



# Pacific Conference of Churches

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## **Outcomes of the Pacific Church Leaders' Development Conference 20 – 25 November, 2022**

The Pacific Conference of Churches, in partnership with the Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the National Council of Churches in Australia gathered leaders from 21 Pacific Churches at St. Joseph's Retreat Centre in Sydney, Australia for the first Pacific Church Leaders meeting in 3 years.

Pacific Church Leaders, acknowledged with appreciation, the people of the land: Burramadigal & Bidjigal people, of the Darug Nation; the Australian Government – Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the National Council of Churches Australia as our hosts for this important gathering.

Leaders have listened and reflected and spoken on issues of development, migration, gender-based violence, youth, transnational crime and climate justice.

Journeying together as a Pasifika Household of God, seeking the flourishing of this household amidst the challenges our region faces, Pacific Church leaders:

- Called for a greater engagement by development partners on understanding development as a "whole of life" issue, from the spiritual to the ecological.
- Encouraged development partners to be open to stronger support of community-led development and to recognise the different ways in which monitoring and measuring of community-based development projects can be done.
- Discerned the necessity for greater preparation of our people engaging in migrant work schemes such as PALM (Pacific Australia Labour Mobility Scheme) and for the pastoral and practical care of workers as well as families back home.
- Encouraged the PALM scheme to engage with churches in sending countries and in Australia to support this work.
- Affirmed their commitment to the protection and flourishing of all our vulnerable communities in the Pasifika Household and commended the work

being done by the Pacific Conference of Churches and church partners on eliminating violence against women and children and all vulnerable members of our community.

- Affirmed support the creation of more spaces and opportunities for our young people to develop and strengthen their leadership capabilities. They also called on the PCC Regional Ecumenical Youth Council to ensure all member and partner churches are participating in its activities.
- Expressed deep concern on the issue of transnational crime and in particular the methamphetamine epidemic in our region; and called for greater support for the engagement of churches to address this growing scourge.
- Continued to urge the Australian Government to do better in its commitment to climate justice for its Pasifika family, particularly through firm commitments to the phase out of fossil fuels.

Pacific Church Leaders also committed to ensuring local and regional theological education provides for an ecclesiology that equips Pacific Churches to contribute to the peaceful flourishing of all Pasifika communities.

They further affirmed the need for ongoing ecumenical leadership development for current and emerging leaders.

The Pacific Conference of Churches has been tasked to ensure that these outcomes are developed and operationalised.

Pacific Church Leaders look forward to their next gathering, which they hope to hold in a Pacific Island community.

ENDS.