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## Governor Lemanu Mauga arrives in Apia for the Second Atoa o Samoa Executive Meeting

*"It is our hope that the result of these talks lays the foundation for the work ahead, and to move both countries forward."*



*Pictured above: Honorable Tuala Tevaga Iosefo Ponefasio, Deputy Prime Minister of the Independent State of Samoa, welcoming and greeting Honorable Lemanu Palepoi Sialega Mauga, Governor of American Samoa to Apia.*

On Tuesday, October 11, 2022, the Honorable Lemanu Palepoi Sialega Mauga arrived safely in Apia for the bi-annual Atoa o Samoa Executive meeting that is scheduled for this Thursday and Friday. Upon the arrival of Governor Lemanu, First Lady Ella Mauga, Chief of Staff Loa Tuimavave T. Laupola, and other members of the American Samoa delegation, Deputy Prime Minister Tuala Tevaga Iosefo Ponefasio welcomed and greeted them on the tarmac.

“Opportunities as such allow us to strengthen cooperation between the two Samoas in development areas of mutual interests as discussed in July,” stated Governor Lemanu. He continued, “It is our hope that the result of these talks lays the foundation for the work ahead, and to move both counties forward. As said before, although we are two separate countries with very different governments, we have a common goal and most importantly, duty to our Samoan people.”

The following is the *tentative* program for the American Samoa delegation this week:

On Wednesday, October 12th, American Samoa delegations are scheduled to meet with their respective counterparts as planned by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, followed by site visits to form the basis of agencies reporting to the Atoa o Samoa Executive meeting. On Thursday, October 13th, the Second Atoa o Samoa Executive Meeting will officially open with the Guard of Honor in the front lawn of the Government Building at 7:30 am. Immediately following will be the prayer service, the opening remarks by both Co-Chairs Governor Lemanu and Honorable Fiame Naomi Mataafa. To conclude the official opening ceremony is the traditional fa’aloaloaga. Soon after, delegations, observers and special guests will then travel to Taumeasina Island Resort for the bilateral meeting. On Friday, October 14th will be the closing of the bilateral discussions between agencies and line ministries of the two Samoas.

During the First Atoa o Samoa Executive Meeting, the two Samoas held discussions at the ASCC Multipurpose Center, American Samoa on the 28th of July on issues of mutual importance. Key issues that were discussed are as follows: Health, Economy, Education, Information and Communication Technology, Immigration, Agriculture and Fisheries, Finance, Environment, Climate, Weather & Geoscience, Transport between the two Samoas, Public Works matters, and Foreign Affairs and Trade. Other issues/matters discussed were cultural preservation of language and literacy, and Land Swap Agreement. These matters will be on the agenda for the second executive session.

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