

MSG SPORTS COMMITTEE MEETING (SCM) OFFICIALS MEET IN PORT VILA OVER PREPARATIONS TOWARDS INAUGURAL MELANESIAN GAMES 2014 IN PORT VILA

The Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) Sports Committee Meeting (SCM) was officially opened by Ms Joycelyn Mete, First Political Advisor of the Ministry of Education on behalf of the Minister of Education, Hon. Bob Loughman who is currently the Acting Minister for Youth and Sports Development.

The three day meeting is currently being held in Port Vila, Vanuatu from 28 to 30 October, 2013.

Senior youth and sports officials of the MSG member's countries as well as National Olympic Committees (NOCs) officials and the Pacific Games Council representative have gathered together to discuss key sporting issues being raised between member countries of the Melanesian Spearhead Group.

The SCM was established in 2011 to provide a forum to deliberate and provide policy advice on a broad range of sporting issues influencing the development of MSG member countries.

MSG observers, Indonesia and the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste (DRTL) have also been invited to attend the SCM.

The meeting in Port Vila is chaired by Mr. Yvon Fuaa, Representative of the Front de Liberation Nationale Kanak et Socialiste (FLNKS) of New Caledonia. During the next three days delegates from member countries will be discussing the MSG draft Melanesia Games Charter, the Melanesia Games Council, MSG Sports Academy and Institutes and will be provided an update on the preparations towards the inaugural Melanesia Games to be hosted by the FLNKS in New Caledonia in 2014.

The inaugural Melanesia Games is scheduled for September, 2014 and will comprise of 6 sports disciplines, namely Basketball, Futsal or Indoor Soccer, Beach Volleyball, Rugby Sevens, Open Water-Swimming, and Track and Field events. Participants were told at the opening of the meeting Monday that the Melanesia Games 2014 will be a Youth Oriented Games comprising of youths between the ages of 15 – 18 years and will include cultural events, designed to cater not only for sports and competition, but an avenue to provide a safe and learning environment for the youth of Melanesia to build friendship, share their cultural identities and strengthen Melanesian solidarity.

Other events include symposiums that will focus on health and sports and the protection and conservation of the environment as espoused in the Melanesian Declaration of Environment & Climate Change; and social challenges being addressed under the MSG Declaration on the

United Nations (UN) Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Delegates at the meeting were also told that the Melanesia Games 2014 will facilitate the integration and solidarity of the citizens and residents of Melanesia with the objective of strengthening regional and international cooperation. .

The outcomes of the SCM will be presented to the MSG Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) when they next meet.

Authorized by the Director General

MSG Secretariat
Port Vila, Vanuatu
28October 2013