



## Achieving *Economic Prosperity*, a core objective of the **MSG 2038: Prosperity for All Plan!**

A bi-monthly newsletter to inform readers about key work activities undertaken at the MSG Secretariat, including those supported by the European Union through the Pacific Integration Technical Assistance Project.

## MSG LEADERS CONVENE AT SPECIAL SUMMIT

MSG Leaders met in Honiara, Solomon Islands for their Special Summit on 14 July 2016 to discuss policy recommendations submitted to them by MSG Foreign Ministers. The Summit, chaired by the Prime Minister of Solomon Islands, Hon. Manasseh Sogavare, was attended by Hon. Josaia Voreqe Bainimarama, Prime Minister of Fiji; Hon. Charlot Salwai Tabimamas, Prime Minister of Vanuatu; Hon. Rimbink Pato, Minister for Foreign Affairs of PNG who deputized for the PNG Prime Minister, Hon. Peter O'Neill; and Mr Victor Tutugoro, Spokesperson of FLNKS. The key decisions of Leaders included the approval for Mr Amena Yauvoli as Director General of the MSG Secretariat. They also endorsed the implementation of Phase II activities of the Formed Police Unit and gave an approval in principle for the establishment of an MSG Police Ministers Meeting. On the application for membership by the United Liberation Movement for West Papua, Leaders



Leaders in Honiara, L-R: Mr Tutugoro (FLNKS), Hon Salwai (Vanuatu PM) and Hon. Bainimarama (Fiji PM)

directed the Sub-Committee on Trade Agreement. Leaders also endorsed the recommendations of MSG Trade Ministers including approval for the MSG Private Sector Development Strategy. The next Leaders Summit that the Government of Vanuatu has offered to host is expected to be convened in late 2016 and for more details on these Summits, the Deputy Director General, Mr. Molean Kilepak, can be contacted via email, [m.kilepak@msg.int](mailto:m.kilepak@msg.int).

### COMMON ABBREVIATIONS

<b>ACP</b> - African, Caribbean and Pacific	<b>APEC</b> - Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation
<b>C2C</b> - Cooperative to Cooperative	<b>CIMC</b> - Consultative Implementation & Monitoring Council
<b>CTA</b> - Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation	<b>DG</b> - Director General
<b>DPKO</b> - Department of Peace Keeping Operations	<b>EU</b> - European Union
<b>EPG</b> - Eminent Persons Group	<b>EDF</b> - European Development Fund
<b>FPU</b> - Formed Police Unit	<b>FLNKS</b> - Front de Liberation the Nationale Kanak et Solcialiste
<b>IOM</b> - International Organisation for Migration	<b>ICA</b> - International Cooperative Alliance
<b>MOU</b> - Memorandum of Understanding	<b>IPA</b> - Investment Promotion Agency
<b>PIFS</b> - Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat	<b>MFTA</b> - Melanesian Free Trade Area
<b>PITAP</b> - Pacific Integration and Technical Assistance Project	<b>MSGTA3</b> - Melanesian Spearhead Group Trade Agreement 3
<b>PRISM</b> - Pacific Regional Information System	<b>PIPSO</b> - Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation
<b>PT&amp;I</b> - Pacific Islands Trade and Invest	<b>PNG</b> - Papua New Guinea
<b>SDGs</b> - Sustainable Development Goals	<b>PSD</b> - Private Sector Development
<b>SPC</b> - Pacific Community	<b>SBDC</b> - Small Business Development Centre
	<b>SIWIBA</b> - Solomon Islands Women in Business Association
	<b>VNYC</b> - Vanuatu National Youth Council

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## SOLOMON ISLANDS-VANUATU BORDER TREATY SIGNED

The key activity of “trade between members at rural adjacent borders increased and trade facilitation agencies deployed to these areas by 2016” that was recommended by the MSG Eminent Persons Group (EPG) to achieve “Economic Prosperity” under the MSG 2038 Prosperity for All Plan took a giant step forward on 07 October 2016. This followed the signing of the Solomon Islands-Vanuatu Border Treaty in Mota Lava, Torba Province, Vanuatu by the MSG Chair and Solomon Islands Prime Minister, Hon. Manasseh Sogavare, who was an EPG member himself, and his counterpart, the Prime Minister of Vanuatu, Hon. Charlot Salwai. The signing marked the culmination of 33 years of maritime border negotiations between the two neighbouring countries.

Also present at the ceremony was the MSG Director General, Ambassador Amena Yauvoli, who congratulated the Governments of Solo-

mon Islands and Vanuatu for their historic achievement. “This is part of the vision that our Eminent Persons had for MSG, and it synchronizes with the spirit of the MSG Trade Agreement which will be known as the Melanesian Free Trade Agreement upon its imminent signing by Leaders,” Ambassador Yauvoli said. “Furthermore, it harmonizes with the MSG PSD Strategy which advocates small business development involving formal and even rural informal operators to spur trade and investment flows between Members’ adjacent provinces,” he added.

The Treaty is anticipated to further facilitate cultural, economic and social exchanges between Temotu Province of Solomon Islands and Torba Province of Vanuatu. “After all, the two neighbouring Provinces have so much in common and the Treaty should stimulate trading between them instead of



In Torba, Hon Sogavare (left) and Hon Salwai  
Source: Vanuatu Daily Post

trans-shipping goods through their respective capitals, Honiara and Vila,” Ambassador Yauvoli said. The Secretariat will thus play a facilitating role to assist governments, businesses and civil societies in their shared aspiration for closer relations and stronger partnerships between the two Provinces. (Page 6 has an article on Customs- and Kastom-based trade).

## PRIVATE SECTOR STAKEHOLDERS COMPLETE DIALOGUES

Government officials as well as private sector and civil society representatives from Papua New Guinea (PNG), Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and FLNKS successfully completed a series of policy dialogues in Honiara, Solomon Islands as part of the MSG Private Sector Development (PSD) Week on 19-23 September 2016.

Cooperatives and Small Business Development Officials attended their own workshops before they joined colleagues from their respective Investment Promotion Agencies (IPAs) and Ministries of Commerce, Industry and Trade. This was then followed by their combined dialogue with private sector and civil society representatives to discuss policy constraints and other issues relating to sustained economic growth through private enterprises.

“The new MSG PSD Strategy which Leaders endorsed last July has been put into immediate effect as we opened up our Officials meetings for the first time to include the participation and contribution of business practitioners and civil society advocates to policy dialogue,” said Ambassador Amena Yauvoli, MSG Director General. “First hand experiences with the challenges of regulatory compliance, capacity building, networking and market access added considerable value to the deliberations which involved informal sector operators, cooperatives, and micro, small, medium and large enterprises as well as peak national industry bodies,” the Director General added.

The need for Governments to review outdated legislation, improve resource allocations, support institutional strengthening and enhance inter-agency relationships, including with and within private sector and civil society groups were highlighted during the deliberations. Interventions by the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) on global cooperative practices as well as by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on the relevance of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to the private sector were timely and appropriate to the needs of MSG stakeholders.

“The localization of international principles and practices applicable to the cooperative movement and of the SDGs to PSD as a whole are to be seriously considered since industrial development does not only contribute to global trends but individual enterprises are also vulnerable to these very trends, especially in relation to climate change,” Ambassador Yauvoli said. He pinpointed vegetable farming, fishing and agritourism as examples of business activities which were devastated by recent national disasters in Melanesia. The key outcomes of these dialogues will be factored into the Secretariat’s work programme.

The Solomon Islands National Trade Fair held on 21-23 September 2016 had an MSG booth which helped disseminate



Seated with participants of the 5th Heads of IPA & Industry Officials Meeting are Mr Evangelidis (third from left) and Amb. Yauvoli (third from right)

brochures of Members’ IPAs, private sector bodies and companies as well as of the Secretariat. The PSD Week was supported by the European Union through the Pacific Integration Technical Assistance Project (PITAP) under the 10<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund as administered by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. Mr Ioannis Pavlos Evangelidis, Head of Cooperation, Delegation of the European Union to Solomon Islands and Vanuatu based in Honiara, was among the Week’s guest speakers. For more details, please contact Mr John Licht, Program Manager Trade and Investment via email, [j.licht@msg.int](mailto:j.licht@msg.int).

## SDGs RELEVANT TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR



Salma, speaking on the SDGs

Of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by world leaders including MSG Leaders, Goal 8 calls for *Economic Growth and Decent Work* to help end poverty, fight inequality and injustice, and tackle climate change by 2030. Other Goals resonate with private investment such as Goal 5 *Gender Equality*, Goal 13 *Climate Action* and Goal 17 *Partnerships for the Goals* in pursuit of the 17 SDGs and their 169 supporting targets, conforming to the MSG PSD Strategy. At the Heads of IPA & Industries

Officials Meeting in Honiara, Solomon Islands on 21 September 2016, Ms Salma Yousif, Regional Programme and SIDS Engagement Coordinator with UNDP Pacific Office in Suva, spoke on the relevance of the SDGs to the private sector and to business promotion entities to encourage equitable economic growth through foreign and local corporates, and even small and informal enterprises. Her talk led to extensive discussions, which highlighted the need for the domestication of the SDGs in sync

with PSD. UNDP's offer to support MSG in capacity building for proposals to the Green Climate Fund was welcomed. On the SDGs' significance to PSD, the Director General, Ambassador Amena Yauvoli noted, "Industries not only contribute to global climate trends but individual enterprises are vulnerable to these trends."

The interest of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in MSG's work on the SDG-PSD nexus was also noted.

## NON-STATE ACTORS VOICE THEIR VIEWS



PNG delegates, L-R: Mr Chey Scovell (Manufacturers), Ms Sila Orake (Govt), and Mr Benson Nablu (Chamber)

Last year's PSD Strategy consultations involved substantive inputs from the private sector and civil society, and some of their representatives were present again at the PSD Week in Honiara, Solomon Islands on 19-23 September 2016. Participants included small business owners and operators, and representatives of peak industry bodies, women, youth and civil societies. Resource persons included local entrepreneurs namely, Mr Toata Molea (Didao Enterprises), Ms Julie Haro (Premiere Group) and Ms Nanette Tutua (Timol Tim-

bers) who shared insights on their first-hand experiences with the country's policy environment. Views were also raised by Members' Chambers of Commerce, Manufacturing Councils, Women in Business, policymaking bodies like PNG's Consultative Implementation & Monitoring Council (CIMC), and civil society groups. It was agreed that Governments are to continue addressing pending barriers to improve trade and investment flows and the movement of skilled personnel. While public-private policy dialogue to address bad practices that hinder

business growth is ongoing, dialogue between the private sector and civil society groups needs to be boosted. Calls were also made for supporting indigenous businesses for the purposes of economic empowerment and capacity building given the intrinsic challenges that they face. A pertinent development following the dialogue was MSG Director General, Ambassador Amena Yauvoli's participation at CIMC's National Development Forum in Port Moresby on 18-20 October where he discussed MSG initiatives on free trade and the PSD Strategy.



Speaking for Vanuatu's civil society, Ms Anne Pakoa (far left)

## COOPERATIVES MEET FOR THE FIRST TIME

MSG Cooperatives Officials met for the first time in Honiara, Solomon Islands on 19 September 2016. This provided opportunities for networking and engaging in knowledge sharing for institutional strengthening, informing them about the role of cooperatives under the MSG PSD Strategy as well as to discuss policy issues and remedial strategies for supporting cooperatives within the Sub-region. Besides national policy experiences, practical perspectives were shared by Honiara-based Kokonut Pacific which depends on cooperatives

for the supply of raw materials. The Workshop featured contributions from Ms Alexandra Hordern, General Manager, Business Council of Cooperatives and Mutuals of Australia, who attended on behalf of the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA). Vanuatu and PNG are the only Pacific Island ICA members. Alexandra discussed ICA experiences including cooperative-to-cooperative (C2C) relationships that the Alliance stood ready to assist MSG with. Mr Ridley Joseph, Director of Vanuatu's Cooperatives Department

informed attendees about the benefits of their membership and acknowledged ICA's post-Pam support and technical advisory assistance. Ms Heva Aitsi, PNG's Principal Cooperatives Officer, looked forward to accessing ICA's services after they joined the Alliance recently. Besides agreeing to boost linkages, C2C relationships and collaboration with ICA, the Workshop recommended an MSG Cooperatives Policy within the framework of the MSG PSD Strategy. This is now being considered by the Secretariat.



Cooperating as Cooperatives, L-R: Heva, Alexandra and Ridley

## HONIARA BEVERAGE COMPANY CONTINUES TO EXPAND



Peter (centre), with businessman Toata Molea at the PSD workshop



Sara beverages



Szeba's banner at the PSD Week



MSG officials touring the brewery

As usually reported in *Melanesian Tok* and in harmony with the objectives of the MSG Trade Agreement and MSG PSD Strategy, this issue profiles a beverage manufacturing company whose Managing Director also participated in the events held during the recent MSG PSD Week in Honiara.

Since its establishment in Solomon Islands in 1983 as a manufacturer of carbonated soft drinks under contract with Cadbury Schweppes, locally-registered Szetu Enterprises Ltd has continued to expand and diversify its product lines. Back then, the company packaged its products in glass bottles under the registered brand of Schweppes Soft Drinks.

Szetu Managing Director and former President of the Association of Solomon Islands Manufacturers, Mr Peter Tam shared his company's mission statement as aiming "to provide goods and services of the highest quality made affordably available to the community." He added, "Our company is a friendly and socially responsible producer and bottler of locally made beverages, and these commitments are critical for our slogan, Refreshing Your Taste Buds!"

In the 1990s, the company transitioned into producing its own brand of soft drinks including carbonated soft drinks, cordials, bottled drinking water and cup drinks, which were packaged in PET (polyethylene terephthalate) plastic bottles under the brand name, Szeba. In the mid-2000's, the company ventured into carbonated pre-mixed alcohol beverages and spirits and this led to the birth of a new brand, Saratoga. In 2014, the company decided to brew its own beer under the brand, Sara Beers, and thus began the construction of its brewery, which started producing local beers in November 2015.

The parent company, Szetu Enterprises Ltd, which is located at Honiara's Ranadi Industrial Estate, produces PET-bottled beverages while Szetu Breweries in nearby East Henderson produces beer and carbonated drinks in sleek cans. They employ a total of 134 permanent staff, 46 of whom are women. These permanent employees are supported by casual staff hired during peak production periods. Their list of products includes Szeba bottled carbonated soft drinks; Szeba bottled drinking water; Saratoga Whiskey and Szeba Cola; Spirits including Whiskey, Rum, Gin and Vodka;

Ace canned soft drinks and lastly, Sara Beers.

The company's customers range from wholesale and retail business outlets locally and in the maritime provinces, hotels, non-government and Government institutions, the Diplomatic Corp as well as the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands or RAMSI. They have also ventured into exports and decided to start with Kiribati, and are striving to establish export markets in other neighbouring Pacific island countries.

Most recently and as part of its community obligations, the parent company signed a contract with the Miss Solomon Islands Pageant to sponsor Ms Sara Cave as their queen for the upcoming prestigious event. The crowning night will be on 29 October 2016. "Our company believes in gender equality and empowerment and evidence in that regard is that Szetu employs only women in the Quality Assurance Department, which is one of our main departments," said Mr Rodney Hunuire, Marketing Manager.

For enquiries or to place orders, Peter can be contacted via email [saratoga.w8@gmail.com](mailto:saratoga.w8@gmail.com) while Rodney is reachable through [saragoldsolomon@gmail.com](mailto:saragoldsolomon@gmail.com).

## WOMEN IN BUSINESS ON THE MOVE IN SOLOMON ISLANDS



WIB Awards Chair, Julie



Lynette, an Awards judge

Solomon Islands' Women in Business (WIB) were recognised at the inaugural WIB Awards Night hosted by the Solomon Islands Women in Business Association (SIWIBA) at Honiara's Heritage Park Hotel on 09 July 2016. The guest speakers were MSG Chair and Prime Minister, Hon. Manasseh Sogavare, and successful Lae businesswoman and 2011 Westpac PNG Business Woman of the Year recipient, Ms Sarah Todd. The Government was a major sponsor of the Awards. Ms Naomi Tozaka of Nautilus Books and Gifts which sells local arts and crafts won the major Woman

in Business Award, and Ms Rachel Rahii won the Rising Star award. Ms Julie Gegeu Haro, Managing Director for the Premiere Group of Companies, SIWIBA Vice-President and Chair of the WIB Awards was overwhelmed with the sell-out and overall success of the programme. "It's our first time, surely not the last, and we were so excited that our Prime Minister came to witness the capabilities of our businesswomen and confirm his Government's support for future programmes" she said. Ms Lynette Dawheya, Deputy Director, Foreign Investment Division was among the judges for the Awards.

She then accompanied Julie to the 8<sup>th</sup> Australia-Solomon Islands Business Forum in Brisbane on 22 July. They highlighted opportunities in the country at the Forum, which was also addressed by Hon. Sogavare and Australia's Minister for International Development and the Pacific, Senator Concetta Fierravanti-Wells. Julie spoke on "Building a Small Business Enterprise in Solomon Islands". Lynette went on to Canberra to speak at the Solomon Islands High Commission's Investment Promotion Seminar on 25 July. Notably, Lynette, Julie, SIWIBA officials and Sarah took part in the MSG PSD Strategy consultations last year.

## COLLABORATION ON TRADE DATA ISSUES



At the PRISM Project Office are Tendai (left) and Nilima

As part of ongoing collaboration under the MOU between MSG and the Pacific Community (SPC), the Secretariat's Trade Research Analyst, Ms Tendai Chigwada, completed a 10-day mission with SPC's Pacific Regional Information System (PRISM) Project based in Noumea, New Caledonia on 02-11 August 2016.

While PRISM is part of the Ten Year Pacific Statistics Strategy launched in 2010, the need for accessible and user-relevant web-based MSG trade data was identified by two PITAP-funded studies – MSG Exports Study in 2015 and MSG Market Intelligence Study in

2016 – as a major impediment to trade policymaking and business development. At SPC, Tendai worked closely with Mr Billy Somers, Statistics Professional Officer, under the overall supervision of Ms Nilima Lal, Economic Statistician.

The mission was aimed at generating data on intra-MSG trade and on MSG trade with other markets. A structural layout of an MSG sub-regional statistics system that SPC is to populate was explored while the specific skills for accessing and analyzing trade data to meet stakeholder needs were also acquired.

A key feature of the PRISM website, <http://prism.spc.int/>, is that it hosts all National Statistics Office websites for SPC's member countries which include MSG Members namely, Fiji, PNG, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, as well as New Caledonia. Given their observer status in the MSG Trade Agreement, the FLNKS is also expected to benefit from this particular initiative. As a result of the mission, a new web link was tested on the MSG website and upon clearance of the data dissemination tables, users would be able to access MSG trade data through the new web link.



At the PT&I Auckland office, with Trade Commissioner Greenslade

## PARTNERING WITH PACIFIC TRADE & INVEST

The Secretariat's relationship with PIFS' network of Pacific Islands Trade and Invest (PT&I) offices was further strengthened through the visits of Ms Tendai Chigwada, Trade Research Analyst, to PT&I Auckland on 15-19 August and to PT&I Sydney on 22-26 August 2016. The key objectives here were to identify prospects for promoting MSG export products and investment opportunities and, to gather information on the market requirements and buyer expectations in Australia and New Zealand (NZ).

In Auckland, Tendai met with Trade Commissioner Michael Greenslade and his team. She also attended events including a NZ-PNG Business Council luncheon and the Pacific Futures Forum which had Dr Edwin Kessie from the Port Vila-based Office of the Chief Trade Adviser as a speaker. Meetings were also held with NZ Foreign Affairs, NZ Trade Enterprise, Pacific Cooperation Foundation and business houses. Meetings in Sydney were held with Acting Trade Commissioner Jeremy Grennell, PT&I staff and

Vanuatu's Trade Commissioner, Mr Donald Pelam. Visits were also made to distributors and retail stores selling Melanesian products.

Back in Port Vila on 13 September, Tendai hosted PT&I Beijing Trade Commissioner David Morris who was accompanied by Ms Isa Peng, Manager Investment during their in-country consultations in Vanuatu.

Further collaboration with the PT&Is is expected as key findings from the above engagements are to be considered for the Secretariat's next annual work programme.



On display, products L-R, from Vanuatu, PNG, Fiji and Solomon Islands

## VANUATU TRADE COMMISSION OPENS IN AUSTRALIA

The Government of Vanuatu has appointed Mr Donald Pelam as its first ni-Vanuatu Trade Commissioner to Australia and funding support from the Australian Government has enabled him to be based at the PT&I office in Sydney for 12 months from December 2015. The appointment followed Mr Pelam's four-month attachment with PT&I Sydney in 2013 which demonstrated the viability of opening a Trade Commission for Vanuatu in Australia.

The main objectives of the Vanuatu Trade Commission are to

facilitate the growth of Vanuatu's exportable goods and services, promote Australian investments into Vanuatu, help with the Seasonal Workers Programme, and, to collaborate with PT&I Sydney on Export Services, Creative Arts and the management of events, knowledge and information.

Products promoted include virgin coconut oil, Tamanu oil products, manioc wheat and gluten free flour, coconut cooking oil, Aelan chocolate, tamarind chutney, Tana coffee, beauty products (skin-

care) and Tusker beer. A display was held at the Sydney Beauty Expo on 20-21 August, while three companies attended the Fine Food Show in Melbourne on 12-15 September. An artist was also at the PT&I-sponsored Maketi Ples Exhibition in Sydney on 06-16 October.

MSG Trade Research Analyst, Ms Tendai Chigwada, met with Mr Pelam in Sydney where they discussed business support for Members. Mr Pelam's contacts are [Donald.Pelam@pacifictradeinvest.com](mailto:Donald.Pelam@pacifictradeinvest.com) or [dpelam@vanuatu.gov.vu](mailto:dpelam@vanuatu.gov.vu).



Trade Commissioner Pelam

## PNG IPA FAREWELLS CEO POMALEU

The Board, Management and Staff of PNG Investment Promotion Authority (IPA) farewelled Mr Ivan Pomaleu, OBE on 22 September 2016 after he stepped down from his position as Managing Director for 15 years. As PNG Ambassador to the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and PNG APEC Senior Official, Mr Pomaleu will work on coordinating preparations for the 2018 meetings of APEC that will be hosted by PNG.

Mr Pomaleu was instrumental in promoting and enabling foreign direct investment flows into PNG,

helping to strengthen the institutional capacity of their IPA as well as to facilitate intra-MSG trade and investment flows. MSG Director General, Ambassador Amena Yauvoli, congratulated him on his new appointment and thanked for his contributions to MSG. "We thank Mr Pomaleu for all that he has done for our sub-region as well as the wider Pacific region, especially his inputs to the formulation of the new MSG PSD Strategy, the key activities of which are directly related to APEC's Trade, Investment and

Economic Cooperation priorities," the Director General said. "We sincerely hope that MSG will benefit immensely from APEC under Mr Pomaleu's leadership as there are much synergies between our two organisations," he added.

Mr Clarence Hoot, now Acting Managing Director for IPA, also has extensive experience with APEC and MSG. It is anticipated that the Secretariat will work closely with him and his team on the implementation of MSG's PSD Strategy as well as on other mutually beneficial areas of work.



Hon. Richard Maru, Minister for Trade, Commerce & Industry presents Mr Pomaleu (centre) and Mrs Pomaleu with a farewell gift.

Source: PNG IPA

## CUSTOMS OR KASTOM: THE TRADE DILEMMA

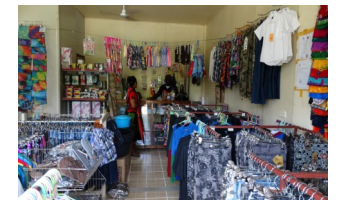
The free flow of trade and movement of people practised historically between adjacent sovereign provinces by Melaneseans – given their close family and cultural ties – continue to prevail although policies and regulations to guide such cross-border flows have been the subject of intense negotiations by MSG senior trade officials over recent years. This topic was addressed by Ms Lynette Dawheya, Deputy Director, Foreign Investment Division of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry for Solomon Islands during her presentation at the Heads of IPA and Industry Officials Meeting in Honiara on 21 September 2016.

Lynette noted their review of the national investment policy and reserved business activities found the occurrences of cross-border trade and investment flows between PNG and Solomon Islands, based on customary relations between the people of Bougainville, Shortland Islands and Choiseul. For instance, PNG "foreign-owned" businesses operating in Choiseul include a fuel distribution depot and a retail store that sells PNG fish and rice, while Solomon Islands beverages and goods crossing the border exceed household usage levels.

"The challenge is to address the issue of foreign-owned businesses without a Foreign Investment Certificate of Registration against the backdrop of traditional family and cultural ties and exchanges between our people and the people of PNG," Lynette stressed. This has been the subject of discussions at the national level as well as through bilateral dialogues. The Secretariat also referred to relevant provisions of the revised MSG Trade Agreement relating to simplified procedures for cross-border trade. This issue is to be further discussed by MSG Trade Officials.



Fuel depot in Choiseul



Inside the retail shop

Source: Ms Lynette Dawheya

## PSD EVENTS AT PACIFIC REGIONAL LEVEL

In harmony with the MSG Leaders' mandate in 2015 for "the Secretariat to work closely with relevant partners in the region on the Private Sector Development (PSD) Strategy", two invitations from key partners were duly accepted. The first invitation provided the opportunity for Mr Henry Sanday, Private Sector Development Advisor, to present the MSG PSD Strategy to the 2016-18 Strategic Planning Workshop of the Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation (PIPSO) in Nadi, Fiji on 11-12 July 2016. This helped raise the visibility of MSG, contribute to PIPSO's new

Plan and explore opportunities for collaborating with PIPSO's members and partners including the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Pacific Community (SPC) and South Pacific Tourism Organisation. Consultations were also held with PIPSO members from Micronesia and Polynesia.

Henry then discussed the Strategy, focusing on Rural Informal Economies which relate to tourism-agriculture linkages, at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Pacific Agribusiness Forum in Apia, Samoa on 30 August-01 September. Attended by over 100 participants from the Pacific, Car-

ibbean and Europe, the Forum was organised by the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation ACP-EU (CTA) in partnership with PIPSO, SPC and the International Fund for Agricultural Development. A key message from the Forum relates to the replicability of successful agribusiness projects from the Pacific including Fiji and Vanuatu and from the Caribbean to other parts of Melanesia. This event followed MSG's participation at the 1<sup>st</sup> Forum held in Nadi last year and it conforms with the spirit of MSG's MOUs with PIPSO, CTA and SPC.



Agribusiness Forum participants in Samoa included MSG representatives

Source: CTA

## ADDRESSING YOUTH AND SPECIAL NEEDS

The interest of the Vanuatu National Youth Council (VNYC) in the inclusiveness aspects of the MSG PSD Strategy as presented on 02 June 2016 in Port Vila by Mr Henry Sanday, Private Sector Development Advisor, at the Pacific Islands Regional Initiative 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Forum on Financial Inclusion inspired the Council to visit the Secretariat. VNYC President, Mr Vira Taivakalo, Secretary, Ms Rebecca Solomon and Principal Administrator, Mr Joe Kalo then met with Henry on 07 June for discussions on Youth Economic Empowerment based on the PSD

Strategy. Opportunities for more collaboration were also explored. VNYC officials then joined their MSG counterparts during the Capacity Building for Emerging Youth Leaders Programme co-organised by the Pacific Community and MSG in Port Vila on 19-22 July. A feature of the training was the attendees' exposure to leaders and innovators who shared practical insights on advocating and influencing change at community level.

A further dimension of inclusiveness on the part of the Secretariat was realised when two interns

were engaged for basic administrative duties over two months between 01 June and 05 August 2016. The interns were Ms Anne Manua who has a physical disability, and Ms Alissy Tuigaloa. Their duties covered switchboard operations, handling correspondences, updating file registers and directing visitors to staff. Deputy Director General, Mr Molean Kilepak commended them for their punctuality and dedication to learn and complete tasks. "Anne was particularly impressive as she did her best despite her challenges," he said.



L-R: Joe, Vira and Rebecca



Anne

## FIJI POLICE HELPS WITH SECURITY ISSUES

A mandate from MSG Leaders in 2013 in relation to Police and Security issues continues to be pursued through the Secretariat's Department of Peace Keeping Operations (DPKO). Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Epineri Seibouma, who is on secondment from the Government of Fiji, joined the Secretariat on 05 September 2016 to further advance the work activities of the DPKO. He is not new to the organisation since he had served previously as DPKO Officer in 2013. His current secondment ends in December 2016. Key achievements during SSP

Seibouma's term in 2013 included submissions on the establishment of the DPKO, the MSG Formed Police Unit and the Humanitarian Emergency Response Coordinating Center Framework. All of these were endorsed by Leaders during their Summit in Noumea that same year.

Major tasks that SSP Seibouma will be undertaking relate to the proposed inaugural MSG Police Ministers Meeting which is to discuss the implementation of Leaders-endorsed policing and security initiatives. Other tasks include the development of a

framework in anticipation of the drawdown and conclusion of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands or RAMSI in mid-2017, the mobilisation of assistance for FLNKS during the 2018 referendum to address potential security concerns, and other initiatives discussed and agreed to through the MSG Police Commissioners Conference. SSP Seibouma will work closely with Mr Ilan Kilo, Manager Legal Services on security and police-related issues. For additional information, SSP Seibouma can be reached via email, [e.seibouma@msg.int](mailto:e.seibouma@msg.int).



SSP Seibouma

## SECRETARIAT CELEBRATES RIO 7S VICTORY

The historic Gold medal win by the Fiji 7s rugby team at the Olympic Games in Rio, Brazil was celebrated by Secretariat staff over morning tea on 12 August 2016, barely an hour after the Ben Ryan-coached and Osea Kolinisau-captained team secured that famous victory. The team's progress in the early hours of each morning during the tournament was followed very closely by staff members, especially their Fijian colleagues and families, beginning at the pool stages and continuing until those heart-stopping

elimination rounds. Hosted by Fijian staff led by the Director General, Ambassador Amena Yauvoli and including Mrs Laisiana Tugaga, Mrs Eleni Tevi, and Mr Henry Sanday, Secretariat staff enjoyed the tea party. Just as it happened in Fiji and other countries including Vanuatu, the famed "noble banner blue" colours were dominant at the Secretariat on the day. Ambassador Yauvoli acknowledged the kind words of commendation from staff on Fiji's success. "This is

something we can all be proud of in Melanesia and throughout the region as a testimony to the world that we from this special part of the globe called the Pacific and its small island states can also win gold medals at the Olympic Games," the Director General said.

Besides the Rio 7s victory, other events celebrated by staff included the National Days for Solomon Islands on 07 July, Vanuatu on 30 July, PNG on 16 September and Fiji on 10 October.



Celebrating in the streets of Port Vila were family members and friends of Secretariat staff

**THE SECRETARIAT  
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WORKING TOGETHER TO  
ACHIEVE PROSPERITY FOR ALL

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## PITAP STUDIES COMPLETED

A week-long workshop convened in Port Vila, Vanuatu on 10-14 October 2016 provided the opportunity to table findings from the series of PITAP-funded MSG studies and projects completed in 2016. Members were represented by Officials from the Departments of Trade, Investment, Labour, Immigration, Forestry and Transportation.

The reports presented by consultants covered the Forestry Study by Dr Yohannes Bauer on 10 October, the Market Intelligence Study by Ms Sally Ann-Hughes on 11 October and the Labour Mobility and Investment Opportunities Website Development by Mr Cainton Milroy on 13 October. The Secretariat tabled, on behalf of the respective consultants, reports on the Shipping Study (12 October) and the Labour Mobility Study under ACP-EU Migration (14 October) which were conducted by Captain Naveen Singhal and Mr David Stewart, respectively.

The Labour Mobility Study under ACP-EU Migration involved a joint undertaking between the Secretariat and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM). In addition to IOM, the Pacific Community (SPC) which was represented at the Workshop by their Regional Director for Melanesia, Ms Mia Rimon, also partnered with the Secretariat by facilitating in-country consultations, knowledge sharing and the review of findings. The outcomes of deliberations during the Workshop have been conveyed to Members and collaboration with partners such as SPC and IOM as well as with Members and other relevant institutions is to continue for the implementation of recommendations from the Workshop.



A Forestry-based industry  
on Vanua Levu, Fiji



Chocolate exports  
from Solomon Islands



A glimpse of trade- and tourism-related  
Shipping in Port Vila, Vanuatu

## MELANESIAN TOK'S LAST ISSUE

This eighth issue of *Melanesian Tok* is the Newsletter's last issue during the duration of PITAP which ends on 31 October 2016. *Melanesian Tok* thanks all its readers from both within and beyond MSG for their contributions and comments and it is hoped that the Newsletter has been beneficial. For all further details, please contact Mr John Licht, Program Manager Trade and Investment, via email, [j.licht@msg.int](mailto:j.licht@msg.int).

## PITAP STAFF FAREWELLED

As the PITAP Project drew to its close on 31 October 2016, Secretariat staff, families and guests led by the Director General, Ambassador Amena Yauvoli farewelled the PITAP staff at the Le Lagon Resort in Port Vila, Vanuatu on 25 October. The outgoing staff namely, Mr Petros Shayanowako (Trade Economist/Legal) and Ms Tendai Chigwada (Trade Research Analyst) from Zimbabwe as well as Mrs Eleni Tevi (Capacity Development Advisor) and Mr Henry Sanday (Private Sector Development Advisor), both of Fiji, were thanked by Ambassador Yauvoli for their dedication and commitment to the Secretariat's work. "The far-reaching contributions of our de-

parting friends, as evident from the concluded MSGTA3 negotiations, PSD Strategy and studies on various trade-related initiatives, are bound to benefit our Members," the Director General said. He also acknowledged the EU, PIFS and Members for their support.

Program Manager Trade and Investment, Mr John Licht, also delivered remarks in recognition of the services provided by the PITAP team members, all of whom were given the opportunity to address the gathering as well. The Secretariat wishes each one of them success with their future endeavours.



L-R: Amb. Yauvoli, Petros, Eleni, Tendai and Henry



John delivers his  
remarks



Impromptu Zimbabwean  
singing by Tendai and Petros