



Agenda item 2: *Consideration for Adoption of a proposed draft Declaration of Partnership*

Recommendations

The PIDC Chair is invited to:

1. **welcome** the efforts undertaken to date to Develop the Declaration;
 2. **note** the importance of collaboration;
 3. **note** the importance of formalising collaborative arrangements to ensure continuity and
 4. **advise** the meeting that pending a favourable outcome from this gathering, the Declaration will be taken to the PIDC Board to consider at its next meeting at the end of the month for possible endorsement for consideration by Members at the 2018 Regular Annual Meeting in June.
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Purpose

To brief and provide talking points for the PIDC Board representatives to the Joint Pacific Regional Law Enforcement Organisation Board Meeting on the proposed *Declaration of Partnership on Regional Cooperation in Law Enforcement and Border Security between the Regional Organisations of OCO, PICP and PIDC* (referred to as the 'Declaration').

Background

2. OCO, PICP and PIDC currently engage in a number of mutually supporting activities due to overlapping regional objectives in promoting national security and law enforcement. The Secretariats share information, engage regularly, and seek to coordinate joint activities where possible especially in the areas of capacity building and information and intelligence sharing. The Secretariat's normally seek to engage face to face on the fringes of their respective annual conferences or on an ad hoc basis as the need arises. Traditionally, the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat organised an annual meeting of the organisations to prepare common positions in preparation for the Forum Regional Security Committee (FRSC) meeting which was the primary regional mechanism to discuss Pacific law enforcement and security issues to advise Forum Leaders.

3. While current collaborative practices between the organisations have been based mainly on the relationships established through common interests to maintain regional security and combat transnational crime as outlined in the Honiara, Aitutaki and Nasonini Declarations, (summarised in attached Annex One) Article 3 of PIDC's Constitution specifically provides that the purpose of PIDC includes to:

- *act as a focal point for collaboration with other regional and international bodies and organisations such as the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat (PIFS), Oceania Customs Organisation (OCO), the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police Conference (PICP), Pacific Islands Law Officers Network (PILON), Interpol, PACRIM, IATA, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and relevant United Nations agencies.*

4. These collaborative practices are further highlighted in MOUs that PIDC has signed with both OCO and PICP in the past to facilitate cooperation with these organisations. In 2000 PIDC signed an MoU with OCO to dialogue and enable two-way exchange of information, advice and assistance on a range of common issues in areas including:

- improved border management;
- service delivery options;
- trends in criminal activity for Customs and Immigration;
- training on technical skills common to both Customs and Immigration Officers; and
- organisational structures and Secretariat support arrangements.

5. In 2007, PIDC further signed a Cooperative Agreement with PICP to enable a two-way exchange of information, advice and assistance particularly through:

- combining resources and expertise, where appropriate, to enhance and strengthen border management;
- sharing of intelligence information and trends in criminal activity of relevance to both Police and Immigration where the laws of the disclosing party's country permits the sharing of such information;
- training of staff, where appropriate in areas common to both Police and Immigration functions;
- holding regular meetings, including other regional partner organisations, to discuss issues of common interest and concern; and
- maintaining a dedicated contact officer within each Secretariat responsible for receiving official requests and coordinating assistance.

6. In meetings undertaken between the three Secretariats over the past several months, there have been discussions on enhancing the coordination of activities through formalising the current collaborative arrangements that exist collectively between the three organisations OCO, PICP and PIDC into one document. This discussion was especially relevant given uncertainty around the continuation of the FRSC which had been the main coordinating forum for the three organisations.

7. To enhance and formalise this tri-lateral collaboration, the Secretariats have developed a draft Declaration of Partnership outlining possible common objectives and how these can be achieved for the mutual benefit of the three organisations and their Members.

Analysis

8. The Declaration seeks to lay a foundation for enhanced cooperation between the three organisations by formalising areas of engagement and promoting inter-agency cooperation to share information, support common training activities and combat transnational organised crime. Parties will seek to:

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- a) conduct regular and systematic joint meetings including ongoing participation at each Party's annual governance meeting (discussed in more detail in Agenda Item 3);
- b) encourage the collection and sharing of relevant information and intelligence and best practices;
- c) promote coordinated delivery of training and participation;
- d) support national efforts to develop and strengthen inter-agency cooperation;
- e) coordinate contributions to strategic regional assessment reports and regional prioritization processes; and
- f) promote better understanding and appreciation of each agency's role and function for enhancing closer cooperation between all agencies.

9. These areas of engagement are identical or aligned to the current objectives of PIDC contained in the Constitution and previous MOUs signed with OCO and PICP and do not impose any new or onerous obligations. The Declaration focuses on transnational and organised crime, border security and recognises the need for better collaboration between law enforcement agencies to ensure effective measures are taken. In addition, the Declaration if endorsed, can be reviewed, amended and terminated by the three Parties.

10. The Declaration also provides an opportunity for the three organisations to highlight their priorities and raise the profile of their key activities to maximise use of resources and minimize possible duplication. It re-emphasises at the regional level the need to combat law enforcement threats and consolidates the existing MoUs between the organisations into a common document.

Recommendation

11. The Secretariat supports further consideration of the Declaration through submission for review by the Board and ultimately for consideration by Members at the 2018 Regular Annual Meeting. The Secretariat notes that chronologically if this is to be discussed by the respective annual meetings of the three organisations, then OCO and PIDC will meet in June, followed by PICP meeting in September.

Strategic Implications

12. The proposed Declaration provides a pathway for enhanced collaboration and will support the Secretariat in implementing PIDC objectives contained in the PIDC Constitution, the 2016 – 2018 Strategic Plan and the Results Management Suite. In addition, the Declaration formalises the relationships between the three organisations to ensure continuity of collaboration during times of staff turnover.

Financial Implications

13. The Declaration is only being raised for discussion and does not call for any new resources although once finalized, joint funding proposals for joint activities will be encouraged where feasible and will need to be included in the annual work plans.

Pacific Islands Forum Regional Security Architecture

Forum Regional Security Committee

The annual meeting of the Forum Regional Security Committee (FRSC) is the principal forum for setting a regional security agenda and identifying priorities for enhancing the capacity of members to respond to internal and external security threats.

Security Declarations

1992 Honiara Declaration on Law Enforcement Cooperation: Recognised that an adverse law enforcement environment could threaten the sovereignty, security and economic integrity of Forum members and jeopardise economic and social development and called for closer law enforcement cooperation at the regional level.

1997 Aitutaki Declaration on Regional Security Cooperation: Forum Leaders agreed to a number of principles governing security cooperation in the region.

2000 Biketawa Declaration: The Declaration sets the framework for regional crisis management and conflict resolution initiatives.

2000 Nadi Framework Initiative: Legal Framework for a Common Approach to Weapons Control in the Pacific region.

2002 Nasonini Declaration on Regional Security: Leaders recognised the need for immediate and sustained regional action in response to the current regional security environment.