

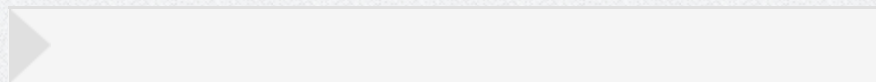


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Pacific MPs sign up to curb corruption


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Parliamentarians from the small Pacific island nation of Kiribati have voted to set up the first national chapter of the Global Organisation of Parliamentarians Against Corruption in the Pacific Islands.

Meeting in the Kiribati Parliament at Tarawa, government and Opposition MPs signed up to ensure there was transparent oversight of anti-corruption as Kiribati prepares to join 166 other nations which have signed the UN's Convention against Corruption.

“GOPAC Kiribati now joins national parliamentary GOPAC groups in Australia and New Zealand as regional MPs assert their key role as advocates against corruption, which robs communities of sustainable development,” said GOPAC Oceania chair John Hyde.

Mr Hyde praised the commitment of AusAID funding a new four-year USD\$4.3 million Pacific Regional Anti-Corruption Project in 15 Pacific nations, including Kiribati.

“It's great to see the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) joining together to administer AusAID's anti-corruption fund – their work in Kiribati has helped GOPAC attract nearly half of the nation's MPs to form their national chapter,” said Mr Hyde.

GOPAC Kiribati chair Dr Mariko Tofinga said MPs in the island nation wanted to enhance Kiribati's anti-corruption policies, laws and institutions.

“Kiribati MPs understand that corruption robs our people of clean water and affordable health programmes – corruption keeps developing nations in poverty,” said Dr Tofinga.

“We want to build up the capacity of our MPs in best-practice anti-corruption so we can advocate throughout all our isolated and diverse island communities.”

GOPAC is a worldwide alliance of parliamentarians working together to combat corruption, strengthen good government, and uphold the rule of law. Based in Ottawa, Canada, GOPAC has 54 national chapters on 6 continents. GOPAC supports its members' efforts through original research, global anti-corruption capacity building, and international peer support. Visit GOPAC on the web at gopacnetwork.org, on Twitter at twitter.com/GOPAC_Eng, and on Facebook at facebook.com/gopacnetwork

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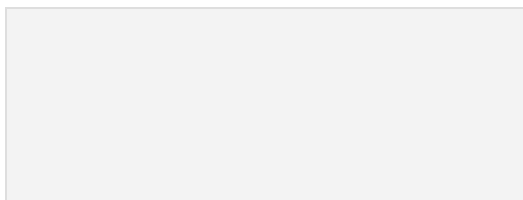


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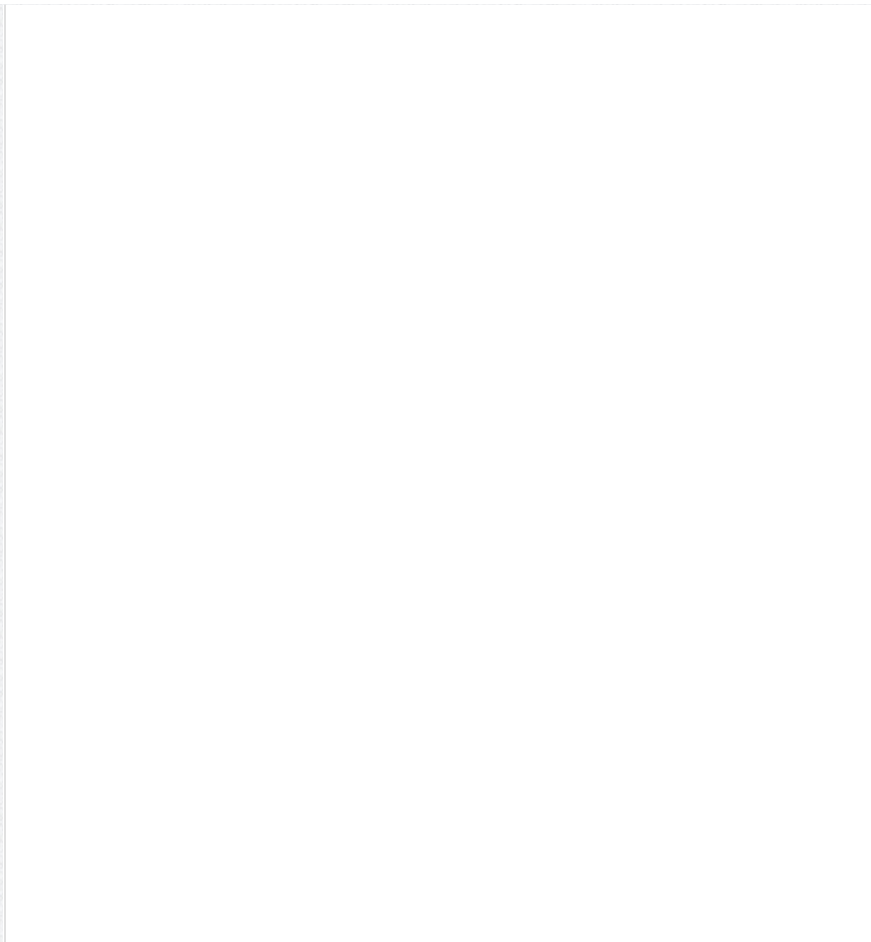
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