua Samoa ua Tasi Party.

This very issue was brought before the Court and the decision was made final on the 23rd July, declaring the Faatuatua ile Atua ua Tasi Party as government, as per results of the general elections.

Mr Speaker I will not elaborate on the events I have mentioned. But I will say this, that if it were not for the steadfastness of the law and the other pillar of government which is the Judiciary to which we relied on. After all the Executive Branch had become unstable whilst the Legislative Branch had become marred by politics damaging the process of fulfilling the people's decision through their representatives to decide on a government to rule.

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Ministerial Statement by the Hon Prime Minister

Mr Speaker, the Court ruled to declare the legitimacy of this new government on the 23rd July 2021. The administration of the new government commenced on the 27th July 2021. This is the sixth week of the new government. We began with the new Cabinet opening their offices and continued to meet with staff of their respective Ministries. In addition, was the further administration role of swearing in the Associate Ministers. On the other hand, the Speaker and his deputy have also began their preparations for the continuing of the Legislative Assembly. Preparations for the compilation of the Main Financial Estimates for 2021/2022 began and is the first agenda in our order paper for this sitting.

There were also internal measures concerning the appointed public servants whom were dismissed and with some resigning from the post. Due to reason of not being able to work together because there was no trust. This came about due to the actions which contradicted their roles and responsibilities during the course of various disagreements between the two political parties, all of which ended up in court. I am specifically referring to the Attorney General and the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly. The resignation of the former Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry of Finance was evidently clear. It was not on a basis of poor work ethics but simply his close connection to the former Prime Minister which has disabled him to continue in that role under the new government – conflict of interest. The former Attorney General has been terminated and replaced by Su'a Hellene Wallwork. The matter concerning the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly is to be decided upon and shall be the responsibility of the Honourable Speaker. The resignation of the former Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry of Finance was done through an amicable settlement between himself and the Minister. The Chairman of the Public Service Commission has resigned and so as the Police Commissioner.

I have mentioned these appointments, because these appointments are core positions to which the functioning of government depends on, thus the urgency of the new government to immediately make its decision so as to ensure stability within the new Administration and that operations continue progressing forward.

Mr Speaker the whole world is still confronting COVID-19. The new government continues its defence under the State of Emergency Orders particularly the safeguarding of our borders from air and sea and travels. Immunisation is rolled out to our people. The kindness of our partners - Australia, Japan and New Zealand, Regional Development Organisations and the United Nations is to be applauded. They are responsible for monetary contributions, vaccines and equipment for our front-liners.

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Ministerial Statement by the Hon Prime Minister

Mr Speaker, Samoa Airways is one of the developments that can recover our economy. Our new government is looking into the policies and plans of our new airline established by the previous government for the Airline Company. Economies are fragile due to Covid-19 and is the most difficult time to ascertain whether a development can be upheld. I believe that in the very near future a constructive solution would be sorted for this matter.

Mr Speaker I wish to address the issue of management. There is a government policy to reconsider and enhance the management side of its Three Pillars of government. To solidify the independence of respective pillars in term of their functions. Dialogue on the role of the Legislative Assembly has long been discussed. The same desire has evolved for the Judiciary. With the Executive there is recommendation to return the authority for the Public Service to the Public Service Commission and the independence it once had. The incidents surfaced which has affected public servants with politics resulting from the previous general elections has deemed it necessary to stabilize the public service which is a professional body that serves under any Government from time to time. But we cannot blame the public service if the line between government and political party has become blurred. After all the majority of them have never known any other government other than HRPP, and has been so for 33 years straight. Any Government requires a public service that is well prepared as they execute the functions of government and whom have the experience and expertise the government counts on. Recommendations and implementation is their responsibility. The Government are representatives of the people that lay out policies and makes decisions that is their responsibility. With every duty and responsibility must bound by the authority of the law.

Mr Speaker the history of Faatuatua I le Atua ua Tasi political Party must be noted in Parliamentary records. It is a Political Party formed in Salafai at the beginning of the previous year. It was registered in July 2020 with 51 members that contested the general elections in April this year. It resulted with 24 members making it in Parliament with the 2 independent members taking our number to a 26 majority of the 51 seats of Parliament. This 26 has formed the new Government.

The ceremony of the 24th May 2021 when members of Parliament convened and were sworn in at the front of this building was a remarkable event in the history of our Politics. It was a ceremony held under a tent in which notable lawyers replaced Statutory appointments provided in the Constitution to officiate this service, whom did not attend. The Court have concurred with this ceremony and that is basis of this new government in accordance with the choice of the people from the general election.

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Mr Speaker, I will start with the striking view of the 51 seats not all occupied. We have heard your announcement that members of the HRPP will not be sworn in. I have gathered the reason behind your decision which is due to the fact they do not accept and recognize the group of members of the new Government in which your Honourable is the Speaker and therefore you have the authority to all subjects relating to this Parliament. We had witness the developments of this issue, with the publication of the correspondence between yourself and the leader of the HRPP, Susuga Tuilaepa and it was rather shocking to see the high-mindedness and disparaging statements made towards you. It is as if they are instructing you on how to conduct the swearing in for them, in front of the Head of State and somewhat set up a complete ceremony of convening Parliament and the sworn in of all members. Honorable Speaker, that ship has set sail. Alas! Perhaps they have forgotten the urging of this group for parliament to convene and so as to realise the decision given by the people of the country. Who was responsible for the prevention of Parliament covering? Who was responsible for the members of HRPP elected by their constituencies to not be sworn in? The court gave the HRPP interim government two chances to convene Parliament. They rejected those opportunities. What now? It reminds me of Hamanu and his stick, the seats of these constituencies is in air due to the anxiety to win. Despite losing in an open and comprehensible democratic manner. They have gone on to claim that the Speaker's decision has no legal basis.

But we will simply say this, that Tuilaepa and his group acted in the manner of ants dragging the skins of canes has hauled the law, the dignitaries of government appointments and everyone because of his plans. He has no sense of direction in every phase of life, he has destroyed and influenced the public service and those in contract positions, and also antagonizing people with his publications. He no longer has any compassion.

As far as the law is concern, there is no provision to support the uncertain state he is in with his group. We shall leave that up to you Mr Speaker and perhaps a new dawn for Samoa is looming. So we may attain peace and civility under our customs and traditions which is based on respect and courtesy.

Mr Speaker there will be a 2 legislations to progress through this sitting. The Main Estimates for 2021/2022 will differentiate from the government expenses and provisions of the State of Emergency Orders which the interim government started, and so we shall continue on with the usual Main Estimates for the remaining months of the year now progressing. The statement of the Minister of Finance will elaborate the policies of the new government which will dictate our functions through the allocations of resources.

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The second legislation shall be the amendments to the Electoral Law to enhance the election process particularly the issues surfaced in the recent court cases concerning the illegal conducts during elections which has resulted in by-elections.

Mr Speaker oru calling is to manage its affairs during this Parliamentary Term. I believe that Faatuatua I le Atua ua Tasi is equipped, and is not our doing but of the Lord. Looking back and you will concur with the journey we had taken from the previous yaer, it is impossible to find the wisdom and knowledge in anyone to steer us through the cruel sea so to speak, we had sailed through bringing us here today. My prayer is that our government shall be the instruments of God in which Samoa is founded upon.

May you be blessed Honourable in your role as the head of the Legislative Assembly. Long live Le Ao o le Malo, may the beloved country at large journey in peace.

Soifua and may we blessed.

The House showed appreciation with the round of applause at the conclusion of the Prime Ministers Ministerial Statement.

MR SPEAKER: Thank you Hon Prime Minister for your address, which has been witnessed by the dignitaries of the Assembly and the general public. May God's grace be upon you in the carrying out of your duties.

I call upon the Deputy Prime Minister for the motion.

Afioga Hon TUALA TEVAGA IOSEFO PONIFASO (Deputy Prime Minister): Mr Speaker I respectfully rise to move the following motion as follows:

1. *That the Prime Minister's Ministerial Statement be tabled.*
2. *That all official Hansard Records confirming the election and appointment of the XVII Parliament of Samoa and the new Government be tabled.*

Seconded by the Minister of Agriculture, Minister of Works, Transport and Infrastructure, Minister of Environment and Natural Resources.

Motion was approved.

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APPROPRIATION BILL 2021/2022
– first reading

MR SPEAKER: I call upon the Hon Minister of Finance.

Afioga Hon MULIPOLA ANAROSA ALE MOLIOO (Minister of Finance): Mr Speaker I move *That the Appropriation Bill 2021/2022 be read a first time.*

Secoded by the Minister of Agriculture, Minister of Works, Transport and Infrastructure, Minister of Commerce, Business and Labour.

Motion was approved.

MAIN ESTIMATES 2021/2022
– tabling

MR SPEAKER: I call upon the Hon Minister of Finance.

The Hon Minister of Finance Afioga Mulipola Anarosa tabled the Main Estimates 2021/2022.

APPROPRIATION BILL 2021/2022
– second reading

MR SPEAKER: I call upon the Hon Minister of Finance.

Afioga Hon MULIPOLA ANAROSA ALE MOLIOO: Mr Speaker, I move the motion, *That the Appropriation Bill 2021/2022 be read a second time.*

Secoded by the Minister of Agriculture, Minister of Works, Transport and Infrastructure, Minister of Commerce, Business and Labour.

MR SPEAKER: Budget Address on the Main Estimates 2021/2022. This is the chance for the Budget Statement on the Main Estimate 2021/2022. I call upon the Hon Minister of Finance for your statement.

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BUDGET ADDRESS 2021/2022

Mr Speaker and Honourable Members of Parliament.

Greetings to you Mr Speaker on this beautiful morning.

Greetings also to the Honourable Prime Minister and Honourable Ministers of your Cabinet and all Members of Parliament. I am pleased to greet you all this morning knowing you are all in the best of health.

Sincere greetings to all the people of Samoa watching or tuning in to our Parliament session this morning, not forgetting the people of Tutuila and Manua.

Finally, I send warm greetings to all Samoans living abroad, wherever you are connecting from all over the world, greetings and best wishes to you all.

Mr Speaker, the theme for the Budget 2021/2022 for the new Parliament term is *"Recovery, building resilience and shared prosperity for all the people of Samoa"*.

The new government's mission is summarized as: *"Our Family, Our People, Our Nation, Our Culture and Christian values is our collective responsibility"*

Mr Speaker, unless the Lord builds the house, those who built it labour in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain. Without doubt the lesser is blessed by the greater. It is more blessed to give than to receive. No servant is greater than his master.

Mr Speaker,

As required under Standing Order 131, it is my great honor to present to the House the first Statement on the Estimates for the fiscal year 2021/2022 on behalf of the Government – the first for the FAST Political Party. These estimates represent a transitional budget and is therefore called a **"Budget for Recovery, building resilience and shared prosperity for all the people of Samoa"**

Mr Speaker,

Before I outline the key priority areas of the Budget, I would firstly like to praise and give thanks to God Almighty for his guidance and protection over Samoa as our country continues to remain free from the Covid19 pandemic. A special word of thanks to our development partners for their assistance and kindness shown through vaccination donations and countless other assistances for Samoa and its people. A word of thanks also to our people for their support as seen through the increasing number of those who have begun and completed their vaccinations against the Covid19.

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Budget Address 2021/2022

Acknowledgement is also given to the private sector and public servants who continue to work tirelessly to ensure that our country remains protected from the pandemic.

Mr Speaker,

The first Budget for 2021/2022 required for some time to restructure existing frameworks as well as to reshuffle resources so that Government spending can be directed to ensuring the social wellbeing of Samoa citizens. Protecting Samoa's borders from the Covid19 pandemic however remains a top priority. The Government has also paid close attention to addressing the economic decline resulting from the country's border closures. In essence, the country faced many challenges during the last Parliamentary term, including the political standoff post elections.

It is the belief of the new Government that this Budget will be the starting point from where a more efficient and more directed use of Government resources can be actioned to ensure social harmony and secure shared prosperity for all the people of Samoa. The new administration identified the following key policy outcomes that will support the achievement of this vision:

- i. Improved human development.
- ii. Sustainable economy.
- iii. Trusted governance.
- iv. Secured environment.
- v. Structured public works and infrastructure.

II. MACROECONOMIC OUTTURN AND OUTLOOK

Mr Speaker,

The outlook for this fiscal year under discussion 2021/22 anticipates a slight growth in the economy by 2% should all planned priorities (including targeted assistance to affected sectors, communities and vulnerable groups) outlined within this Budget be implemented successfully.

The fiscal target for total public debt was 40% of GDP in the past. This target now stands at 50% of GDP. The Government's total public debt to date has reached \$1.0 billion, this is equivalent to inherit such high debt but it is committed to start reforms on governance to include public finance management, debt sustainability and fiscal consolidation in general to build adequate fiscal space for 'rainy days' over the medium term.

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The fiscal year 2020/21 estimated a budget deficit of -3.2% of GDP. The Budget currently before the House projects a deficit of only - 2.5% of GDP. The government will continue to collect projected revenue, ensure the efficient allocation of expenditures; improve public sector efficiency and productivity as well as prepare for when emergencies and natural disasters hit.

Mr Speaker,

As I stated earlier, it is the firm belief of the new Government that Samoa's economy can return to and sustain high levels of growth if all citizens work together to develop and improve their own quality of life.

Particularly if development opportunities are increased and efficiently allocated to enable inclusiveness through policies and programmes that will be implemented at the district level directed at securing the socio-economic welfare of our youth, families, communities and churches.

Mr Speaker,

The Budget laid before you includes a set of new policies which can be implemented within the immediate year and have therefore been prioritized by the new Government in line with its manifesto commitments. In essence, the following policies to be resourced in this first Budget seeks not only to address the needs arising from the effects of the Covid19 but to also address the transitioning into a new Government which requires proper forward planning that supports cost effectiveness and successful implementation.

1. Social Well Being

- Senior Citizen's Pension Scheme/Pension
This will be raised from \$160 a month to \$200.
- Disability Benefit Scheme.
This budget includes a provision for this new policy, and all affected Ministries and Corporations of Government have been directed to initiate discussions for new policy and legislative amendments required to ensure that the scheme may be come into effect as soon as possible.
- Housing and Hygiene Development Program
Provisions have been made to ensure that this programme can be continued which targets the upgrade and re-enforcement of housing for those most vulnerable citizens of the country.

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- Assistance to NGO's who provide services to the elderly, those with disabilities and other special needs;
Organisation who provide specific and special services to those most vulnerable within the country as previously mentioned will get this annual assistance from the Government to ensure their services continue to expand to cover more citizens.
- Assistance to NGO's as part of government's priority to combat violence against women.

About 52.3% of women aged 15-49 years (more than half of the women population) report having experienced physical, emotional and /or sexual violence by an intimate partner. Grants can be given out to these organization not only to help develop and improve their programs and community support but also to build a relationship with the government and to acknowledge the important work they do for our community and country.

- Assistance to Civil Society Organisations combatting the incidence of NCD's;
Provisions have also been made to give out assistance to help these organisations who are working at the grassroots level raise awareness, provide hand holding support and on the ground activities to reduce the incidence of NCDs in the country noting that just over 50% of children and adolescents aged 5 to 19 are now overweight, females obesity rates tripled more than 55% and a quarter of adults now have diabetes.

2. Strengthening Health Services

- Meals Services for Inpatients
The provision for hospital meals has been increased to cover all inpatient care across the country.
- District Hospitals
Works have already begun to roll out the repair and refurbishment of all district hospitals as well as clinical staff residency to secure improved healthcare at the community level;

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- District Hygiene and Health Committees
The Government will invest in ensuring the Committees are trained and equipped to guide and lead health promotion programmes at the community level.
- Repairs, Maintenance and Supervision at the TTMH Hospital Motootua.
Provisions have been made to outsource some of these works to ensure that the hospital conditions are improved;

3. Education

- Teacher's Salaries
The One Government Grant has been increased and maintained at the Stimulus Level with plans in place to restructure the distribution of the assistance to cover salaries whilst the relevant Government agencies, work on how best to mainstream all the country's teachers under the Government payroll.
- Sports Development
The Government's usual annual assistance for sports development has been increased and the Ministry of Education are now working at reviewing the policy to ensure that these funds are not just for international representation but also for local development.

4. Community Empowerment

- An appropriation has been made for the capacity building and support of Non Government Organisations involved in the empowerment of youth, women and spiritual development.

5. Agriculture and Fisheries

- Exports
Funds have been allocated towards the revival of discussions around and the establishment of a National Export Authority under the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries to assist local farmers in connecting with overseas markets. This is to promote not just local agricultural products but also value added products that are sourced from Samoa's agricultural resources.

*14 SEPTEMBER 2021***Budget Address 2021/2022****6. Business Innovation and Growth**

- Assistance to Business

Provisions have been made for a one-off assistance to those businesses who have been affected by the COVID19 border lockdowns and emphasis will be placed on Small to Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs). The assistance is to include the hospitality related services.

7. Strengthening the Tourism Industry

- Assistance to Hotel Operators

An appropriation has also been made to provide a one-off assistance for hoteliers who have been affected by the COVID19 border lockdowns.

8. Enhancing the development of communities

- To enhance the development of communities, initial work will focus on establishing appropriate governance and operational frameworks to prepare the district councils for implementation of their development plans.

- Salary increase for village mayors - their duties have increased over the years however they have not received any salary increase for ten (10) years now.

9. Strengthening Legislative Framework

- Legislation Reviews

Appropriations have been made to assist in preparation and review of the Constitution of the Independent State of Samoa.

10. Improving Accountability

- Public Finance Management Systems

Appropriations have also been made to hire technical experts to conduct a full forensic audit of the Government's financial systems;

11. Environment

- Forest Development

An appropriation has been made to resource the replanting of all of the country's rainforests.

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Budget Address 2021/2022**12. Strengthening Public Utility Services**

- Price of Electricity and Water

To further assist the country's recovery, electricity and water prices will be reduced by 20% effective 1 November 2021.

- Improve the Climate Resilience of Manono and Apolima Coastlines There is a provision for a feasibility study to assess the works required to improve the resilience and security of coastline communities on both small islands as well as repair and improvement works for their docking bays.

- **13. Broadening the Use of Technology**

- Internet Access for Schools

Funds have been set aside to pilot free internet access for select schools to assist both teachers and students in academic studies;

- **14. Fees and Charges of Government**

Selected fees and charges on specific services of the Government will be reduced by 20% to assist the country during the COVID19, these are:

- i. Registration for private vehicles;
- ii. Business licenses;
- iii. National Examination Fees;
- iv. Lands and Titles Courts fees and charges;
- iv. Consultation fees and the National Hospital;
- v. Alia licenses;
- vi. Passport fees and charges;
- vii. Building permits.

IV. BUDGET AGGREGATES

Mr Speaker,

I would now like to highlight the key components of the 2021/22 Budget:

<u>Receipts</u>	\$ 876,362,251.89
Ordinary Receipts	\$ 635,147,203.03
External Grants	\$ 241,215,048.86
<u>Expenditures</u>	\$ 982,580,130.08
Statutory Expenditures	\$ 109,570,916.06

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Expenditure Programmes	\$700,213,021.42	
Unforeseen Expenditures	\$21,006,390.64	
Development Expenditures		\$ 151,789,801.95
Cash (Deficit)/Surplus		\$ (106,217,878.19)
Financed by:		
Soft Interest rate	\$	2,193,766.21
Movement in Cash Balances		\$ (104,024,111.98)

The 2021/22 financial year Main Estimates is expected to record an overall deficit of approximately \$106.2million. Under the Government Finance Statistics (GFS)1 format, this results in a deficit of \$53million tala or 2.5% of GDP.

V. REVENUE MEASURES

Mr Speaker,

Total Receipts for the Government is expected to increase by 3% in the fiscal year 2021/22 due primarily to the noticeably high collections noted for taxations despite the economic effects of the COVID19.

Ordinary Receipts of Government which include both Taxation and Non Tax Revenues are projected to increase by 7%.

As the honorable members are aware, estimated **Taxes** were reduced in the fiscal year 2020/21 due to the anticipation that a prolonged pandemic would eventually affect trade schedules for supply ships into the country.

However, throughout the course of the fiscal year collections on tax revenues remained high and therefore the projections for the new fiscal year 2021/22 have been raised by 11%.

Non Tax Revenues are expected to drop by 26% in line with the plans to reduce some fees and charges of Government as already stated.

Grants are estimated at 6% lower than the previous year attributed largely to a reduction in budget support as the majority of these were for the COVID19 efforts of Government in 2020/21.

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Budget Address 2021/2022**VI. EXPENDITURE PRIORITIES (FINANCED FROM GOVERNMENT'S OWN REVENUE)****Mr Speaker,**

The aggregated total expenditures for the fiscal year 2021/22 is estimated to be \$982,580,916. This total includes development programmes sourced by the country's donors which is estimated to increase by 0.6% when compared to 2020/21.

The slight increase in the Government's expenditures despite the many new priorities and programmes included in the budget is a reflection of the Government's ability to effectively reshuffle and reprioritize existing programmes to ensure that resources are efficiently rediverted to the new priority areas at the same time provide stimulus measures with better targeting and use.

Mr Speaker,

I will now outline the details of the estimates for each Ministry for the fiscal year 2021/22:

1. Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries - \$14,467,881

- \$12,075,171 for outputs delivered by the Ministry
- \$2,392,709 for Transactions on behalf of the State

Large expenditure items included in the Transactions on Behalf of State are:

- \$140,437 as Government's counterpart to the Agricultural Development Project;
- \$50,000 for the Animal Protection Society;
- \$250,000 for the establishment of the National Export Authority;
- \$500,000 for the Annual Agriculture Show;

2. Scientific Research Organisation of Samoa - \$5,715,385

- \$5,474,441 for outputs delivered by the Ministry
- \$240,944 for Transactions on Behalf of State.

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Budget Address 2021/2022**3. Ministry for Commerce, Industry and Labour - \$7,811,255**

- \$5,453,543 for outputs delivered by the Ministry.
- \$1,907,713 for Transactions on Behalf of State.

Large expenditure items included in the Transactions on Behalf of State are

- \$450,000 as grant to the Samoa Business Enterprise Centre
- \$250,000 annual assistance for the Private Sector
- \$178,000 for the Government's Apprenticeship Programme
- \$124,021 for the E-Registry Database.

4. Samoa Tourism Authority - \$19,897,810

- \$7,193,161 for outputs delivered by the Ministry;
- \$12,704,649 for Transactions on Behalf of State.

Large expenditure items included in the Transactions on Behalf of State are:

- \$5,493,560 for a targeted Marketing and Promotion strategy;
- \$5,000,000 Assistance to Operators;
- \$200,000 for the usual National Tourism Awareness program of the Authority;
- \$400,000 for the Agro Tourism Park

5. Ministry of Communication and Information Technology - \$8,817,852

- \$2,936,881 for outputs delivered by the Ministry;
- \$5,880,971 for Transactions on Behalf of State;

Large expenditure items included in the Transactions on Behalf of State are:

- \$1,120,128 for the Samoa National Broadband Highway (SNBH) Co-location;
- \$246,510 for the SNBH Spectrum Fees;
- \$315,000 being electricity bills for the SNBH;
- \$525,012 for the CSL Monthly Management fee on the SNBH
- \$300,000 for the refurbishment of a studio for the Digital TV programs of the Government;

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- \$2,000,000 provisions to pilot free access to the internet for specific schools;

6. Office of the Regulator - \$2,365,630

- \$1,977,831 for outputs delivered by the Ministry;
- \$387,799 for Transactions on Behalf of State;

7. Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture - \$105,877,332

- \$77,052,578 for outputs delivered by the Ministry;
- \$10,008,434 for Transactions on Behalf of State;
- \$1,090,000 for Sports Development distributed as follows:
 - \$500,000 for general Sports Development;
 - \$350,000 for the Samoa Rugby Union;
 - \$50,000 for the Special Olympics team;
 - \$150,000 for the Samoan Netball Association;

Large expenditure items included in the Transactions on Behalf of State are:

- \$300,000 for Sports Fields construction;
- \$1,500,000 for the Teachers' Higher Education Scheme;
- \$4,670,170 for the implementation of the Education Sector Support Program (Budget Support);
- \$285,454 for the Samoa Language Commission;
- \$472,662 for the Samoa National Archives and Records Authority.

8. Samoa Qualifications Authority \$5,676,728

- \$2,996,117 for outputs delivered by the Ministry;
- \$2,680,611 for Transactions on Behalf of State.

Large expenditure items included in the Transactions on Behalf of State are

- \$2,338,832 for the implementation of the Authority's obligations under the Education Sector Support Program (Budget Support);

9. Samoa Sports Facility Authority - \$2,531,743

- \$2,407,051 for outputs delivered by the Ministry;
- \$124,692 for Transactions on Behalf of State;

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Budget Address 2021/2022**10. National University of Samoa - \$28,585,128**

- \$24,606,400 for outputs delivered by the Ministry;
- \$3,978,728 for Transactions on Behalf of State;

Large expenditure items included in the Transactions on Behalf of State are:

- \$3,280,518 for the implementation of the Authority's obligations under the Education Sector Support Program (Budget Support);

11. Ministry of Finance - \$101,485,066

- \$15,227,121 for outputs delivered by the Ministry;
- \$86,257,945 for Transactions on Behalf of State.

Large expenditure items included in the Transactions on Behalf of State are:

- \$300,000 for the Independence Day celebrations;
- \$680,318 as counterpart to the OPEC/Petroleum Tank Farm;
- \$200,000 as counterpart to the ADB's Agri-Business Project;
- \$250,000 for the Pacific Disaster Risk Insurance Premium;
- \$144,291 as counterpart to the World Bank's Pilot Programme for
- Climate Resilience;
- \$750,000 as counterpart to the ADB/World Bank's Samoa
- Connectivity Project;
- \$100,000 as counterpart to the World Bank's West Coast Road
- Project;
- \$500,000 as counterpart to the ADB's Samoa Port's
- Development
- Project;
- \$100,000 as counterpart to the construction of the Samoa Police
- Academy;
- \$100,000 as counterpart to the Chinese funded Friendship Park;
- \$100,000 as counterpart to the Chinese funded Cultural Centre;
- \$100,000 as counterpart to the Samoa Climate Resilient
- Transport

MR SPEAKER: I interrupt the statement of the Hon Minister of Finance. I trust this is the opportunity to take a rest as you have been upstanding too long.

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Since we have arrived at our recess hour, you will resume your remarks when we come back from our break.

I announce that Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly be set aside for our normal recess.

Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly suspended for normal recess at 11:00am and resumed at 11:44am.

The Budget Address 2021/2022 of the Hon Minister of Finance now resumed.

MR SPEAKER: I trust that Parliament has been invigorated from our normal recess to resume our works.

Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly set aside for normal recess when the Hon Minister of Finance was giving her Statement on the Main Budget. So this is the chance for me to call upon the Hon Minister of Finance to resume her speech.

Afioga Hon MULIPOLA ANAROSA ALE MOLIOO: Thank you honorable Speaker. New energy and strength has been restored from our normal recess. Thank you to the Legislative Office.

During recess Parliament was at the appropriation for the Ministry of Finance.

- Project;
- \$2,650,000 for the usual expenses of the Government bowser;
- \$4,201,551 for Insurance on Government Assets;
- \$711,000 for Computer Software license payments;
- \$410,000 for Network Fees and Maintenance;
- \$500,000 for the Ministry's Vulnerable Scholarship Scheme;
- \$3,000,000 for the Disability Benefit Scheme;
- \$200,000 as counterpart to the ADB System Strengthening for Effective Coverage of new Vaccines in the Pacific;
- \$150,000 as counterpart to the Phase II of the Samoa Parliamentary Complex Rehabilitation Project;
- \$500,000 as counterpart to the ADB Central Cross Island Road Upgrade Project;
- \$2,000,000 for the Government's Shelter and Hygiene Facilities Programme;

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- \$33,388,308 for the Senior Citizens' Benefit Scheme;
- \$3,500,000 for Import Duty on Aid and Loan Funded Projects;
- \$4,940,000 for VAGST on Aid and Loan Funded Projects;
- \$200,000 for VAGST and other remaining payments on Phase I of the Samoa Parliamentary Complex Rehabilitation Project;
- \$10,000,000 allocated to private sector assistance with emphasis on small to medium size (COVID19 Assistance);
- \$250,000 to assist in improving the Annual Reporting of State Owned Enterprises;
- \$1,000,000 as grants assistance for organisations who lobby for ending violence against women and children;
- \$1,000,000 as grants assistance for organisations who implement programmes and projects to combat NCD's;
- \$1,000,000 capital injection for Development Bank of Samoa.
- \$1,000,000 capital injection for STEC;
- \$250,000 for a full forensic accounting assessment of the Government's financial systems;

12. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade - \$22,979,753

- \$19,702,562 for outputs delivered by the Ministry including provisions for all overseas missions;
- \$3,277,190 for Transactions on Behalf of State;

Large expenditure items included in the Transactions on Behalf of State are:

- \$150,000 for the Preparations for the CHOGM 2022;
- \$150,000 for the Meeting of the Pacific ACP-EU IEPA Trade Committee;
- \$150,000 for the Pacific Labour Mobility Annual Meeting;
- \$300,000 for the Summit on the signing of the EU-ACP Samoa Agreement Post Cotonou Signing);

13. Ministry for Health - \$126,715,844

- \$80,752,054 for outputs delivered by the Ministry;
- \$37,438,790 for Transactions on Behalf of State;

Large expenditure items included in the Transactions on Behalf of State are:

- \$2,000,000 for the Returning Graduates program;

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- \$1,200,000 for the Plumbing System Preventative Maintenance Services;
- \$3,949,144 for the implementation of obligations under the World Bank's Programme for Results;
- \$116,000 as counterpart for the Health Sector Program;
- \$2,000,000 for Bulk Food to cater to hospital inpatients;
- \$4,600,000 as consumables and reagents for the Pathology Lab;
- \$852,287 for Dental Health medical consumables;
- \$3,000,000 for the Pharmacy's consumables;
- \$6,000,000 for the Supply of Pharmaceuticals;
- \$590,000 for vaccine supplies;
- \$145,000 for the supply of XRay films;
- \$3,000,000 for the refurbishment of rural (district) hospitals and doctors' residence;
- \$600,000 for Security Services for the main hospitals;
- \$360,000 for lawnmowing contracts;
- \$2,000,000 for commercial cleaning contracts for the hospitals;

14. Samoa National Kidney Found - \$9,046,544

- \$5,588,977 for outputs delivered by the Ministry;
- \$3,457,567 for Transactions on Behalf of State.

Large expenditure items included in the Transactions on Behalf of State are:

- \$2,850,000 for overseas medical supplies;
- \$200,000 for refurbishments required for the new reverse osmosis;

15. Ministry for Justice and Courts Administration - \$16,667,214

- \$12,363,410 for outputs delivered by the Ministry;
- \$4,303,804 for Transactions on Behalf of State.

Large expenditure items included in the Transactions on Behalf of State are:

- \$250,000 for Legal Aid;
- \$200,000 for the Re-roofing of the Courthouse;
- \$325,543 for Surveying of Boundaries for Customary Lands;
- \$2,000,000 for the construction of the Savaii Courthouse;
- \$350,000 for the Establishment of a Community Law Centre;

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- \$100,000 for the Court of Appeal;

16. Ministry for Natural Resources and Environment - \$25,867,242

- \$13,096,792 for outputs delivered by the Ministry;
- \$12,770,450 for Transactions on Behalf of State.

Large expenditure items included in the Transactions on Behalf of State are:

- \$4,221,355 for Waste Management Service Contracts;
- \$2,000,000 for Land Compensation;
- \$164,100 for Sludge Mainenance Contracts;
- \$1,000,000 for the National Forest Replanting initiative;
- \$205,000 Customary Land Advisory Commission;
- \$245,000 for Lawn Maintenance;
- \$388,300 for Public Toilet Maintenance and Cleaning;
- \$100,000 for the rents and leases of the Pacific Water and wastewater office;
- \$160,000 for the Technical Assistance/Professional Service;
- \$150,000 for the Rainfall Harvesting Program;
- \$400,000 as Land Compensation – Water Sector;
- \$200,000 for the maintenance and upkeep of the Friendship Park;
- \$500,000 Roads for Land Board Leased Lands;

17. Ministry of Police and Correction Services - \$37,765,534

- \$34,314,488 for outputs delivered by the Ministry;
- \$3,451,046 for Transactions on Behalf of State;

Large expenditure items included in the Transactions on Behalf of State are:

- \$160,000 for officers sent to Overseas Peacekeeping Missions;
- \$900,000 for Police Uniforms;
- \$300,000 for purchase of license plates and stickers;
- \$450,000 for Bulk Food supplies for the Prisoners;
- \$150,000 for the purchase of Uniforms and personal protection for Corrections Officers;
- \$102,200 for the Town Cleaning Project for Prisoners;
- \$100,000 to retain a doctor for the Prisoners;

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- \$100,000 for lawnmowing maintenance contracts for Police HQ and select Outposts;

18. Fire and Emergency Services Authority - \$10,613,030

- \$10,073,628 for outputs delivered by the Ministry;
 - \$539,402 for Transactions on Behalf of State;
- Large expenditure items included in the Transactions on Behalf of State are:
- \$200,000 for uniforms.

19. Ministry of the Prime Minister - \$10,145,941

- \$7,631,791 for outputs delivered by the Ministry;
 - \$2,514,150 for Transactions on Behalf of State;
- Large expenditure items included in the Transactions on Behalf of State are:
- \$261,223 for the Immigration Support Systems;
 - \$710,000 for Purchase of New Passports;
 - \$150,000 grant to the Samoa Returnees Charitable Trust;

20. Ministry for Customs and Revenue - \$13,431,913

- \$10,718,805 for outputs delivered by the Ministry;
 - \$2,713,109 for Transactions on Behalf of State.
- Large expenditure items included in the Transactions on Behalf of State are:
- \$250,000 for the ASYCUDA Support Mechanism;
 - \$681,155 for DataTech International;
 - \$125,000 for the Collection Enforcement Assistance;
 - \$184,920 for the Automated Exchange of Information Systems;

21. Ministry for Women, Community and Social Development - \$24,984,980

- \$10,482,547 for outputs delivered by the Ministry;
 - \$14,502,433 for Transactions on Behalf of State;
- Large expenditure items included in the Transactions on Behalf of State are:
- \$400,000 for the Fuataga o le Ie Samoa annual exhibit;
 - \$100,000 as support for the Independent Water Scheme Association;
 - \$150,000 for National Beautification Activities & Awards;
 - \$2,100,000 as support to the Komiti Tumama for all villages;

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- \$250,000 for capacity support to the National Council of Churches, National Youth Council and the National Women's Council (NGO Capacity Support Programme);
- \$11,000,000 for the District and Community Programming and Scoping;

22. Ministry for Works, Transport and Infrastructure - \$21,368,325

- \$5,201,841 for outputs delivered by the Ministry;
- \$926,845 for Transactions on Behalf of State;

Large expenditure items included in the Transactions on Behalf of State are:

- \$250,000 for the Improved Coastal Resilience of Apolima and Manono;

23. Land Transport Authority - \$46,912,488

- \$38,409,880 for outputs delivered by the Ministry;
- \$8,502,608 for Transactions on Behalf of State;

Large expenditure items included in the Transactions on Behalf of State are:

- \$3,000,000 for the Fugalei Road Rehabilitation;

24. Office of the Attorney General - \$5,367,508

- \$4,653,527 for outputs delivered by the Ministry;
- \$713,981 for Transactions on Behalf of State;

25. Office of the Auditor General - \$4,107,581

- \$3,421,011 for outputs delivered by the Ministry;
- Third Party Outputs
 - \$100,000 for the establishment of an Anti Corruption Authority;
- \$586,570 for Transactions on Behalf of State;

26. Office of the Electoral Commissioner - \$3,192,962

- \$2,609,216 for outputs delivered by the Ministry;
- \$583,747 for Transactions on Behalf of State.

Large expenditure items included in the Transactions on Behalf of State are:

- \$200,000 for Election Commission of Enquiries;

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Budget Address 2021/2022**27. Office of the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly - \$7,333,917**

- \$5,822,906 for outputs delivered by the Ministry;
- \$1,511,011 for Transactions on Behalf of State;

Large expenditure items included in the Transactions on Behalf of State are:

- \$250,000 for the Constitution Review;
- \$200,000 grant for political parties;
- \$175,000 for the Parliamentary Education and Engagement Program;
- \$170,000 for the Parliamentary Institutional Strengthening Program.

28. Office of the Ombudsman - \$1,483,635

- \$1,216,466 for outputs delivered by the Ministry;
- \$222,169 for Transactions on Behalf of State;

29. Public Service Commissioner - \$8,525,285

- \$4,464,907 for outputs delivered by the Ministry;
- \$4,060,379 for Transactions on Behalf of State;

Large expenditure items included in the Transactions on Behalf of State are:

- \$277,579 for the Remuneration Tribunal;
- \$165,376 for the Human Resource Module License;
- \$3,200,000 for Government Scholarships;

30. Samoa Bureau of Statistics - \$6,064,345

- \$4,328,462 for outputs delivered by the Ministry;
- \$1,735,883 for Transactions on Behalf of State;

Large expenditure items included in the Transactions on Behalf of State are:

- \$1,000,000 for the Population Census;

31. Law Reform Commission - \$1,499,474

- \$1,239,506 for outputs delivered by the Ministry;
- \$259,968 for Transactions on Behalf of State;

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Budget Address 2021/2022**32. Ministry for Public Enterprises - \$3,158,808**

- \$2,536,639 for outputs delivered by the Ministry;
- \$622,169 for Transactions on Behalf of State.

VII. UNFORESEEN EXPENDITURES

The estimated Unforeseen Vote for the fiscal year 2021/22 is \$21million based on the Ministries' expenditure programmes.

VIII. OTHER EXPENDITURE PRIORITIES (EXTERNALLY FINANCED)**Mr Speaker,**

The Government continues to receive development partner support to finance additional development projects and programmes through cash grants and concessional lending. Total externally financed projects and programmes for the FY2021/22 is estimated to reach \$243.4 million. Out of this amount, \$241.2 m comprise of cash grants - key focus sectors earmarked to benefit from grants include Finance sector (\$81.3m) - majority is budget support assistance through the joint policy action matrix supported by multiple development partners and to assist government with covid19 efforts and stimulus; Transport/Infrastructure (\$62 m), Agriculture 22 (\$23.8 m), Health Sector (\$19.45m), Environment (\$18.6m), Education (\$11.95 m), Multisector (\$9m), Communication Sector (\$5.2 m), Community and Development and Civil Society (\$4.8 m), Law Justice (\$1.97m) and Tourism (\$1.0 m). The only soft term loan will finance a key priority in the energy sector (\$2.19m).

Estimated grant receipts for FY2021/22 is expected to slightly drop by 6% compared to FY2020/21 due to one-off assistance received for COVID-19 preparation and the closure of some projects/programmes that are now completed. Estimated lending for FY2021/22 is estimated to drop by 81% compared to FY2020/21.

IX. EMERGENCY BUDGET TO OPERATE GOVERNMENT SERVICES FOR THREE (3) MONTHS OF FISCAL YEAR 2021/2022 (1 JULY – 30 SEPTEMBER 2021)**Mr Speaker,**

As a result of Parliament not convening due to the political standoff post elections in April 2021, a budget was not tabled in Parliament as required. Expenditure in anticipation of appropriation under article 95 of the Constitution should have been applied to ensure essential services for the continuance of any services of government until an Appropriation Bill becomes law.

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Motion for Suspension of Standing Orders.

However the former administration had already approved the use of articles 105, 106 and 93 of the Constitution of the Independent State of Samoa to authorize payments out of the Treasury Fund for emergency under a Warrant signed by the Head of State of Samoa. The government decided to continue with this emergency budget arrangement to avoid disruption to government essential operations and public service delivery but shall not exceed an amount equal to one-fourth or 25% of the total budget payment approved in the Appropriation Act for the preceding year.

This 2021/22 Main Estimates include the government's three (3) months emergency budget (1 July – 30 September 2021), expenditure authorized for the three (3) months was paid out using a series of warrants that were signed by the Head of State.

X. CONCLUSION

Mr Speaker,

This 2021/22 Budget is the first for the FAST Government and even though the journey has been a challenging one it is the end result of the combined efforts and cooperation of all Ministries and Corporations of Government and clearly illustrates the belief this journey of the XVII Parliament of Samoa is to be made with a vessel that is built by all.

Despite the many challenges our country continues to face, what is evident in this Budget is that it paves a new beginning through reprioritization and identifying cost efficiencies that is conducive to the improved social welfare of all Samoan citizens. It also marks a new era for Samoa and its Parliament. It therefore humbles me greatly, on behalf of the first ever female Prime Minister of Samoa and the Government to commend the 2021/22 to the House.

Soifua ma ia Manuia.

The House showed appreciation and gave a round of applause at the conclusion of the Statement of the Hon Minister of Finance.

MR SPEAKER: Thank you to the Minister of Finance for her Budget Address.

MOTION FOR SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

MR SPEAKER: I call upon the Madam Prime Minister for the motion.

14 SEPTEMBER 2021

**Appropriation Bill 2021/2022
– debate on second reading**

Afioga Hon FIAME NAOMI MATAAFA: Mr Speaker, the distinguished House and the supporting Samoa listeners in its dignity and the stage of our proceedings this morning. I have no intention of referring to it as it is quite understood from the Ministerial Statement and my initial address today.

The essence for me and that of the Government is to progress with the implementation of our roles and responsibilities in which we were elected by the country through this Budget. This Assembly and the country understands that the Budget currently in progress will cease effect at the end of this month.

As such, I move, *That Part of Standing Order 133 which provides for the presentation of the Main Estimates to the Finance and Expenditure Committee for its consideration be suspended, to allow the debate upon the second reading of the Main Estimates tabled before Parliament and to resume with the detailed consideration and the third reading.*

Seconded by the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Agriculture, Minister of Works, Transport and Infrastructure, Minister of Commerce, Business and Labour.

Motion was approved and Standing Order 133 was set aside.

**APPROPRIATION BILL 2021/2022
– debate on second reading**

MR SPEAKER: Pursuant to Standing Order 133 debate shall continue on the Appropriation Bill 2021/2022.

For the information of distinguished members you must keep your remarks on the budget and the state of the country's economy.

The normal advice for the members is that you make general remarks and not to speak on each item particularly in relation to the financial policies of the Government.

Therefore, this is the opportunity for a member to take the floor. I call upon the Deputy Speaker the member for Aiga I le Tai.

MAIDEN SPEECH

Afioga AUUAPAAU MULIPOLA ALOITAFUA (Deputy Speaker, Aiga i le Tai): I had been eagerly awaiting the Lord and He heard my pleas and salvaged me from the den where I was curse in a place of filth. He set my feet upon a rock and made sure I would walk.

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**Appropriation Bill 2021/2022
– debate on second reading**

My loins were wrapped with dance, you tore your girth in shreds and embraced me with joy. I am overwhelmed with happiness Mr Speaker thank you for the opportunity.

I will firstly acknowledge the dignitaries of this House. It is a fact concerning the sea that it is eerie due to its frightening occurrences. I extend greetings to the elected Prime Minister of Samoa, a first female elected Prime Minister in the Pacific. Afioga Sao Faapito representing the Salevalasi clan and the well-known Sitagata, when the throne is vacant you have all the rights to become Tuiatua.

I convey greetings also to the Deputy Prime Minister and Ministers of Cabinet, Associate Ministers of the designated government. Thank you God for our gathering here today. The God of Jacob the God of this Parliament now in session. Praise God for His mercy and kindness. It is true that God's praises remain forever more.

I acknowledge the chosen servants of God throughout the various denominations, pleading unto God for his will to be done. Thank you for your prayers to ensure tranquillity and prosperity for Samoa.

I recognise the Chief Executive Officers of Ministries and Corporations attending our session today. I also recognise the business community and members of the public present.

Greetings to Le Ao o le Malo Afioga Tuiaana Tuimaleaalifano Sualauvi II for even though we are unable to be with your Good Lady today. I extend the same to the Member of the Council of Deputies and his consort. I bid greetings to the Chief Justice and the Judiciary for your role presiding over our court system.

I will not forget to acknowledge our brothers in American Samoa and their Government with the Honourable Governor, the Lieutenant Governor and members of the two Houses. I respectfully acknowledge their ceremonial salutations.

I cannot overlook but must acknowledge the dignitaries of this House whom are unable to attend today. The solid foundations established by our ancestors and forebearers whom have passed on.

The fact is I am overwhelmed and tempted to speak in respect due to the glorious outcome of today. Such glory pertains to the royal sons and their royal families, our royal families connected to all four titular titles.

Samoa is a very complex nation since the sea and our coastal waters explains in oratory jargon the praises concerning ceremonial salutations which no one can master. We are gathered here today because of the grace of God. We are basking in the glory of our Maker as He has blocked adversities and allowed peace and goodwill.

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This House is overwhelmed with pride and dignity. Tiafau is the principal court where the people grievances are sorted, and is where our political affairs are deliberated through the exchange of wisdom and visionary opinions.

I do not intend then to take it lightly or speak casually on this occasion as I am filled with the joy of God as the strong winds is not heard, the tides of the cruel sea are similarly calm and the dark clouds in the east have rolled on to oblivion. Hail the House, *e le fagatua manu o le gogosina, manu o le tuasivi ma lou gogouli. Faafetai o lea ua tuta i taga le sa folau o le Aiga Sa Tunumafono, a ua fanaafi o malama ina ua olioli faatasi fetu o le taeao i lenei aso. Ua lulu fulufulufiso* given the spirit of God and his will, he is the Maker of the universe. The morning stars have shouted together, as we reconvene again in good health instead of ill will today. *Ma ua laga foi manu talimalama, a ua sola le nuu tutai, ona o Lona alofa ma Lona agalelei. Le Alii e, faamalo alofa, ua felelei gogosina i lenei aso, ua seu foi i le pepesina ona o Lona alofa ma Lona agalelei.*

Mr Speaker allow me this opportunity to address my beloved constituency. Aiga I le Tai I am in awe because of this honour you have accorded me. Gone are the trouble days but today we greet each other in good terms and joy. I accept with humility the honour you have bestowed upon me. In saying that I recognise the paramount salutation of our constituency which is the principal mouthpiece of the Malietoa family. With Susuga Taupau, Susuga Mulipola and the various branches of the title, Susuga Luatutu whom observes traditions and resides at Anaolemaile.

The orator Auapaau the brave one, the four sides of Salua, Susuga Tuilaepa the son of Malietoa residing at Fogamanono. The chiefly brothers, the principal orator Finau and company.

Hail Leiatualesa of Luatimu whom held the initial government, the Mutimuti clan and the matua Vaisagote and the orator Futi. We are the gold bracelet marking the arrival of the Methodist Mission at Faleu and Utuagiagi. Greetings to Leiatualetaua residing at Malaetuli *alaalatai oe le Matuaovai, Falelimaoalosapapa ma le faletolu, ma le mamalu ni muliauma eseese ia te oe le Falemanono, susuga tutasi, aua le Aiga Sa Malietoa.*

I recognise also Sa'u and his family and orator Sauma and the respects of Apolima.

I cannot forget the village of nobles and the son of Malietoa, Faulefau and Pouli, Ati and Lautolo. I will be considered to have erred if I do not mention Letelemana the belle of Aana, the matua, Peipeigamalie and the four orators of Satuimalufilufi. Such are the ceremonial addresses of our constituency.

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The fact remains, and that is you have salvaged me from an eerie lair. I have journeyed through the exhausting dealings with our community and have come through it. I will cherish the visionary opinions which you offered me and I thank you.

I wish to acknowledge my fellow running mates, I salute you for your sportsmanship which Susuga Leiataualesa, Susuga Mulipola, Susuga Ifopo and Susuga Pouli displayed. I extend sympathies but as I said this is my time. I did raise the fact that the post has already gone around in full circle in our constituency and therefore, this is my opportunity.

Some of our prominent orators have held the seat like Levaa, Vaatiuola, Mafua and others. Is this not the opportune time for Futi and Auapaau, I thank you for it is true that searching for that fish during the day in Salafai is most difficult. I appreciate your opinions. The truth is my constituency, I have searched high and low and blessings have been poured upon me. *E ta tagata Leatiogie, ae patipati taoto le Feepo* When the legendary Leatiogie was beating his nemesis, Feepo clapped his hands while lying down. Our political affairs is evolving as we come full circle and I have thrown that contested spear on your behalf. Thank you.

Mr Speaker I will now speak on the Budget. I thank you Mulipola the Hon Finance Minister for this Appropriation and your funding allocations for the economic development of our country. There are quite a few areas I would like to cover which I will now get to it. I appreciate the allotted money upon my constituency.

As members are aware this constituency is made of 3 islands with Manono and Apolima situated at the southern tip of Upolu. Perhaps no member of this House is able to visit these 3 islands, except for the members from Salafai.

Thank you Hon Minister as I understand that Part 22 indicates \$250,000 for the wharves at Manono and Apolima. Thank you Mulipola for the kindness you have shown me. I applaud the Government for the opening of the huge project at my wharf. I note from the Budget that this funding allocation is under the Ministry of Works, Transport and Infrastructure and therefore thank you Hon Minister. The only plea for me is that we implement it now, let us go ahead and fulfil it. Let us not wait and delay it.

I now come to the protection of our environment given the many changes we have today due to climate change. We are also victims of natural disasters from time to time. My plea to the Hon Minister if there is still the existence of what we discussed regarding walk for clarity, the paths for my islands of Manono and Apolima. We cannot foresee the unpredictability of natural disasters, at least there will be pathways to make convenient the movement of people. If the \$250 is insufficient then increase it. This is the plea of this constituency.

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Coming on to the Courts Administration. Mr Speaker everyone understands the overlapping powers of the Laws which are used to guide the village communities most particularly the Laws relating to the Court. In my view it looks as if it was planned to happen and once the Legislations are enacted from the previous Parliament term, the issues began to surface. My pledge to the Hon Minister of Justice is to please find a solution to calm this difficulty. To avoid the possibilities of powers overstepping each other.

I want to say to the Minister of Health as I do realise that vaccinations have begun to roll out and I ask you if it would be more convenient for the staff to travel over to our two islands to possibly avoid the hassles of travelling back and forth of doctors and nurses.

These are the requests. As for the layout Budget and all areas and its allocations, I wish to congratulate the Hon Minister for your engagement and implementation which is not an easy task.

I can only advise the Hon Ministers that our new government has just been established. In saying that points earned from slow bowl is similar to fast thrower.

To conclude it is obvious that since not all Parliament members are present. I do not mean to instruct the wisdom of the royal families or the vision of the oratory group. Samoa I ask you to embrace the victory now before you.

The journey of this chosen Parliament by God has progressed. I ask that you bear support and let us work together not for us but for the people and their calling. May God show mercy upon Samoa let not the wisdom of the families be at crossroads let not the opinions of the orators be conflicting. I wish our families and everyone great vigour. I wish blessings upon the members of the clergy here and abroad and those contributing to our economy May God bless you in the work you do.

Honourable Prime Minister the road is long, Cabinet Ministers I wish blessings upon your arduous undertakings, and may support be upon the Associate Ministers. Mr Speaker I wish the chiefs and orators of the country and the women be blessed and may they continue to give support. May God continue to provide you good health. If somehow the task becomes unbearable due to the pressure of politics, I am willing to give my heart so we may undertake the responsibilities together and give you a sense of composure.

I conclude by saying that may the consecrations of God be upon this Parliament to allow us to obtain sense and realisation of cooperation and camaraderie. May God keep the sun shine upon Gideon and the moon over the valley of Ajilon such are my sentiments for Samoa. Soifua.

The House showed appreciation through a round of applause at the conclusion of the maiden speech by the member for Aiga I le Tai.

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MR SPEAKER: Thank you and congratulations to the member for Aiga I le Tai for the speech. I do believe that the Assembly have been all ears and I would think the same for the public at large.

I applaud your preparation and courage. The main thing is that you have managed to cover the Budget and a few projects of your constituency. I do think that the constituency have heard you, well done. We still have sufficient time for another speech. I call upon the member for Faleata No.1. You can start now and finish tomorrow.

MAIDEN SPEECH

Afioga MANULELEUA PALETASALA T TOVALE (Faleata No.1): Thank you Mr Speaker for the opportunity given to Faleata No.1. The elected representatives of the country have taken their rightful place in this sacred court on this magnificent new dawn as we mark the beginning of a new era. But do allow me this golden chance to convey greetings to Samoa's notable forum. Greetings to the Madam Prime Minister, Afioga Fiame Naomi Mataafa. My greetings to you Mr Speaker and the Deputy Speaker and I extend the same to all the distinguished members assembled today.

I acknowledge the Le Ao o le Malo Afioga Tuimalealiifano Sualauvi II and your consort. I also recognise the Member of the Council of Deputies of the House.

I convey greetings to the Chief Justice and the Judiciary. I acknowledge the Chief Executive Officers and Executives of Government Ministries and Corporations. I convey greetings to Samoa's diaspora around the world and our local community in all its traditional salutation.

I further acknowledge our neighbouring islands in the East, Tutuila and Manua in your honorifics. These are the respects of Samoa tuning in today.

Mr Speaker I extend to you my commendation for the noble way you have come through to presiding over the dignitaries of Parliament and taking control of this Assembly. Do not ignore the recommendations from those rendering support for you, *aua ne i muliloa le vaai i le lauamanu, ae tapena le muliloa aua le faamulioatu*. Do not lose touch of your support base.

Our new government is slowly progressing forward and we must not forget our ancestors and forbearers that paved the way for us today who were at the dawn of this XVII Parliament in Tiafau. I applaud the wise opinions submitted.

MR SPEAKER: I respectfully interrupt the speech of the member since we have approached our normal adjournment hour. I would think that it will allow the member to further prepare for tomorrow.

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I would think that your preparations are quite extensive so my commendations. But since we have come to the end of our proceedings, such is the reason for notifying the member, you will have another chance tomorrow when we return to resume your wonderful speech.

I cannot express it any clearer one of the main functions of the Executive is preparing the Budget and the Minister of Finance has clearly elaborated about our fiscal situation.

I do wish to acknowledge the prayerful support of our people tuning in from home. I do appreciate your prayers which has brought about success upon your Parliament. Whatever shortcomings we may have displayed during the course of our deliberations I bid for your forgiveness.

Furthermore, I offer my apologies to the members if I have mistaken you No one is perfect. I pray that blessings be upon this Assembly and I wish the same for the people at large. I recognise the Chief Executive Officers and Executives attending our session today.

Before we adjourn I call upon the member for Gagaemauga No.2 to conclude our Sitting with a prayer.

Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly was adjourned at 12.55pm until Wednesday 15th September 2021 at 9.30am.