

02 Apr 2013 - MSG Chairman meets with the West Papua National Coalition for Liberation



The Prime Minister of Fiji and Chairman of the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) received representatives of the West Papua National Coalition for Liberation (WPNCCL) in Suva, Fiji this week, in their quest for membership to the Melanesian bloc. The WPNCCL was led by Dr Otto Ondowame, the Vice Chairman of the grouping and included Mr Rex Rumakiek, the Secretary General and Mr Barak Sope, former Prime Minister of Vanuatu and adviser to the WPNCCL.

In welcoming the delegation, Prime Minister Bainimarama acknowledged receiving the WPNCCL expression of interest to join the MSG and informed them that this is a process which will require extensive consultation amongst members of the organization, given the sensitive involved. Furthermore, once a decision has been reached by the members, the WPNCCL will be informed of the Outcome.

On behalf of the WPNCCL, Vice Chairman Ondawame thanked the Prime Minister for taking the time to meet with the delegation and hear from them directly, their reasons for submitting their application. They also commended him for leading the people of Fiji well during these challenging times and also his overall leadership of the MSG over the past two years which has seen MSG gain more prominence in regional affairs. They noted that under Fiji's Chairmanship, the MSG has advanced issues relating to the process for decolonization in New Caledonia, trade, economic and cultural issues which have further strengthened the grouping and expressed their appreciation to the Prime Minister for acknowledging their application to be a part of this young and dynamic organization.

The WPNCCL is the umbrella organization of the West Papuan independence movement established in 2008 and is based in Port Vila, Vanuatu. The objective of the WPNCCL is to organize and coordinate programs and activities to restore or reclaim Papuan people's right of self-determination and independence. In their MOU signed at their last Summit in April 2008, they declare their motto to be 'one people one soul' – different organizations bound by their Papuan Identity.

Within the WPNCCL, there are 28 Papuan political parties and NGOs located in West Papua and others that are based overseas. They claim to represent the 2.5million people of West Papua.

The delegation also congratulated Prime Minister on his assumption of the Chairmanship of the G77 and wished him well in his role, a first for the region.

Prime Minister Bainimarama expressed his appreciation to the WPNCCL for taking the time to visit Fiji to meet with him and the Minister of Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation, Ratu Inoke Kubuabola and informed them that he will maintain close contact with his colleagues on the matter and will inform them through the MSG Secretariat of the Leaders decision.