

ment, Churches, NGOs, Private Institutions and others) and voice their concerns on any matter on the agenda. However, only registered members are entitled to vote.

HRDMT OFFICE BEARERS

It is the responsibility of the AGM to elect the Office Bearers of the Movement. The Office Bearers for 2002-2003 are:

Rev. Simote Vea - Chair
Prof. Futa Helu - Deputy Chair
S. 'Akilisi Pohiva - Secretary
Finau Tutone - Deputy Secretary
Kaufo'ou 'Amato - Treasurer (Ex-officio)
Lopeti Senituli - Director of HRDMT Office (Ex-officio)

HRDMT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

It is also the responsibility of the AGM to elect members of the Executive Committee. The HRDMT Executive Committee is made up of the 6 Office Bearers and 18 elected members. There are 5 seats in the Executive Committee reserved for women and two for Youth. There are also seats for one representative each from the 'Eua, Niua, Vava'u and Ha'apai, Tongatapu Parliamentary electoral constituencies, and two each from the Western, Central and Eastern districts of Tongatapu.

The Executive Committee meets every 2 months though the Chairman has discretion to call emergency meetings when the need arises.

HRDMT OFFICE

The HRDMT Office employs paid workers. The Director is the head of the office and is answerable to the Executive Committee. In 2003 there are 3 permanent employees including the Director.

The Director is responsible for the daily administration of the office and its staff. He ensures material and financial support for the Movement, pre-

pare annual reports to present to the AGM and partner agencies and bi-monthly reports to present to the Executive Committee. He also establishes and maintains good relation with the Government and all sectors of Tongan society, partner agencies and other organizations in the national, regional and international level.

The Office is responsible for the coordination and implementation of the works of the Movement approved by AGM, Executive Committee and Staff Meeting of the HRDMT Office.

MEMBERSHIP

Any Tongan citizen who agrees with the ethos of the Movement and supports its aims and objective is welcomed to join. He/she must also abide by the Constitution and by-laws of the Movement. Intending members are required to apply in writing to the Executive Committee. On approval, he/she is expected to pay the annual subscription fee of \$5.

WHAT MAKES HRDMT UNIQUE

We are a democratic institution, a non-government organization; gender sensitive and will continue to exist for the people of Tonga.

Human Rights & Democracy Movement Office

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Fatafehi Road,
PO Box 843, Nuku'alofa, Tonga,
Phone (676) 25-501, Fax (676) 26-330,
Email: demo@kalianet.to*

Webpage address:

<http://www.planet-tonga.com/HRDMT>

Human Rights & Democracy Movement In Tonga

WHO WE ARE & WHAT WE DO?



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BRIEF HISTORY OF HUMAN RIGHTS & DEMOCRACY MOVEMENT IN TONGA

The Human Rights & Democracy Movement In Tonga was formed in the late 1970's by a small group of Tongans who believed that changes were needed to bring about more democratic governance in Tonga.

It was formally established and recognized as the Pro-Democracy Movement in 1992. This name was later changed in 1998 to TONGA HUMAN RIGHTS & DEMOCRACY MOVEMENT. Because the Government refused our application for incorporation under that name it was further changed to its current form in September 2002 in the hope it would be more acceptable. As of July 2003 government has not yet approved our application for incorporation.

KEY PEOPLE

The initiative to push for democratic governance in Tonga was led by prominent personalities. These courageous people were at the forefront in voicing the concerns of the Movement culminating in the 1992 Convention on the Tongan Constitution and Democracy in the Basilica of St. Anthony of Padua, Nuku'alofa. The issues addressed related to social justice, exploitation of the poor, inequality, womens' rights, land shortage, constitutional amendments and corruption. Amongst the leaders were the late Dr. Sione 'Amanaki Havea, the late Bishop Patelisio Punou-Ki-Hihifo Finau, Rev. Simote Vea, Fr. Selwyn 'Akau'ola, Prof. Futa Helu, 'Akilisi Pohiva, 'Eakalafi Moala, Havea Katoa, Viliami Fukofuka, Finau Tutone, Sione Teisina Fuko, 'Iunisi Malolo Fuka, Dr. Feleti Sevele, 'Uliti Uata, Lopeti Senituli and many others.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The Movement primarily strives to serve the people of Tonga. Its working philosophy is based on the text of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Christian principles.

Our objectives are:

- To act on behalf of the people who support the Movement and believe in an open, free and democratic government;
- To strive to achieve the goal of forming an open, free and democratic government of the people, elected by the people, for the people, based on the principles of equality, justice and peace;
- To seek the most appropriate democratic system of government for Tonga;
- To encourage public discussions and dialogue on various aspects of a democratic government;
- To cooperate with other organizations and associations which have similar principles and objective;
- To encourage and defend the doctrines of the 'Rule of Law' and the true separation of powers in government'
- To strive to achieve democratic control of ownership of all natural resources for the benefit of all Tongans and the proper management and protection of natural resources and the environment for the benefit of the present and future generations.
- To achieve equal access and rights of all citizens, both men and women, to employment and education opportunities, information, technology, housing, health and welfare services, cultural and leisure activities and the law;
- To achieve greater equality in the distribution of income, wealth and economic and educational opportunities.

- To ensure that all human rights and fundamental freedom are entrenched in Tonga's Constitution and are implemented;
- To discourage all forms of discrimination.

WORK AGENDA

The Movement's annual work programme is focused primarily on public education and advocacy. This annual work programme includes weekly radio programmes, fortnightly television programmes, fortnightly village seminars and workshops for youth, website, Annual Human Rights Situation Reports for Tonga, Essay Competitions, Advisory Service to the Public, a library, an annual Human Rights Week program. Sixteen identified issues of the work programme include: Tonga citizens from overseas and their operations in Tonga, Public Utilities and Services, Income generating bodies in which government has interests and investments, Land/Environment, Constitution, Government Accountability and Transparency, Education, Military Expenditure, Church, Government Income and Expenditure, Non-Governmental, Youth and Community Organisations, Corruption, Foreign Policy, Women's Rights, Drugs.

HOW IS HRDMT ORGANISED?

The legitimacy and authority of the Movement is derived from its membership. The main decision-making bodies of the Movement are the Annual General Meeting, and The Executive Committee.

HRDMT AGM

The AGM is held once a year within 3 months of the end of the previous financial year of the Movement in July. All registered members are obliged to attend any AGM and each member is entitled to one vote. The AGM is open to all members of the public to attend, (which includes the Govern-