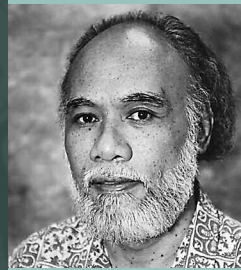


PACIFIC ISLANDS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



■ *Sitiveni Halapua is director of the Pacific Islands Development Program.*

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The Pacific Islands Development Program (PIDP) assists Pacific leaders in advancing their collective efforts to achieve and sustain equitable social and economic development consistent with the goals of the region's people. PIDP began in 1980 as a forum through which heads of government could discuss critical issues of development and formulate solutions to common challenges in collaboration with donors, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector. PIDP's role as a regional organization has expanded and today conducts advanced research and dialogue on island development; disseminates vital news about the region; facilitates specialized training; and promotes trade and investment. PIDP is the only regional organization based in the United States and serves as a catalyst for advancing closer relations between the Pacific and North America.

■ *Gerard Finin is deputy director of the Pacific Islands Development Program.*

Members of the Standing Committee of the Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders gathered at the EWC.



STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING

PIDP hosted the 29th meeting of the Standing Committee of the Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders in Honolulu focusing on the "Direction of Development in Our Shared Region." His Royal Highness Prince 'Ulukalala Lavaka Ata, then Prime Minister of Tonga, chaired the meeting attended by heads of government from the Cook Islands, French Polynesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Solomon Islands, and officials from the Federated States of Micronesia, Papua New Guinea, the Fiji Islands, Guam, and New Caledonia.

Presentations by PIDP researchers stimulated active discussion among the leaders followed by further reflection on the roles of consultants, NGOs, and research institutions in development decision-making; the cultivation of in-country and regional expertise; and balancing between debt, savings, and spending on development priorities. Participants also explored the creation of institutions that address causes of conflict, and ways to increase participation in the decision-making process to foster ownership over the direction of 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. The JCC convened in May, in conjunction with the Standing Committee meeting, to discuss a draft proposal on methods for the JCC's future development. The meeting was co-chaired by the Kingdom of Tonga's Minister of Commerce, Labor and Industries, Honorable Fred Sevele and Federated States of Micronesia's Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Honorable Sebastian Anefal.

The proposal highlighted the need for Pacific island countries to identify specific goods and services to promote to the U.S., and specify the policies to be developed and barriers to be removed to stimulate trade of those products. The Secretariat emphasized that this narrow focus will enable PIDP to effectively measure and evaluate the outcomes. The participants adopted the proposal and submitted it for U.S. review and response. If accepted, the proposal sets a precedent stressing the importance for Pacific island nations to take a more proactive approach towards the United States.

■ *Scott Kroeker is the JCC project officer.*



Islands of Globalization project members at the Caribbean Studies Conference in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.

“THANK YOU FOR YOUR GIFTED LEADERSHIP IN ORGANIZING THE MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS CONFERENCE OF LEADERS ... WE BENEFITED IMMENSELY FROM THE RESOURCES AND EXPERTISE OF THE CENTER.”

Evan J. Paki, Papua New Guinea's ambassador to the U.S.

PACIFIC ISLANDS REPORT

The Pacific Islands Report (PIR) provides a news roundup on the Internet, Monday through Friday, featuring the top 20 stories about the region, editorials from regional news media, expert commentary, feature stories, analyses of current issues, and historical information. Updated daily, it is widely regarded as the best single source of regional Pacific news.

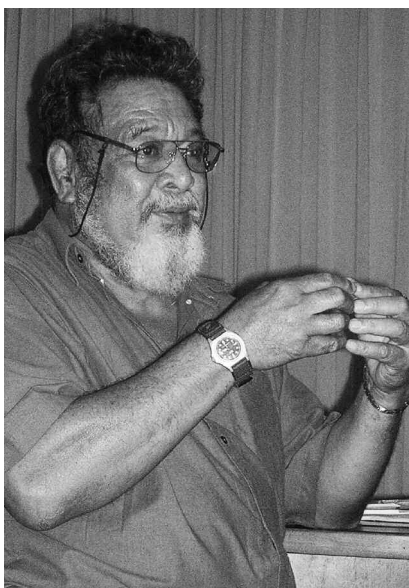
PIR continues to draw strong readership from around the world, with unique hits to the Website averaging 1,200 per day, while subscribers to PIR's daily email service of news briefs, heavily promoted during 2005, has skyrocketed, from 200 to nearly 1,000. The Pacific Islands Report this year established a part-time Assistant Editor position, which has been filled successively by two Pacific island students. The assistant position is critical as it provides Pacific journalism students with valuable experience working in a real news environment and frees the editor to focus on the second major initiative of 2005 — the PIR mentoring program. This program, which relies on Internet communication, allows Pacific island journalists to benefit from direct editorial assistance in the basics of news gathering and reporting, and generates exclusive news content for the PIR.

- *Peter Wagner is the managing editor of the Pacific Islands Report.*

ISLANDS OF GLOBALIZATION

Islands of Globalization (IOG) is a collaborative research and instructional project of PIDP and the University of Hawai'i's Center for Pacific Islands Studies funded by the Ford Foundation. Focusing on the Caribbean and Pacific regions, the project seeks to enhance understanding of the origins, nature and consequences of globalization from the perspective of small island societies, and in the context of changing notions of “islandness.”

During 2005, IOG team members participated in the annual Caribbean



Islands of Globalization representative, Epeli Hau'ofa, presenting his research at the Caribbean Studies Conference.

Studies Conference in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. This outreach effort represented the first time that an organized group from the East-West Center, the University of Hawai'i, and the University of the South Pacific joined with islands studies colleagues in the Caribbean. The IOG representatives conducted two sessions featuring panelists discussing the IOG project, introducing Caribbeanists to the diversity of the Pacific islands, and revealing personal experiences and issues relevant to both regions. A major highlight of the conference was a presentation arranged by IOG, featuring noted Tongan scholar Epeli Hau'ofa sharing his experiences in both regions, his reflections on globalization and culture, and his current work at the Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture, University of the South Pacific.

IOG's conference participation highly solidified relationships between people and institutions in the Pacific islands and the Caribbean. A core group of interested scholars have committed to moving the project forward and continuing discussions about future collaboration. Another significant outcome was a proposal to create a professional Pacific and Caribbean Studies Association, which is currently being explored.