



21st MSG LEADERS' SUMMIT

"Strengthening Trade and Sustainable Development for an Inclusive Melanesia"

*14 February, 2018
Stanley Hotel, Waigani
Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea*

COMMUNIQUE

1. The 21st Leaders' Summit was held in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea on February 14, 2018. The Welcome and Hand-Over Ceremony of the MSG Chair from Solomon Islands' Prime Minister Hon. Rick Nelson Houenipwela to Papua New Guinea's Prime Minister Hon. Peter O'Neill, CMG, MP was held on February 13, 2018 at the Sir John Guise Indoor Sports Stadium and the ceremony included a traditional welcome by the Cultural Groups from all regions of Papua New Guinea. The Leaders convened their Retreat at the Stanley Hotel, Waigani on the morning of 14 February, 2018 followed by the Plenary in the afternoon.
2. The Summit was Chaired by Hon. Peter O'Neill, CMG, MP, Prime Minister of the Independent State of Papua New Guinea and Chair of the MSG. MSG Leaders in attendance at the Summit included Hon. Rick Nelson Houenipwela, Prime Minister of Solomon Islands, Hon. Charlot Salwai Tabimasmas, Prime Minister of the Republic of Vanuatu, Hon. Ratu Inoke Kubuabola, Minister for Defence and National Security who deputized on behalf of Hon. Frank Bainimarama, Prime Minister of Fiji, and Mr. Victor Tutugoro, Spokesperson of the Front de Liberation Nationale Kanak et Socialiste (FLNKS).

3. At their Retreat, Leaders considered and made decisions on the key issues submitted by the MSG Foreign Ministers Meeting (FMM) and other issues on their Agenda. The key decisions of Leaders are summarised below.

A. Director General's Report to the 21st MSG Leaders' Summit

4. The Leaders considered and acknowledged the Director General's Report and his commendable efforts in bringing the Secretariat back to order and further encouraged increased collaboration between the Director General and the Leaders.
5. The Leaders further emphasised the need for MSG to pursue with vigour concerted efforts to support the work of the Secretariat and assist with access to development partners.

Decision

6. The Leaders **considered** and **adopted** the Director General's Report.

B. Foreign Ministers Meeting (FMM) Report

7. The Leaders considered the report of the FMM as presented by the Chair of the FMM, Hon. Rimbink Pato and noted the recommendation contained in the report. In discussing specific issues contained in the FMM report, the Leaders encouraged the Director General to undertake regular dialogue with all Leaders to keep them abreast of the current issues of MSG and the performance of the Secretariat.
8. The Leaders also noted the need for promoting equal opportunities for young Melanesian men and women at different levels of development in the MSG region including engagements at the Secretariat.
9. The Leaders unanimously agreed to support the Forum Fisheries Agency's (FFA) Director General candidacy of the Republic of Vanuatu.
10. The Leaders reaffirmed their full support towards the FLNKS Self-Determination process under the Noumea Accord and approved its Action Plan/Roadmap on Referendum.

Decision

11. The Leaders:

- i) **approved** the report of the FMM and the recommendations as presented by the Chair of FMM except the discussions under the close session; and
- ii) **agreed** for a renewed and concerted efforts supporting the Secretariat setting aside past differences.

C. Update on Membership Guidelines

12. The Leaders considered the presentation by the Director General on the Revised Guidelines for Observers and Associate Members as well as the New Membership Guidelines.

13. The Leaders:

- i) **approved** the Revised Guidelines for Observers and Associate Members and New Membership Guidelines;
- ii) **approved** for the application by United Liberation Movement for West Papua (ULMWP) for full Membership be now referred to the Secretariat for processing under the newly approved Guidelines; and
- iii) **encouraged** more dialogue between Observers and Associate Members, and the MSG to engage collectively as a group.

D Other Matters

14. The Leaders recognised the need for concerted effort by the MSG to address the global issue of climate change and conveyed their appreciation to Fiji for lifting the profile of MSG and the Pacific at the global level on climate issues. In doing so, Leaders expressed sympathies for the devastation caused by the recent Tropical Cyclone Gita in Tonga and other parts of the Pacific.

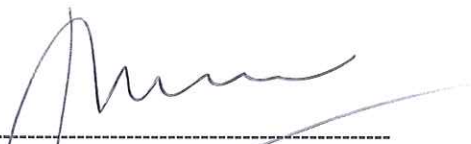
15. The Leaders encouraged greater advocacy on anti-nuclear activities in the Pacific.

16. The Leaders endorsed the engagement of the MSG Members with New Caledonia under the new Melanesian Free Trade Agreement (MFTA) to be ratified in the immediate future.

17. The Leaders directed the Director General to engage in a more active manner at the regional and global levels to advocate MSG sub-regional issues.

E Conclusion

18. The Chair thanked all the Leaders for their support and contributions during the 21st Leaders' Summit. Leaders also thanked the Chair for his Leadership during the Summit and also extended their deep appreciation to the Government and people of Papua New Guinea for hosting a successful 21st Leaders' Summit in 2018 and its related meetings. They further expressed their gratitude and appreciation for the warm hospitality extended to all the Leaders and delegates.



Honourable Peter O'Neill, CMG, MP
Chair of the MSG and
Prime Minister
Independent State of Papua New Guinea



Honourable Rick Nelson Houenipwela, MP
Prime Minister
Solomon Islands



Honourable Charlot Salwai Tabimasmass, MP
Prime Minister
Republic of Vanuatu



Honourable Ratu Inoke Kubuabola, MP
Minister of Defence and Security Representing the
Prime Minister of the Republic of Fiji



Mr. Victor Tutugoro
Spokesperson
Front de Libération Nationale Kanak et Socialiste (FLNKS)