

## Chapter 9

### Conclusion—Partnerships for Security

9.1 In this volume, the committee underlined the findings in Volume I which stressed the importance of building the self sufficiency and resilience of Pacific island states so that they are able to take advantage of trade opportunities and deliver essential services. It stressed the need to develop more robust policing and regulatory capacities to deal with breakdowns in law and order and demonstrated the importance of building regional cooperation to deal with major disturbances. The committee also identified the need to develop communities that are better able to withstand the adverse effects of natural disasters and climate change. In so doing, the committee has reemphasised the findings of its report into peacekeeping that it is critical that Pacific island states, and donor partners alike, understand that the most important task is to address the root causes of conflict.

9.2 Both volumes of the report have made clear that the Pacific Partnerships for Development (PPDs) present a significant opportunity for Australia to contribute to improving the economic and security status of Pacific island states. The committee has already stressed the need to establish links between the separate priorities in PPDs. This should extend to the security sector where there are many opportunities to better integrate security priorities into the PPDs.

9.3 While the PPDs may have a strategy regarding the reform of policing and law and the justice sector, few of the immediate outcome priorities are focused on traditional security concerns. The only PPD that directly addresses justice sector development is that signed with Samoa. The agreement addresses human resource constraints among government legal services and supports a proposed Law Reform Commission in order to improve Samoa's 'rule of law score in World Bank Governance Indicators'.<sup>1</sup> The law and order and justice sector is also addressed in the PPD with Nauru but as an enabling outcome to assist achieve development outcomes. The Australia–Nauru PPD notes that the absence of a law and justice sector strategy constrains Australia's ability to provide assistance to Nauru. However, it also notes that the AFP and the Attorney-General's Department are expected to lead development in this sector under their existing bilateral and regional programs.<sup>2</sup> The PPDs with

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1 AusAID, Samoa–Australia Partnership for Development, <http://www.ausaid.gov.au/country/partnership/samoa.cfm> (accessed 9 October 2009).

2 AusAID, Nauru–Australia Partnership for Development, [http://www.ausaid.gov.au/hottopics/pdf/Australia\\_Nauru\\_Partnership\\_for\\_Development.pdf](http://www.ausaid.gov.au/hottopics/pdf/Australia_Nauru_Partnership_for_Development.pdf) (accessed 9 October 2009).

Vanuatu and PNG note policing and law and justice sector reform as potential future priority outcomes.<sup>3</sup>

9.4 The committee notes that at the Pacific Islands Forum meeting in Cairns, in August 2009, Prime Minister Kevin Rudd announced bilateral Partnerships for Security with Pacific Island countries. The Forum Communiqué states:

Leaders welcomed Australia's initiative to develop, in close consultation with Pacific Island countries, bilateral Partnerships for Security with Pacific Island countries as a complement to Australia's successful bilateral Partnerships for Development. They agreed that such Security Partnerships could streamline, consolidate and strengthen existing bilateral security cooperation between Australia and Pacific Island countries. They underlined that negotiation of the proposed partnerships would be based on mutual agreement, reflect the needs and priorities of each partner and take account of the capacity and resources of both parties.<sup>4</sup>

9.5 Beyond this statement, the committee has received little evidence about the character of these Security Partnerships. When Defence was asked about the nature of these partnerships at the recent Supplementary Estimates hearings, in October 2009, it was limited in the amount of detail it could provide.<sup>5</sup>

9.6 While these Partnerships for Security are still in their initial or developmental stages, the committee considers that they represent a significant opportunity to address some of the challenges outlined in this volume. The committee therefore recommends that when developing the partnerships the government consider the concerns raised by the committee throughout this report.

### **Recommendation 10**

**9.7 The committee recommends that in developing its Pacific Partnerships for Development and Partnerships for Security, the Australian Government ensure that the link between development and security is strong. Moreover, it recommends that close attention be given to developing Partnerships for Security which:**

- **enhance the level of cooperation, collaboration, coordination and interoperability between Australia's various security-related initiatives;**

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3 AusAID, Vanuatu–Australia Partnership for Development, [http://www.ausaid.gov.au/hottopics/pdf/Australia\\_Vanuatu\\_Partnership\\_for\\_Development.pdf](http://www.ausaid.gov.au/hottopics/pdf/Australia_Vanuatu_Partnership_for_Development.pdf) and Papua New Guinea–Australia Partnership for Development, [http://www.ausaid.gov.au/hottopics/pdf/Australia\\_PNG\\_Partnership\\_for\\_Development.pdf](http://www.ausaid.gov.au/hottopics/pdf/Australia_PNG_Partnership_for_Development.pdf) (accessed 9 October 2009).

4 2009 Forum Communiqué, Cairns Australia, paragraph 58: [http://www.forumsec.org.fj/\\_resources/article/files/Final\\_2009\\_Forum\\_Communique.pdf](http://www.forumsec.org.fj/_resources/article/files/Final_2009_Forum_Communique.pdf) (accessed 26 October 2009).

5 *Committee Hansard*, Supplementary Estimates, Department of Defence, 21 October 2009, p. 73.

- **work with bilateral partners to develop security assistance that is appropriate to Pacific nations' level of development and commensurate with their technical and material capacity; and**
- **complement the work of regional organisations and become instrumental in forging much closer cooperation and coordination with other donors to the region.**

9.8 Recognition of the following issues is essential to the process of developing the Partnerships for Security.

***Coordinating Australia's security-related initiatives through:***

- Identifying the link between development and security, making clear the relationship between the PPDs and the Partnerships for Security. Moreover, as noted in Volume I, the PPDs should also be instrumental in forging much closer cooperation and coordination with other donors to the region.
- Enhancing cooperation, collaboration and coordination between Australia's various security-related initiatives in the Pacific. It is imperative that the Partnerships for Security enhance, not duplicate, current assistance. At a number of points throughout this report, the committee identified potential overlap between initiatives established to deal with transnational crime and suggested that the endeavours of intelligence gathering units be coordinated in terms of their objectives, their information sharing and their delivery. More specifically, the partnerships should establish links between the existing Pacific Policing Development Program and the Defence Cooperation Program and the Pacific Patrol Boat Program, the Pacific Transnational Crime Network and Financial Intelligence Units. The committee has also suggested that Australia enhance the integration, cooperation and coordination of its recent initiatives to deal with significant breakdowns in law and disaster management across the Pacific.
- Enhancing connectivity and interoperability between Australia's various security-related initiatives in the Pacific. The committee is encouraged by efforts such as the Regional Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Strategy which seeks to achieve interoperability with PPBP vessels. The committee also noted the initiatives currently in operation to assist Pacific island states enhance their interoperability, such as the Pacific Transnational Crime Network. This will allow for improved information sharing across the Pacific. Enhancing interoperability must be a priority for all new security-related programs.

***Working with bilateral partners through:***

- Developing security assistance that is appropriate to nations' level of development. The committee recalls comments made by the AFP's Assistant Commissioner Frank Prendergast, outlined in Chapter 3, that '...there is no

point building a First World police force in a country that just does not have the budget to sustain that'.<sup>6</sup> Considering some of the observations that have been made throughout this report about the lack of technical and material capacity in the Pacific, the committee is concerned that some of the initiatives that have been developed to assist deal with transnational crime cannot be sustainably managed by Pacific island states and that states will continue to rely upon donors to fund their operation. The committee also believes that it is difficult for smaller Pacific island states to maintain relations with the large number of organisations, agencies and commissions listed above.

- Improving information sharing between Pacific island states. The committee has noted the need for better information sharing between Pacific island states in their attempt to combat transnational crime and illegal fishing. The committee noted comments from the Pacific Islands Forum Regional Security Committee which points to information and communication as the biggest impediment to effective law enforcement in the Pacific.<sup>7</sup>

***Complementing the work of regional organisations and international donors through:***

- Developing security partnerships to support and complement the work of regional organisations such as Pacific Islands Forum Security Program, the Forum Fisheries Agency, the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission and the Oceanic Customs Organisation. Overlap and duplication with these organisations and other international donors should be avoided.

SENATOR RUSSELL TROOD  
CHAIR

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6 *Committee Hansard*, 21 November 2008, p. 74.

7 Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Opening Address by Mr Tuiloma Neroni Slade, Secretary General, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Forum Regional Security Committee Meeting, 4–5 June 2009.