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PRESS RELEASE

Tonga Seeks Re-rating of 21 FATF Recommendations Under the APG Follow-Up Process

Following significant strengthening of its Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing legislative framework, Tonga has formally submitted request to the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering (APG) for re-rating of 21 out of 40 Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Recommendations under the APG follow-up process.

The mutual evaluation of Tonga's compliance with the FATF International Standards was conducted between 2019 and 2021. These standards represent the internationally recognized requirements for combating money laundering, terrorist financing, and proliferation financing. Following its mutual evaluation, each APG member is required to report to the APG on the progress made in implementing the recommended actions in its Mutual Evaluation Report. Under this follow-up process, a member that has strengthened its legal and regulatory framework may request the re-rating of its technical compliance with the relevant FATF Recommendations.

Tonga's request, submitted by the National Reserve Bank of Tonga (NRBT) to the APG on 1 October 2026, reflects Tonga's substantial efforts to strengthen its legal and regulatory framework for combating money laundering, terrorist financing, and other serious financial crimes. This progress has been achieved through significant legislative reforms, including the enactment of the **Money Laundering and Proceeds of Crime Act in December 2025** and the subsequent introduction of the **Money Laundering and Proceeds of Crime (Preventative Measures and Transaction Reporting) Regulations in October 2026** together with strengthened alignment and implementation capacities of the Government working group including the Ministry of Police, Ministry of Revenue and Customs, Immigration, NRBT and the Attorney General Office to combat financial crimes.

These legislative developments have strengthened the foundation of Tonga's financial integrity framework and provided the basis for seeking a reassessment of its technical compliance ratings against 21 FATF Recommendations. Tonga considers that the strengthened legal and regulatory framework now warrants improved ratings in these areas.

The submission was undertaken with technical assistance from the Asian Development Bank (ADB), and support of the Office of the Attorney General, relevant line Ministries, Ministry of Finance and Hon. Cabinet members. This milestone reflects the continued commitment of the Government of Tonga, supported by its development partners, to strengthening the country's financial integrity framework and ensuring its continued alignment with international standards. The request will now be reviewed by the APG in accordance with its follow-up procedures. The outcome of this submission will be finalized in 2027.

Governor's Office
3 November 2026.