



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Effective Accountability through the strengthened Kiribati Audit Bill 2017 – Stakeholders workshops, Tarawa, Kiribati, 8 and 9 May, 2017.**

Kiribati officials of government ministries and State-owned Enterprises (SOEs) attended two alternate workshops on 'Effective Accountability through the strengthened Kiribati Audit Bill 2017 for audit entities', held on the 8th and 9th May, 2017 at the USP Campus, Tarawa, Kiribati. "Greater knowledge and better understanding by audit entities of the citizens' mandate, tendered through the new Kiribati Audit Bill 2017 for the Audit Office, is a catalyst for enhanced public service delivery, stronger stakeholder engagement, and effective public accountability and transparency in Kiribati" said Mrs. Matereta Raiman, Auditor-General of Kiribati, in her address to the workshop participants. The workshops were jointly conducted by the Kiribati National Audit Office (KNAO) and the Pacific Association of Supreme Audit Institutions (PASAI).

Nineteen staff from seven government ministries and twenty-four officials from various State-owned Enterprises attended these workshops on alternate days. The core content of the workshops was on the Kiribati Audit Bill in which staff from KNAO, led by the Auditor-General, presented and explained the main parts of the bill, which will be enforced once it is passed by Parliament in their next sitting. Interactive discussions were made by participants seeking better understanding and clarification on particular aspects of the bill. In particular, the implications of the various sections. The KNAO provided practical illustrations on how those sections would apply for their respective type of entities.

In addition, PASAI Chief Executive, Mr. Tiofilusi Tiueti provided an overview of PASAI and the state of accountability and transparency in the Pacific region, and emphasised the value and benefits of Supreme Audit Institutions (SAIs) in making a difference to the lives of citizens.

Mr. Tauaasa Taafaki, Aid Manager and Deputy Head of Mission for the New Zealand High Commission in Kiribati, during his opening speech left an inspiring challenge for participants to think carefully about these foreign concepts such as transparency, accountability, good governance, independence of the Auditor-General, strengthening public sector efficiency and effectiveness and value for money, to benefit our people and our citizens. He said, "*...we find ways to reduce or remove the tensions that exist between our traditional customs and our culture and these foreign concepts so that we can improve the quality of life for our people*". A valid challenge in reminding public sector officials on their duties of delivering quality public service.

The workshops were funded by the Government of Kiribati through KNAO, and also the Australia Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade through PASAI.

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Photo above: Staff from government ministries participated in the workshop on Monday, 8 May 2017



Photo above: Officials from state-owned enterprises (SOEs) participated in the workshop on Tuesday, 9 May 2017



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