



COOK ISLANDS - AUSTRALIA
'OA TUMANAVA PARTNERSHIP



'Oa Tumanava means enduring friendship in the Cook Islands Māori language – friendship in peace times and friendship in times of adversity. .

We acknowledge the deep historical, cultural and personal connections between our countries and people and we commit to elevated cooperation to grasp the common opportunities and tackle the common challenges that lie ahead.

We will work together to promote a peaceful, prosperous and resilient region, underpinned by rules, norms and respect for sovereignty. We will engage in a partnership that achieves lasting outcomes and recognises each other's integral role in the Pacific family.

The following principles will provide the foundations of our partnership:

- We will respect each other as individual sovereign states
- We will engage in regular dialogue, joint decision-making and strategic exchanges
- We will listen and speak carefully to understand our respective points of view when differences arise
- We will engage the knowledge and perspectives of Australian First Nations peoples and Cook Islands Māori to inform our partnership.

Together, we will endeavour to pass down to our children a partnership that they will be proud to inherit. It will be framed by the following five pillars:

- Strengthening the people-to-people links which give substance to our 'Oa Tumanava partnership
- Enhancing our security cooperation to address shared regional challenges
- Achieving greater prosperity for our people and our region
- Cooperation on regional and international issues
- Fostering closer institutional linkages, including in support of resilient and inclusive societies.

Cook Islands and Australia recognise that our respective national interests are served by a strong and enduring partnership and a Pacific region that is secure strategically, stable socially, prosperous economically and sovereign politically. Our cooperation under this partnership is outlined at [Annex A](#). We will ensure all future cooperation under this partnership is informed by our guiding principles. We commit to this as 'oa tumanava.

Signed on 18 October 2022

For the Government of the Cook Islands
Hon. Mark Brown
Prime Minister

For the Government of Australia
Senator the Hon Penny Wong
Foreign Minister

ANNEX A

Pillar One: Strengthening our people-to-people links

1. To better reflect the depth of our partnership and the growing number of people with Cook Islands descent that have made Australia their home, the Cook Islands will look to establish a Cook Islands High Commission in Canberra.
2. To support the shared ambitions in this Partnership arrangement, we will convene regular senior officials' consultations, whether in-person or virtual, and maintain regular political-level engagement between the Government of the Cook Islands and the Government of Australia. These high-level meetings will focus on issues of importance to Australia and Cook Islands in promoting a region that is peaceful, prosperous and resilient, including but not limited to economic growth and transformation, human and social development, education, maritime security, health and food security, climate resilience, gender equality, inclusion, and tourism.
3. We will explore opportunities to share Australian First Nations people's and Cook Islands Māori knowledge and practices, including through exchanges.
4. We will examine further opportunities to enhance cooperation in the tourism and trade sector for the Cook Islands and Australia. Aviation agencies of the Cook Islands and Australia may also consider updating the air services arrangements to ensure they continue to meet aviation market requirements.
5. We will explore reciprocal superannuation portability arrangements to support movement of our respective diaspora between the Cook Islands and Australia for economic, family, health and cultural reasons.
6. We share a passion for sport and recognise the health and social opportunities participation in recreational and competitive sport brings to our respective communities. We will explore opportunities to support athletes, coaches, sporting exchange and competition between our countries, that strengthen our people-to-people links and contribute to health, social cohesion, and gender and disability inclusion.
7. We recognise the value of community and faith-based organisations in maintaining social and cultural connections. We will explore avenues to strengthen these connections through programs that facilitate partnerships or exchanges.

Pillar Two: Enhancing our security cooperation to address shared regional challenges

8. Cook Islands and Australia share a strategic interest in ensuring a peaceful, prosperous and resilient Pacific region. We reaffirm the concept of regionalism and a family first approach to peace and security in the Pacific.
9. We reaffirm our shared commitment to building maritime security capacity and capability, including to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, to contribute to regional security, and support humanitarian and disaster relief efforts in the region, including through Australia's Defence Cooperation Program and the Pacific Maritime Security Program. We will hold annual senior level dialogues to inform our cooperation.
10. We welcome the strong history of cooperation and operational exchanges between the Cook Islands Police Service and the Australian Federal Police. We will explore opportunities to strengthen cooperation, through bilateral and regional mechanisms, to prevent, detect, respond to and prosecute transnational crime. We will endeavour to share operational intelligence bilaterally and through the Pacific Transnational Crime Network and will explore joint training, deployment and capability development opportunities through the Pacific

Community for Law Enforcement Cooperation coordination mechanism and the Australian Institute of Police Management's Pacific Faculty.

11. We acknowledge that cybersecurity and cybercrime are growing security challenges for the region. We will work together in support of an open, free and secure internet and will explore opportunities to build further cyber security capacity at policy and operational levels, and to support Pacific communities to engage safely, meaningfully and equitably online.
12. We will collaborate to enhance Cook Islands' air and maritime border security including under the auspices of the Oceania Customs Organisation (OCO) and Pacific Immigration Development Community, working through the Australian Department of Home Affairs and Cook Islands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration, and focussing on immigration policy and program information sharing and bilateral and regional information sharing.

Pillar Three: Achieving greater prosperity for our people and our region

13. We share a common vision for deeper economic integration and regional prosperity underpinned by the Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations (PACER) Plus. We will share information and opportunities, including through open and transparent trade, including pathways to markets; private sector development and innovation; mutually beneficial cooperation in science and technology; commercial opportunities; productive agricultural and fisheries systems; oceans resources; Pa Enea progress; renewable energy and climate resilient, sustainable infrastructure; and tourism. We will collaborate on biosecurity and market access to enhance trade flows, including through the Pacific Horticultural and Agricultural Market Access Program (PHAMA Plus).
14. We recognise the value of our respective engagement with the Australia Pacific Islands Business Council (APIBC) and note the goal of the 2021 Memorandum of Understanding between the APIBC and the Cook Islands Chamber of Commerce to support and promote inclusive economic development and employment growth in Cook Islands.
15. Australia recognises the significant achievements of the Cook Islands in developing its economy and the subsequent economic hardship created by the COVID-19 pandemic. We will work together, and with regional and multilateral partners, to explore opportunities for transformative and climate-resilient infrastructure investment in the Cook Islands, including through the Australian Infrastructure Financing Facility for the Pacific.
16. We will work together to promote gender equality and women's economic and social empowerment, and social inclusion for people with disabilities.

Pillar Four: Cooperating on regional and international issues

17. The strength of the Cook Islands-Australia bilateral relationship is rooted in our common membership of the wider Pacific family. We acknowledge regional partnerships are necessary to achieve our shared goal of a region that is peaceful, prosperous and resilient.
18. We will work closely together to strengthen emphasis on the centrality and unity of the Pacific Islands Forum as the key leaders-led forum for discussing regional strategic, political and economic issues. We will encourage members to speak with one voice for the Pacific in the global context.
19. In recognising our shared membership to the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP), namely the Pacific Islands Forum, the Pacific Community, the South Pacific Regional Environment Program and the Forum Fisheries Agency, the Cook Islands and Australia will work together with Pacific partners to bolster regional governance arrangements,

- strengthen regional coordination and integration, promote gender equality and inclusion, and enhance service delivery by our CROP agencies.
20. The Cook Islands and Australia will work together to enhance our own and regional capacity to respond to natural disasters and be among the first regional responders in times of need.
 21. We recognise the Pacific is facing a climate emergency, with climate change an existential threat to the Pacific. Together, we will promote international action on climate change and will explore opportunities to collaborate on blue carbon protection and restoration and renewable energy generation. We will continue to work towards building climate resilient societies in the Cook Islands and Australia.
 22. We will continue advocating for small island states' appropriate access to development and climate change adaptation finance, including through multilateral development banks and funds, and ease of access for Cook Islands to appropriate international financing mechanisms.
 23. We will work together with other partners to ensure their efforts and support are guided by the *2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent* and Pacific priorities.
 24. We will work together to implement the regional security framework under the 2018 Boe Declaration building upon the 2000 Biketawa Declaration. We will work to implement the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Commitments to 2050 set out in the *2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent*, including in relation to the thematic area of Peace and Security. We will cooperate to provide leadership on regional security issues through regional bodies, including the Forum Fisheries Agency, the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police, the Pacific Immigration Development Community, the Pacific Islands Law Officers' Network, the Oceania Customs Organisation and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme. We will explore opportunities to enhance security capacity development, including through the Pacific Fusion Centre, the Australia Pacific Security College, Pacific Community for Law Enforcement Cooperation, and the Pacific Transnational Crime Network.
 25. We will share knowledge and expertise on issues of plant, animal and environmental health and biosecurity for the joint protection of social, cultural, environmental and economic interests of both countries. As island nations, we both enjoy precious protection from exotic pests and disease. We will continue to work together to maintain the productive quarantine status of our countries.
 26. We will explore cooperation on environment and heritage protection through academic information sharing and programs, as well as through shared membership of the World Heritage Convention.

Pillar Five: Fostering closer institutional linkages, including in support of resilient and inclusive societies

27. To promote strong civil services and institutions with good governance, we will explore twinning arrangements between government agencies, as well as the participation of Cook Islands senior public servants in the Australia New Zealand School of Government Executive Programs.
28. As signatories of the Pacific Leaders' Gender Equality Declaration, we will work together to ensure that women are able to have full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership in political, economic, cultural and social life. We will work with civil society, non-government organisations, government institutions and the private sector to eliminate all forms of gender-based violence and discrimination against women and girls, accelerate the achievement of gender equality, increase women's and girls' empowerment, leadership and

decision-making opportunities at all levels, and strengthen women's economic empowerment.

29. We recognise the central role a free and robust media plays in upholding democratic principles in our societies and we will explore opportunities to strengthen our collaboration in support of this.
30. We recognise the value and impact of education, training and research partnerships, including the Cook Islands alumni of Australian institutions. We appreciate the importance of scholarships as an avenue to supporting the region's access to quality education and technical competencies. We will explore opportunities to enhance access to education.