

29 August 2016

An unprecedented series of private sector engagements is to be organised by the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) Secretariat during the MSG Private Sector Development (PSD) Week in Honiara, Solomon Islands beginning on 19 September 2016.

Departmental Heads and Senior Officials from Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu are expected to attend together with representatives from the FLNKS of New Caledonia.

Representatives of the National Private Sector and Civil Society Organisations within the MSG Sub-region will also meet with government officials responsible for business development at all levels.

The schedule of related meetings to be held in Honiara will be as follows:

Monday, 19 September - Cooperatives Policy Workshop on, a Tuesday, 20 September - Small Business Development Policy Workshop

Wednesday 21 September- 5th Heads of Investment Promotion Agencies and Industry Officials Meeting on Thursday, 22 September - Private Sector Trade and Development Awareness Workshop.

The primary objective of the meetings is to update stakeholders with key aspects of the concluded negotiations on the MSG Free Trade Agreement (MFTA) as well as of the MSG PSD Strategy, which was endorsed by MSG Leaders at their Special Summit in Honiara on 14 July 2016. Relating the work of these statutory agencies with the Sustainable Development Goals will be a major consideration as well.

“These engagements are groundbreaking in nature as it will for the first time to bring together the Heads of Cooperatives as well as of the Small Business Development Centres to meet and network among themselves,” said the MSG Director General, Mr Amena Yauvoli. “They will also exchange and discuss their experiences on micro, small and medium enterprise development, as well as to seek opportunities for these MSG officials to assist each other,” he added.

Linkages between government authorities including the Investment Promotion Agencies as well as with the private sector will be explored while dialogue with the representatives of the private sector and civil society groups on key features of the Trade Agreement and PSD Strategy will also be undertaken.

An additional facet of the upcoming MSG PSD Week is the annual Solomon Islands National Trade Fair which will be convened on 21-23 September 2016. The host country, Solomon Islands will have various businesses exhibiting their goods and services on that same week. Businesses from other MSG countries may also participate in the Trade Fair.

This series of meetings is supported by the European Union through the Pacific Integration Technical Assistance Project (PITAP) under the 10th European Development Fund as administered by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat.

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