The role of the Pacific Islands Forum in enhancing Pacific regional cooperation on cyber security

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Outline

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    - Forum Regional Security Committee (FRSC)

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Pacific Islands Forum

"Our Pacific Vision is for a region of peace, harmony, security, social inclusion, and prosperity, so that all Pacific people can lead free, healthy and productive lives."

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Pacific Islands Forum

- The Pacific Islands Forum is the premier inter-governmental organisation in the Pacific region.

- Comprises 16 independent and self-governing states located in the North and South Pacific: Australia, Cook Islands, FSM, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, NZ, Niue, Palau, PNG, RMI, Samoa, SI, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu.

- The Agreement establishing the Forum also establishes the annual meeting of heads of governments of Forum Members (referred to as 'Forum Leaders') as the pre-eminent decision making body of the Forum.

- Its main purpose is to strengthen regional cooperation and integration, including through the pooling of regional resources of governance and the alignment of policies, in order to further Forum members' shared goals of economic growth, sustainable development, good governance and security

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- The Forum has also evolved to articulate a set of shared principles and values, which include commitments to the rule of law, regional security, democratic governance and respect for human rights.

- 2014 Framework for Pacific Regionalism:
  - **Pacific Vision**: for a region of peace, harmony, security, social inclusion, and prosperity, so that all Pacific people can lead free , healthy, and productive lives.
  - One of its 6 key regional **values** guiding policy making and implementation: "We seek peaceful, safe, and stable communities and countries , ensuring full security and wellbeing for the people of the Pacific".
  - One of its 4 key **objectives**: "security that ensures stable and safe human, environmental and political conditions for all".

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Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat

- Secretariat of the Forum. It is based in Suva.
- An international organisation established by treaty, enjoying legal personality in each of its 16 member countries.
- 3 key programmes: Political Governance and Security; Economic Governance; Strategic Partnership and Cooperation
- Primary role is to 'provide advice, coordination and assistance in implementing the decisions of the Forum Leaders.'
- Forum Officials Committee (comprising reps from all Forum members) oversees the operations of the Secretariat and provides high-level strategic advice to Leaders .
- Annual work plan is derived from Leaders' annual Communiqués, and high level ministerial and officials meetings.
- Coordinates implementation of the new Framework for Pacific Regionalism.
- The Secretary General, currently Tuiloma Neroni Slade of Samoa, also Chairs the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP).

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Forum Regional Security Committee

- Forum Leaders regularly reinforce the importance of regional cooperation as a way to maintain and improve the security of the region, as well as endorse specific strategies, such as increasing regional participation in relevant regional and international negotiations and treaties.

- Core function: provide advice to Forum Leaders on the wide range of security issues that affect or may affect the Pacific region.

- Within these broad terms of reference, the FRSC:
  - identifies opportunities for regional cooperation in addressing current and emerging security threats;
  - facilitates the exchange of information about the types of technical assistance available to Forum Island Countries on regional security priorities;
  - shares information about the security environment of the individual countries; and
  - provides a level of oversight of activities initiated under Forum Declarations, including the Biketawa Declaration, Honiara Declaration, and Nasonini Declaration.

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Forum Regional Security Committee

- Coordinated by PIFS Political Governance and Security Programme.

- Key Forum mechanism for discussing issues concerning regional security issues including the rule of law, democratic governance, and human rights.

- Represents the peak mechanism for directing and coordinating the development of regional policies and activities to address regional security threats.

- Comprises Member countries and the various regional organisations with law-enforcement and justice related mandates, including the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police, the Oceania Customs Organisation, the Pacific Immigration Directors' Conference ,and the Pacific Islands Law Officers' Network.

- International organisations operating in the security and law enforcement sphere also regularly participate in the annual meeting of the FRSC, for the opportunity it provides to share information with senior officials from the foreign affairs, internal affairs and justice ministries of Member countries. For example, the UN Office for Drugs and Crime, the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs and various counter-terrorism related bodies of the UN.

FRSC: cyber security updates

- 2003: the Committee requested the Secretariat and specialised law enforcement agencies (e.g. OCO, PIDC and SPCPC) to develop a short paper drawing together statistics on the extent of transnational crime in the region and possible future trends. The paper encompassed an overview of the situation in the region including on electronic crime.

- 2004:
  - FRSC noted updates in trends in transnational crime (as updated by PIFS and other regional specialised law enforcement agencies) which included electronic crime;
  - endorsed the establishment of a Working Group to develop a regional strategy to address electronic crime, including a training needs analysis and the development of model laws.

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FRSC: cyber security updates

- 2004:

o The Secretariat informed the Committee that improvements in communication technology had facilitated the activities of transnational organised criminal groups and Forum Island Countries were vulnerable to those activities because of the lack of resources and the technical capacity to address electronic crimes effectively.

o There were basically three main challenges in responding to electronic crimes. There was the technical complexity of electronic crimes and in particular, the sophisticated nature of electronics linked to the technical challenge; the legal constraints resulting from the pace at which technological developments quickly make laws redundant; and the high level of skills and expertise required to investigate electronic crimes.

o The Secretariat proposed the establishment of a small working group to develop further measures and initiatives to assist Forum Island Countries respond to the threat posed by electronic crimes. The small working group could be tasked to develop legislation and formal and non-formal cooperative mechanisms to assist Forum Island Countries respond to the threat that electronic crimes posed.

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FRSC: cyber security updates

- 2010 : the FRSC noted the role and activities of the Economic Development Division of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community in security matters, including cyber security.

- 2011:
  - the FRSC noted the work that had been undertaken to address issues, including cybercrime and the need to address emerging and significant issues in these areas;
  - the Committee also noted recent activities in relation to strengthening cyber crime legislation by the SPC, including the Pacific Cyber Crime Legislation Workshop, held in Tonga from 26-29 April 2011.

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Cyber security from the FRSC

- 2012: the Forum Regional Security Committee considered a paper that provided an update on regional responses to cybercrime. The update included:

  o endorsement in 2010 by Pacific ICT Ministers of the *Tonga Declaration* which included a direction from Ministers for officials to *work with the SPC, the Council of Europe, the ITU and other development partners to develop appropriate policy, legislative and regulatory frameworks and strategies to combat cyber crime and promote Internet safety and security, including child online protection'*. The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) has developed initiatives in response to this direction, including (in collaboration with the Council of Europe and the Australia Attorney-General's Department) a workshop on Pacific cybercrime legislation that was held in Tonga in April 2011;

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Cyber security from the FRSC

o endorsement by Commonwealth Heads of Government of the *Commonwealth Cybercrime Initiative* in October 2011 to help build the necessary investigative, technical, enforcement and prosecutorial capacity within Commonwealth developing countries to combat cybercrime;

o the range of assistance available to Forum Island Countries by international and regional organisations – including the ITU (ICB4PAC Project outcomes), the SPC (a workshop on Pacific cybercrime legislation that was held in Tonga in April 2011), and the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police (PICP) (Cyber Safety Pasifika Programme) – in developing policy, legislative, and regulatory frameworks to address cybercrime, as well as in facilitating community education about the online environment and enhancing policing capabilities in relation to cybercrime.

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Cyber security from the FRSC

- ▪ 2012 FRSC outcomes:
- o noted the ongoing threats posed by cybercrime and the vulnerabilities of Forum Islands countries to cybercrime;
- o noted that addressing the threats posed by cybercrime require a multi-faceted approach to develop comprehensive and robust policies, legislation and enforcement capacities, as well as enhanced community awareness;
- o noted and supported the range of regional activities currently being undertaken by the Secretariat, ITU, SPC, Commonwealth, and the PICP to assist Members develop robust policies, legislation and enforcement capacities in relation to cybercrime;
- o encouraged Members to utilise the various regional resources available to assist combat with domestic cybercrime;
- o recognised the need for and encouraged governments, in particular their law enforcement agencies, to work together with the Secretariat and other regional organisations, in a coordinated manner; and
- o noted the legislative drafting and review assistance available from the Secretariat to assist Members develop effective legislation to address cybercrime.

FRSC: cyber security updates

- 2013:
  - the Committee invited New Zealand to carry out a needs assessment review of cybercrime vulnerabilities amongst Forum Island Countries, with an aim to guide future cyber security capacity building efforts in the region.

- 2014:
  - NZ reported that an initial environment scan was underway in association with the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police, and that preliminary results highlighted the range of cyber capacity in the region and an interest in understanding cyber threats more fully.
  - The Committee also noted that the terms of reference for a full needs assessment would be developed in consultation with all Forum Island Countries.

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