

From: Secretary of foreign Affairs and Immigration

To: HOD's, Private sector organization, community groups, and relevant stakeholders

Dear all,

As you may be aware, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration requested technical assistance from the Pacific islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) last year to formulate a Trade Policy Framework (TPF), including an implementation matrix and a trade policy statement which would guide the Government and help our country's participation in international trade.

The Ministry is pleased to inform you that our request has been accepted by the PIFS and, through a competitive bidding process, Triangle Business Solutions of Vanuatu was selected as the successful contractor.

As part of the work programme, two experts will visit the Cook Islands over four sessions beginning on 1-11 April to hold national consultations with government officials, private sector representatives, community groups and non-government organizations. The purpose of the visit is to obtain information on Cook Islands' laws and regulations affecting trade and investment, collect relevant data and initiate discussions on the establishment of a National Trade Facilitation Committee which would play a central role in the formulation and implementation of Cook Islands trade policy.

The TPF is expected to guide the Cook Islands trade policy for the next decade we are inviting your participation in the consultation process. We will be contacting you shortly to fix appointments for the two consultants, Ms Ana Kessie and Mr Dan Lui, who will be based at the Ministry during their visit to the Cook Islands, to meet with you to discuss trade issues.

The main questions that the consultation seeks to cover are included in the attached document but can be summarised as: *How should we in the Cook Islands organise ourselves to ensure we participate effectively in international trade and international trade negotiations?*

Yours sincerely,

Myra Patai

Secretary

(Attach appendix 3 from Inception Report)