

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **CATA 43<sup>rd</sup> Technical Conference attended by the Deputy Prime Minister and Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry**

The 43<sup>rd</sup> Technical Conference of the Commonwealth Association of Tax Administrators, held in the Republic of Maldives from 10<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> July 2023, was attended by Deputy Prime Minister, Hon. Tuala Tevaga Iosefo Ponifasio, who is also the Minister of MCR. His attendance was accompanied by the CEO of the Ministry, Fonoti Talaitupu Lia Taefu.

The conference for this year focused on the theme '***Role of Data in Tax Compliance Management and Taxation of Hospitality Industry***', and gave recognition to the importance of the work of tax administrations around the world, and noted the move towards data driven decision making to make it easier for taxpayers to comply with tax laws. Given the objective change of modern tax administration to increase voluntary compliance of taxpayers, data can be used as a powerful tool to drive compliance. Data transmission, extraction, cleansing, analysis and information security play a significant role in the work of tax administration and thus, require progressive developments to ensure a strong and effective compliance risk management framework is in place.

The theme was divided into five main topics to further simulate and encourage discussions amongst the delegates through a total of nine sessions. The five main topics were on information sharing on the national, bilateral and multilateral levels and the critical role of this exchange in the effectiveness of tax administrations, the move to strengthen tax administrations through automation, mitigating international tax risks in the hospitality industry and considering the relationship of tax and the environment. Country experiences were shared on these main topics and the Deputy Prime Minister as the head of delegation from Samoa also provided update on the work by MCR on Samoa E-tax and TIMS and the importance of these systems in the work of the Ministry. He also advised the meeting on work now progressing in the upgrade of the RMS system which will be a substantial move and change for the Ministry.

Furthermore, the delegation from Samoa attended a site visit on the local island of Huraa showcasing the pivotal contribution of the tourism industry in the economy of Maldives and had the opportunity to experience a day of Maldivian craftsmanship, culture and cuisine. We are truly grateful to God for his guidance to and from the conference and are thankful to the Honorable Prime Minister and Cabinet for the approval granted which enabled the esteemed delegates from Samoa to attend.

