



## Vanuatu hosts regional meeting of chief justices

**THE CHIEF JUSTICE OF** Vanuatu, Vincent Lunabek, is hosting a high-level regional meeting of Chief Justices from across the region in, Port Vila between 18-20 October. This meeting is attended by 9 chief justices from Samoa, FSM, Palau, Nauru, Tonga, PNG, Kiribati, Solomon Is and Vanuatu.

From 12 to 20 October 2011, the Pacific Judicial Development Programme (PJDP) has organized 3 conferences/workshops in Port Vila – a workshop for National Coordinators, a meeting of the members of the Program Executive Committee which decides on policy matters for the PJDP, and a Leadership workshop for 9 Chief Justice

es of the Pacific region.

This meeting is promoting regional leadership as part of the Pacific Judicial Development Programme [PJDP].

The New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade in partnership with AusAID launched the second phase of the Pacific Judicial Development Programme (PJDP). PJDP Phase 2 (6 July, 2010-30 June, 2012) is designed to build on the achievements of the Programme's first phase and the earlier Pacific Judicial Education Programme by supporting participating Pacific Island Countries (PICs) to enhance the professional competence of judicial and court officers, along with the processes and systems they use.

PJDP will operate in 14 PICs, namely: Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

The goal of PJDP generally, is to strengthen governance and rule of law in Pacific Island Countries through enhanced access to justice and professional judicial officers who act independently according to legal principles; its purpose is to support Pacific Island Countries to enhance the professional competence of judicial officers and court officers, and the processes and systems that they use.

And in their meeting this

week, the Chief justices of the region are discussing a range of topics such as promoting improvements to justice including customary dispute resolution, developing judicial governance, introducing codes of judicial conduct, modernising judicial administration systems, strengthening the monitoring and evaluation of court performance, and the training of judges court officers and lay magistrates across the region.

The chief justices will take the recommendations arising from these discussions back to their countries for implementation, and will meet again in Apia Samoa next March to monitor progress over coming months.

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