

MSG Leaders endorse the establishment of the Department of Peace Keeping Operations (DPKO)

The Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) has achieved another milestone when the Leaders of the MSG endorsed on 21st June 2013 the establishment of Department of Peacekeeping Operation (DPKO) within the MSG Secretariat based in Port Villa, Vanuatu.

The DPKO concept was initially originated as for the establishment of the Formed Police Unit (FPU) concept and was presented to the Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) in the Vale ni Bose in Suva in March 2011 and subsequently as requested by the SOM that the DPKO concept is to be the overarching concept over the FPU, the Leaders' Summit through the Foreign Ministers Meeting (FMM) agreed to the concept in principle in March 2012. In the initiation of the concept, members accepted an offer by Fiji to second a Senior Police Officer who would organize and spearhead its further development. After years of consultation, discussion and negotiations and realizing the need for the region to be more proactive in its security arrangement and to avoid the regions dependency on polarity and informal arrangement, the leaders finally agreed to and endorsed the concept of the DPKO's establishment.

The establishment of the MSG DPKO will strengthen security capability and cooperation between member countries in the MSG region; nurture new dimensions of assistance to the United Nations Peace Keeping efforts; establish available capabilities within the Region to be deployed for any instability through the UNDPKO, in the region or to any part of the world; and to contribute to the improvement of peace and security to our region.

The DPKO will now administer and facilitate the strategic direction for security and peace in the MSG region to lay the platform through the Security Ministerial Council (SMC) for improvement and development of the region's security landscape in particular to harmonize its regional member country's security policies.

The creation of the SMC as a security and peace authorizing body will regulate and provide the political autonomy, political will and commitment for the participation of security initiatives that requires change in member government security policies, developing region security policies and also in the release of MSG resources in cases of resources mobilization. It is the wish of the Leaders that the region has to develop its security environment that is applicable, relevant

and will afford peace and prosperity.

Authorised by the Chairman

Port Villa

21 June 2013