

# MSG Framework Treaty on the Protection of Traditional Knowledge and Expressions of Culture

Written by Administrator

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Leaders of the Special Leader's Summit of the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) agreed to sign the MSG Framework Treaty on Traditional Knowledge & Expressions of Culture at the Vale Ni Bose Complex at Nasese, Suva Fiji on 30 March 2012.

MSG Chair and Prime Minister of the Republic of Fiji said the objective of the group is to Spearhead the promotion and strengthening of inter-membership trade, exchange of Melanesian Cultures, Traditions and Values and promote sovereign equality, economic and technical cooperation between MSG Members.

He said Leaders at the 18th MSG Leader's Summit last year in 2011 agreed in principle to the MSG Framework Treaty on Traditional Knowledge & Expressions of Culture. The Treaty was signed by Fiji and the Solomon Islands at the Special Leaders Summit on 2nd September 2011. Following the completion of in-country processes, PNG and the FLNKS have agreed to sign the Treaty. Vanuatu will complete in-country consultations and obtain their Government's approval prior to signing the Treaty. The Treaty supports MSG members' initiative to implement National Traditional Knowledge Laws.

The Treaty further allows for the establishment of a National Competent Authority which will be responsible for the implementation of the provisions of the Treaty. In particular, the National Competent Authority will be entrusted with the tasks of awareness-raising, education, guidance, monitoring, registration, dispute resolution, enforcement and other activities related to the protection of traditional knowledge and expressions of culture.

The MSG Chair said that the Treaty symbolizes MSG members' aspirations to protect their traditional knowledge holders and owners against any infringement of their rights; and protects MSG expressions of culture against misappropriation, misuse and unlawful exploitation.