

**Remarks of the Prime Minister Hon Tuilaepa Lupesoliai Sailele Malielegaoi
for the Opening Ceremony of the Court House at
Mulinuu, Monday 25 January 2010**

Reverend Elder Oka Fauolo

Your Highness the Head of State

His Excellency Mr Chen Changzhi and the delegation from the National People's Congress of China

Honourable Ministers of Cabinet

Your Honour the Chief Justice and members of the Judiciary

Hon Speaker and Members of Parliament

Members of the Diplomatic Corps

Heads of Religions

Representations of the Business Community

Heads of Government Organisations

Distinguish Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish on behalf of His Highness the Head of State and the Government of Samoa to express our gratitude to the Government of the People's Republic of China for their ready acceptance of our government's request to assist Samoa with this very important infrastructure project for our country.

I would like to acknowledge and thank His Excellency Mr Chen Changzhi and the delegation of China's National People's Congress for coming all the way from Beijing to join us in this ceremony to officially dedicate the new Court House building.

I wish also to record our appreciation to China's Ambassador to Samoa, His Excellency Mr Ma Chongren and his office for their key responsibility in coordinating the project from the beginning until its successful completion we celebrate today.

I acknowledge with thanks the presence of the Vice President of the China Eximbank and his delegation and also the representatives of the Tianjin Construction Company for the pivotal roles of their organisations in the financing and construction of the Court House.

I would ask Mr Chen Changzhi and Ambassador Ma Chongren to please convey to His Excellency President, Hu Jintao and also to His Excellency Premier Wen Jiabao to whom I personally mentioned this project our sincere gratitude for this new milestone in the relations between Samoa and China.

To complete my vote of thanks, I would like to thank the Honourable Minister of Justice and his Ministry, the Chief Justice and the Judiciary, the government agencies and private sector businesses that provided Samoa's contribution to the construction of the project. Thank you to all of you who made the project possible.

This new Court House brings together in one location the various parts of our central Courts system and makes available the much needed opportunity for greater efficiency in the management and administration of the work of the Supreme Court, the District Court and the Lands and Titles Court.

The important objective or key outcome that the Courts would now be able to aim for with this new building is to ensure the efficient processing of cases and the delivery of court decisions.

For over a hundred years from the time of the German administration, the wooden buildings housing our courts always presented a very high fire risk and the attendance nightmare scenario of irreplaceable records going up in smoke and lost forever.

In seeking the assistance of the Government of China for this project, amongst the important requirements for the new building to provide were: a substantially reduced fire risk, a much safer working environment for the courts officers and, a more secure storage for important court documents.

This new Court House built with “bricks, mortar and steel” achieves these important requirements in very large measure.

To end my remarks, I thank His Highness the Head of State, our Guests from the People’s Republic of China, Members of Diplomatic Corp and all the dignitaries of the Church, the Government and our country for your presence to witness the opening ceremony of the new Court House.

Thank you.

Soifua.