



MSG Secretariat Secretariat du GFLM

Melanesian Spearhead Group | Le Groupe Fer de Lance Mélanésien



Press Statement

MSG must maintain its relevance to the Melanesian people

The Melanesian Spearhead Group Eminent Persons Group led by Mr Kaliopate Tavola successfully completed their consultations in Fiji today, Friday 3 May, 2013. The MSG EPG began its consultation in Fiji this week meeting with Fiji's Prime Minister, Commodore Voreqe Bainimarama, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Attorney General, other Ministers, government officials and including the Commissioner of the Police. The EPG also held discussions with members of the civil society which included the Pacific Regional Non-Governmental Organisation Alliance, Pacific Conference of Churches, National Youth Council, and private sector organizations. The Team also met with a number of development partners, regional and international organisations and leading regional academics.

"The consultations in Fiji have been very encouraging across wide range of sectors confirming a desire to enhance co-operation amongst MSG members. One of the important issues that have resonated throughout the consultations is the commitment for MSG to become a robust trade and economic bloc. It must adopt the principle of inclusiveness to foster greater integration and community interaction towards a truly unique Melanesia identity", said the MSG EPG Leader, Mr Tavola. In addition, the EPG Chairman expressed that the MSG is an organisation within the greater Pacific regionalism emphasising that a strong MSG will contribute to a stronger Pacific.

Melanesia is a region of opportunities and great potential for wealth attainment. Endowed with the majority of the resources of the Pacific, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Solomon Islands Vanuatu, and New Caledonia also have the populations to benefit from economies of scale. The stakeholders have strongly recommended that any new vision of the MSG is to ensure that the benefits are shared inclusively and equitably, Mr.Tavola added. A lot of collaboration and cooperation mechanism amongst the MSG have been proposed across all sectors.

The EPG will break for two weeks and reconvene in Solomon Islands for consultations there before finally concluding their consultations in Papua New Guinea during 27– 31 May, 2013. In line with its Terms of Reference, the EPG will provide its final report to the MSG Leaders at the MSG Summit to be held in New Caledonia from 17-21 June, 2013.

The EPG comprises Mr Kaliopate Tavola as Leader representing Fiji, Hon. Manassesh Sogavare, MP representing Solomon Islands, Hon. Joe Natuman, MP representing Vanuatu, Mr Roch Wamytan representing the FLNKS and Mr Leonard Louma representing Papua New Guinea.

END

MSG Secretariat

5 May 2013

Port Vila

For further information please contact Mr Peni Sikivou, Acting Deputy Director General, MSG Secretariat at p.sikivou@msg.int .