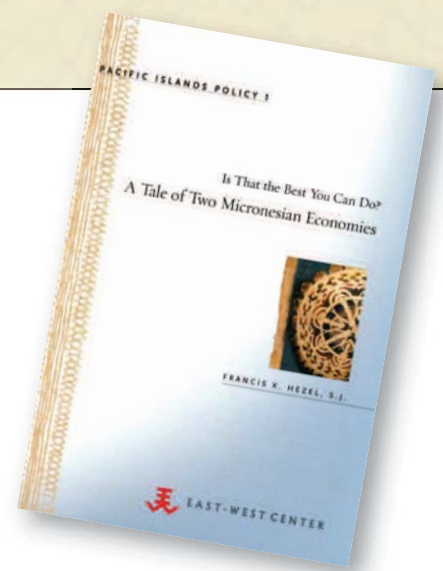


Sitiveni Halapua is director of the Pacific Islands Development Program.



PACIFIC ISLANDS POLICY SERIES

In 2006, PIDP launched the Pacific Islands Policy series, which examines critical policy-relevant issues and viable solutions to on-going challenges in the Pacific. For a description of the first issue, "Is that the Best You Can Do? A Tale of Two Micronesian Economies," see p. 24 (in Featured Publications).

- EWC Adjunct Senior Fellow Robert Kiste and Deputy Director Gerard Finin are co-editors of the Pacific Islands Policy series.

PIDP IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

Strengthening ties with policymakers and diplomats in Washington, PIDP met in June with ambassadors from the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Nauru, Papua New Guinea,

The Pacific Islands Development Program (PIDP) is the research arm and the secretariat to the Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders. More than 20 island governments participate in PIDP's activities that include policy relevant studies, training, promotion of private sector initiatives through the Joint Commercial Commission, and outreach through the daily news Website, Pacific Islands Report. PIDP, the only Pacific islands regional organization based in the U.S., serves as a catalyst for advancing closer relations between the Pacific and the United States.

- Gerard Finin is deputy director of the program.

REFORMS IN THE KINGDOM OF TONGA

PIDP Director Sitiveni Halapua was seconded during 2006 to the Kingdom of Tonga to help lead the National Committee for Political Reform. Consensus-building processes, pioneered by PIDP in Fiji and the Solomon Islands, were used to ascertain public opinion about political reform. With nearly 50 % of Tongans residing outside the Kingdom, consultations were also convened in Australia, New Zealand and the United States.

Halapua presented the Committee's findings to Parliament, stating that the Tongan people unanimously support political and constitutional reform. Among other changes, the report recommended that a new 26-member parliament be comprised of 17 representatives elected by the people, and nine elected by the nobles.



PIDP Deputy Director Gerard Finin briefs Leslie Rowe, U.S. Ambassador to Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.



Tarcisius Kabutaulaka (center), EWC Fellow from the Solomon Islands, addresses the Congressional Study Group on the Pacific Islands in Washington, D.C.

Samoa, Solomon Islands, and Tonga to explore future collaboration on pressing regional issues. PIDP also collaborated with the U.S. Department of State, the Pacific Islands Ambassadors Group, and the National Geographic Society in hosting the first “Pacific Afternoon,” a seminar aimed at policy makers and private sector representatives addressing regional issues such as trade barriers and economic development.

JOINT COMMERCIAL COMMISSION

As secretariat for The United States/ Pacific Island Nations Joint Commercial Commission (JCC), PIDP supports the advancement of mutually beneficial commercial relations among Pacific island nations and the U.S. by promoting trade and investment and using information technology to facilitate business linkages. In summer 2006, PIDP met with the Pacific Islands Ambassadors Group together with the Director General and senior staff of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (formerly the South Pacific Commission based in New Caledonia), and U.S. State Department representatives, at EWC Washington. PIDP’s on-going projects as well as ways to increase collaboration and reinvigorate the Joint Commercial Commission were discussed.

- *Scott Kroeker is the JCC Project Officer.*

CONGRESSIONAL STUDY GROUP

The EWC Washington’s Congressional Study Group on the Pacific Islands convened in June to address the recent elections in Fiji and the Solomon Islands. At this forum, PIDP Research Fellow Tarcisius Kabutaulaka discussed the elections’ implications for security and stability with the ambassadors of Fiji and the Solomon Islands and key U.S. government officials.

DIPLOMATIC TRAINING INITIATIVE

PIDP and the Center’s Seminars Program partnered with The University of the South Pacific (USP), a regional institution supported by 12 Pacific island governments, to launch a new diplomacy program for Pacific islands foreign service officers. Working with USP’s Institute of Advanced Studies in Development and Governance based in Fiji, the training aimed at enhancing participants’ understanding of critical regional issues and their capacity to implement strategies for capitalizing on economic integration.

PACIFIC ISLANDS REPORT

The Pacific Islands Report (PIR) provides a news roundup on the Internet, Monday through Friday, featuring the top stories about the region, editorials from regional news media, expert commentary, feature stories, analyses of current issues, and

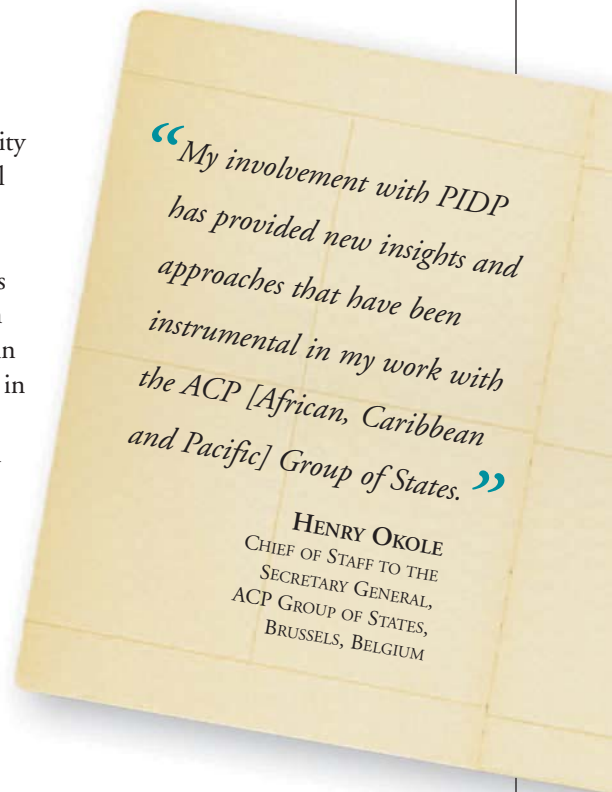
historical information. Regarded as the definitive source of Pacific regional news, PIR continues to draw strong readership from around the world, with unique hits to its Website averaging over 20,000 per month and subscribers to its daily email news service climbing to 1,100.

PIR has expanded the depth and quality of its editorial content as a direct result of the PIR training program funded by Marriott Hotels. This Internet-based program allows Pacific island journalists to benefit from direct editorial assistance in news gathering and reporting, and generates exclusive news content for PIR.

- *Peter Wagner is the Managing Editor of the Pacific Islands Report.*



Visit the Pacific Islands Report Website at:
www.pireport.org



“My involvement with PIDP has provided new insights and approaches that have been instrumental in my work with the ACP [African, Caribbean and Pacific] Group of States.”

HENRY OKOLE
 CHIEF OF STAFF TO THE
 SECRETARY GENERAL,
 ACP GROUP OF STATES,
 BRUSSELS, BELGIUM