

WELCOME REMARKS BY THE MINISTER OF NATIONAL UNITY, RECONCILIATION AND PEACE, HON. ISHMAEL AVUI MP ON THE OCCASION OF THE LAUNCH OF 'CONSOLIDATING PEACE, STABILITY AND SOCIAL COHESION IN SOLOMON' PROJECT, WEDNESDAY 28TH FEBRUARY 2018, HERITAGE PARK HOTEL

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Hon. Prime Minister, Hon. Rick Hou

UN Resident Coordinator, Ms Osnat Lubrani

Colleague Ministers of the Crown

Members of Parliament

UNDP/UN Joint Presence Country Manager

Permanent Secretaries

UNDP and UNWomen Representatives

Senior Government Officials,

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.

WELCOME LO IUFALA EVRIWAN!

Let me first of all express that, I am greatly honoured indeed for this wonderful opportunity to give a brief 'welcome remark' on this very significant and important occasion. I say 'significant' because this is another opportunity for Solomon Islands to chart its course or define its roadmap on peacebuilding programmes.

We gather here today to witness the formal launch of the '**Consolidating Peace, Stability and Social Cohesion in Solomon Islands Post RAMSI**' Project, funded by the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund with inputs from United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and UNWomen.

The Project aims to support sustaining peace in Solomon Islands in the immediate post RAMSI and election period through inclusive implementation of solutions addressing impediments to peace and development as identified in the national dialogues and women and youth summits.

The project will build consensus and facilitate initiatives to address key peacebuilding challenges such as: - on reparation and reconciliation, land disputes, governance and social cohesion, in an inclusive manner, taking into account the voices of women and youths, together with men. It will also help establish and institutionalise structures at the Provincial level to help address the key peacebuilding challenges.

Ladies and gentlemen, this project has 2 significant outcomes. **Firstly**, consensus is built and actions and initiatives taken amongst State and Non-state actors, including women and youths, to address conflict causes and triggers, identified through the National and Provincial dialogues, and youth and women's summits. Examples of identified conflict 'causes and triggers' are: - absence of reparation framework, land disputes, governance deficits and weak social cohesion in communities and organizations.

Secondly, structures, inclusive space and solutions to address peacebuilding challenges, identified through the National and Provincial dialogues are established at the Provincial level, are institutionalised and are effective.

The Solomon Islands Democratic Coalition for Change Government (SIDCCG) has a vision to ensure that all Solomon Islanders live and co-exist in a peaceful environment where national Unity continues to be nurtured and thrive.

Additionally, the Solomon Islands Democratic Coalition for Change Government is serious in its effort to continue the journey of nation-building and peace by protecting human dignity through providing an enabling environment to stimulate and nurture economic growth in Solomon Islands.

Ladies and gentlemen, as Minister responsible for National Unity, Reconciliation and Peace, on behalf of the Government wish to express my gratitude to all Government Agencies, UNDP and UNWomen for stepping forward not only to initiate but also to make the commitment to implement this project.

On that same note, I am also grateful to the UN Peacebuilding Fund for their generous support in this project. Your support is a manifestation of your value for peace, human dignity and the peaceful co-existence of Solomon Islanders and visitors alike.

As this juncture, I would also like to take this opportunity to sincerely acknowledge and thank the many 'Peace Stakeholders' and Development Partners out there who have contributed immensely to Peace and State building processes in Solomon Islands. I firmly believe that this project will contribute immensely to making Solomon Islands a safer place to live in.

I therefore call and urge all Solomon Islanders to take 'peace building' as part of your business every day. In everything that you say and do, the question we all should ask is – will what I say or do, foster peace in Solomon Islands? If the answer to that question is on the affirmative – encourage it. If the answer is on the negative, do not do it.

Hon. Prime Minister and Distinguish guests, thank you once again for coming and gracing this occasion to launch the '**Consolidating Peace, Stability and Social Cohesion in Solomon Islands Post RAMSI**' Project.

Welcome everyone and wish you all a pleasant day.

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