



MSG Secretariat
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Melanesian Spearhead Group | Le Groupe Fer de Lance Mélanésien

Opening Statement by Mr Yvon Faua, Chairman Ministers Culture & Arts Meeting (MCAM) & representative of the FLNKS Political Bureau
3rd Ministers of Culture & Arts Meeting (MCAM)

Grand Papua Hotel, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea (PNG)

11 October 2013

The Minister of Tourism, Arts & Culture of PNG, Hon. Boka Kondra,
The Minister of Tourism and Culture of Solomon Islands, Hon. Samuel Manetoali,
His Excellency, Mr Romanu Tikotikoca, High Commissioner of the Republic of Fiji to Papua
New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Timor-Leste,
Observers,
Senior Officials and delegates,
Acting Deputy Director General and Staff of the MSG Secretariat,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Bonjour and welcome,

I am honored as Chair of the MSG Ministers of Culture & Arts (MCAM) standing in for the

incumbent, Madam, who is currently on an important Mission in Paris this week, to extend a warm welcome to you all to this 3rd MCAM in Port Moresby, PNG.

May I also extend my most profound gratitude to the Government and people of PNG for hosting this 3rd MCAM in this beautiful city of Port Moresby. The hospitalities you have accorded since our arrival is deeply appreciated and may I on behalf of all delegates, express how delighted we are to be in Papua New Guinea.

2013 is the Silver Jubilee year of the MSG and an exciting time for the MSG as it is also a time for members to reflect on our achievements and to also focus on our aspirations for the next 25 years. For the people of Kanaky, it is also 25 years since we signed the Noumea Accord to gradually prepare for self-emancipation. As some of you may be aware, this process will include a referendum to be conducted next year in New Caledonia. In this respect, may I take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support to the people of Kanaky.

It is an honour for the FLNKS to Chair this key organ of our organization as Arts & Culture is one of the fundamental values that binds the members of our organization. We are an unique group that constitutes 90% of the Pacific region's population, land mass and natural resources but overall, we possess almost 1000 languages and have such an exciting and rich culture.

Honourable Ministers, Excellencies, Ladies and gentlemen, as overall custodians of arts and cultural issues concerning our region, we have an important role to play in advancing one of the key objectives of the MSG and that is promoting and strengthening amongst other areas, the exchange of Melanesian cultures, traditions and values as espoused in Article 2 of the Agreement Establishing the MSG.

And because we have such a diverse and interesting culture and could talk about these issues for days on end, I will shorten my statement and allow some of the key mandates of our Membership to be discussed further during the meeting.

I am looking forward to receiving the Report of our Council of Arts & Culture and wish to commend them at this juncture for their diligence and hard work in accomplishing some of the tasks we had directed them to attend to and one of these is the first ever Regional Treaty on the Protection of Traditional Knowledge and Expressions of Culture signed by our Leaders in 2011.

I also acknowledge the presence of our Observers, the Secretary of State of Art & Culture of Timor-Leste, Madam, I welcome you and your delegation and thank you for attending your first ever MCAM. I also acknowledge the representative of the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Port Moresby, welcome Sir. We look forward to your participation now and in future MCAMs.

Finally colleagues, I seek your support in making sure the Meeting is conducted in an efficient and flexible manner to enable us to conclude on time.

With these few remarks, I wish to once again thank you for attending the 3rd MCAM and look forward to the deliberations.

Merci beaucoup and tenkiu tumas!