



COMMODORE JOSIA VOREQE. BAINIMARAMA  
PRIME MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI

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**STATEMENT AT THE 19<sup>th</sup> MSG LEADERS SPECIAL SUMMIT**  
**- Fri. 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2013 – Noumea, New Caledonia**

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Monsieur Victor Tutugoro, Chairman of the MSG;

Prime Ministers;

Foreign Ministers;

MSG Delegations;

Observers;

Special Guests.

Bula vinaka and a very good afternoon to you all.

On behalf of my Government and the Fijian people, I would like to thank both the Government of New Caledonia and the Front de Liberation Nationale Kanake et Socialiste for their wonderful hospitality during the Melanesian Spearhead Group's Leaders Summit and quarter-century celebrations.

Since my arrival into Noumea, I have been overwhelmed by the display of Melanesian unity. As we reach the end of this week's events, I have never been more certain that our group is

heading in the right direction, bolstered by a strong sense of solidarity and a shared desire to work together to improve the fortunes of the Melanesian people.

Allow me to take this opportunity to thank the Honourable Prime Ministers and Leaders of the MSG and their delegations for what has been a very productive summit.

Of course, our thanks go as well to the MSG Secretariat for its hard-work. We must remember that the Secretariat cannot operate in isolation, and needs our continued support.

I would also like to acknowledge the presence of our Observers and Special Guests, whose engagement with the MSG is deeply appreciated.

Your participation marks a new chapter in the MSG's relationship with potential development partners.

Indeed, looking at the period ahead, one of our priorities must be to explore new ways to engage with the international community to further advance the interests of our group.

As I mentioned during the hand-over ceremony on Wednesday evening, I believe that MSG solidarity has never been stronger. We are taking bold steps to restructure the landscape of the Pacific to better suit the needs and aspirations of our peoples.

We are opening up possibilities and creating opportunities that other regional organisations have not.

Together, we have passed a number of significant milestones. During Fiji's tenure as chair, with the support of the Secretariat and our fellow member nations, we focused on a number of result-orientated programs and initiatives, and were able to achieve concrete results.

As previously stated, this includes notable accomplishments across a broad front. I won't repeat the list here, but will just say that we should be proud as we come to the close of a very successful chapter of the MSG's history.

Of course, despite our successes, there are will always be issues to overcome, processes to be improved, new policies to be formed, and old ones to be reviewed.

But, as we now stand at the beginning of a new period, we must share a trust that we have the tools to face each new challenge as it arises. We are embarking with a clear vision, a respectful understanding of the issues that lie before us, and a strong conviction and desire to forge ever closer political, economic, and social ties.

Distinguished colleagues,

I ask my fellow MSG Leaders that we give our full support to the FLNKS as they assume the chairmanship of our group.

I would like to offer the new MSG Chair, Monsieur Victor Tutugoro, my best wishes for his term. I am confident that under his able leadership our organisation will continue to develop and grow.

With those words, I wish everyone happy celebrations for the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary tonight and a safe journey back home.

Thank you. Vinaka Vakalevu. Merci Beaucoup.

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