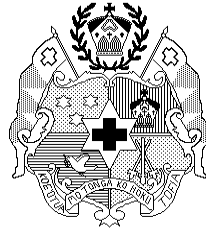


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Our Reference: AK 670/15- c.14

ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE
MEDIA RELEASE
ATTORNEY GENERAL APPLIES TO THE SUPREME COURT TO DECLARE
THAT ELECTION OF MATENI TAPUELUELU AS PEOPLES REPRESENTATIVE
FOR TONGATAPU 4 ELECTORAL CONSTITUENCY WAS
UNCONSTITUTIONAL
7 August 2015

The Attorney General's Office wishes to announce that it has filed in the Supreme Court today a civil action made under the Constitution, against Mateni Tapueluelu, the Peoples Representative for the Tongatapu 4 electoral constituency.

The Attorney General is applying in the civil action to the Supreme Court to declare that the nomination as a candidate on 23 October 2014, and the subsequent election of Mateni Tapueluelu on 27 November 2014, as the Peoples Representative for the Tongatapu 4 electoral constituency, was unlawful and invalid.

The Attorney General claims in the civil action that Mateni Tapueluelu's nomination and election was in breach of clause 65 of the Constitution.

The Attorney General alleges that when Mateni Tapueluelu submitted his nomination as a candidate for the election of a peoples representative for the Tongatapu 4 electoral constituency on 23 October 2014, a judgment order made against Mateni Tapueluelu by the Magistrates Court on 17 June 2011, requiring Mateni Tapueluelu, and two others, to pay damages and legal costs totalling \$14,500.00 to Mr William Clive Edwards, as a result of

defaming Mr Edwards in an article published in the *Ko e Kele'a* newspaper in 2010, remained outstanding, and therefore disqualified Mateni Tapueluelu from being nominated as a candidate or elected in the elections.

The Attorney General also filed with the civil action, two applications to the Supreme Court for administrative and interim orders respectively.

One application was for an urgent hearing of the civil action due to the importance of the civil action made under the Constitution.

The other application was for an order that the salary or remuneration benefits paid to Mateni Tapueluelu as the Peoples Representative for the Tongatapu 4 electoral constituency, be paid into the Court, or it be withheld by the Crown, until this civil action is finally determined by the Courts.

The parties will now wait to receive directions from the Supreme Court as to when this case will be first called in the Supreme Court.

----- **RELEASE ENDS** -----

For further information, please contact:

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