

Executive Instability in TUVALU & NAURU

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Outline

- The issue of instability
- Parliamentary structures of both countries
- Options that could be introduced

Executive Instability

- Motions of vote of no confidence in the Head of Government
- MPs defect from Government to join Opposition
- Instability includes:
 - Different HoG
 - A change in the Ministerial portfolios of Cabinet, or a new Cabinet altogether or just a new PM/President

Tuvalu

Year	Prime Minister
1978-1981	Toaribi Lauti
1981-89	Tomasi Puapua
1989-92	Bikenibeu Paeniu
1993-96	Kamuta Latasi
1996-99	Bikenibeu Paeniu
1999-2000	Ionatana Ionatana
2000-2001	Faimalaga Luka
2001-2002	Koloa Talake
2002-04	Saufatu Sopoaga
2006-2010	Apisai Ielemia
2010	Maatia Toafa
2010-11	Willy Telavi

Why is exec instability an issue?

- Economy suffers
- Lack of continuity of policies
- International obligations
- Implementation of reforms inconsistent
- Termination of civil servants
- Public confidence undermined

Political Systems in Tuvalu and Nauru

- Westminster parliamentary systems
- Nauru has 18 MPs, Tuvalu has 15 MPs
- No formal political party system
- Both have HoG selected by majority in Parliament
- Speakers are elected as MPs
- No control/consequence for MPs that cross the floor
- No limit on when an MP tables a motion of no confidence

Options

1. People to vote for PM directly (Kiribati Constitution)
 - Section 32 of the Constitution
 - **1979 – 1991** H.E Ieremia Tabai, GCMG (Nonouti)
 - 1991-1994 H.E Teatao Teannaki (Abaiang)
 - 1994-2002 H.E Teburoro Tito (South Tarawa)
 - 2003- current H.E Anote Tong (Maiana)
2. The office of the Speaker filled by a non-elected MP (Niue Constitution)

Options 2

3. MP who crosses floor to resign from Parliament and a by-election to be held (*Electoral Act 1967 Samoa*)
4. Limit the option of MP to vote on a motion of no-confidence (*Vanuatu's Constitution (Fourth Amendment) Act 2004*)

Drawbacks to solutions

- It limits the freedom of MPs from changing sides
- It limits the exercise of MPs freedom of expression

Conclusion

The paper introduces possible constitutional and/or legislative controls that are aimed at avoiding political instability and frequent changes in government in Tuvalu and Nauru.

The link between the provisions and political stability and the possible effectiveness of such provisions when introduced in Tuvalu and Nauru will be discussed in a paper which I am compiling for my legal research course.