

THE 2012 PREMIERS' CONFERENCE

THE KIRAKIRA COMMUNIQUÉ

Preamble

Whereas:

- The Premiers of each of the nine provinces of Solomon Islands and the Mayor of Honiara City Council ("the Premiers") convened in this 6th conference of Premiers in Kirakira, Makira Ulawa Province, from the 22nd to the 26th October 2012;
- The Conference theme was "**Together we strive for sustainable, cost-effective, and efficient service delivery**", where the Premiers and the representatives of National Ministries, donor agencies, and other parties involved in the delivery of services in the provinces, were invited to make presentations relevant to the theme to assist the Premiers in their deliberations and decisions.

Statement of guiding principles

The Premiers are guided by the Provincial Government Act 1997, which gives to Provincial Government the responsibility for delivering services in the provinces, in alignment with National Government policies.

The Premiers, in this 6th Premiers' Conference, have had the opportunity to learn from past conferences and reflect on previous experiences, learning lessons and making changes along the way. These experiences have allowed Provinces to better make recommendations that are practical, relevant, and achievable within the current political, social and economic environment of the Solomon Islands.

Having regard to the Preamble and the Statement of guiding principles, the Premiers hereby resolve that:

Resolution 1: To seek clarification regarding the roles and responsibilities of Provincial Government

The Provincial Government Act 1997 has long been in need of review. The review of this Act is vital in order to provide a clear mandate to Provincial Government regarding their roles and responsibilities so that Provincial Governments can better carry out their duties. The continued failure to review this Act has seriously affected the ability of Provincial Governments to effectively deliver services.

The current practice of bypassing the Provincial Government in delivery of services by channeling funds through constituencies has led to a lack of coordination in the service delivery, and a lack of confidence in Provincial Government as the primary service delivery body. The Premiers have concerns regarding the justification, legitimacy, and accountability of such arrangements, contributing to confusion regarding the roles and responsibilities of Provincial Government.

Resolution 2: To seek confirmation regarding the legality of the transfer of funds by line Ministries direct to communities through MPs

The Premiers question the legality of the current funding streams directed through constituencies by line Ministries. This transfer bypasses the Provincial Government and undermines the role that the Provincial Government plays in determining the needs of communities, and delivery of services to them. The transfer of these funds is both legally questionable and undermines the confidence of communities in the Provincial Government, contributing to political and social instability in the provinces.

Resolution 3: To support the development and implementation of the second phase of the Provincial Government Strengthening Programme

The Provincial Government Strengthening Programme ("PGSP") has reaped large rewards for the Provinces, particularly through the use of provincial capital development funds. The second phase of this project is essential to build on the gains made by the provinces in the first phase of this project. The second phase of the project should ideally address the capacity of Provincial Governments to deliver services in the Provinces and, specifically, to rural communities.

In order to achieve this aim, the Premiers:

- recognise the need to engage in dialogue with the Ministry of Rural Development and the Rural Development Project to plan and strategize about any second phase of the project; and

- require a renegotiation of any underpinning Memorandum of Understanding so that changes to Minimum Conditions, and negotiations around such matters, are clearly expressed and understood, and Provinces are not punished for matters out of their control;
- anticipate greater ownership of PGSP by MPGIS, as the implementing Ministry, with the MPGIS being the driving force behind the project, and the Permanent Secretary of the MPGIS as National Programme Director.

The Premiers strongly urge donors and the National Government to continue their support of the programme, and approve funding for the second phase so that benefits made in the first stage can be consolidated upon.

Resolution 4: To encourage better coordination between line Ministries, stakeholders, and Provincial Governments

Access to good information is vital in order for Provinces to function well. At present, Provincial Governments lack sufficient information about how to best support service delivery in their provinces and, where this information is sourced or available, it is often not shared with other agencies. A cooperative and incorporative approach between Provincial Governments and Ministries is needed to assist in indentifying provincial needs, and delivering the services required to address those needs.

Resolution 5: To develop a coordinated approach to transfer of resources to the provinces

Access to resources, whether human or physical, is a matter of critical important to provinces. The Premiers support the development of a plan of action that gradually transfers resources to provinces in a coordinated manner. Identifying, prioritising, and then planning for this transfer must be done in a consultative manner by Provincial Governments, the MPGIS, and other line Ministries.

Resolution 6: To support the development of post-2015 Millennium Development Goals

The United Nations Millennium Development Goals (“MDGs”) begin the process of review in 2015. The Solomon Islands has been included as one of 50 countries who will be consulted with on the development of the post-2015 goals and the Provincial Governments have been asked to assist with this consultation process by the United Nations. The Premiers support the carrying out of this consultation, in coordination with UN agencies, to better understand the needs of the Solomon Islands people.

Resolution 7: To support and endorse the recommendations of the Cabinet Task Force Committee on political integrity and stability

The Premiers received the report of the Task Force Committee of the Strengthening of Political Integrity and Stability Project, undertaken jointly by the Office of the Prime Minister and the Commonwealth Pacific Governance Facility. The Premiers support and endorse the recommendations made by the Task Force Committee and believe that their introduction would benefit both the National and Provincial Government by improving governance and requiring greater accountability.

Resolution 8: To establish a National Framework for Local Economic Development

The economic development of provinces is vital for the long term sustainability of Provinces and Honiara City Council. In order to support the economic development of provinces and Honiara City, the Premiers would like to see the development of a National Framework for Local Economic Development (“LED”) that takes a strategic and holistic view of economic development and clearly explains how decision making is undertaken at all levels of implementation.

Resolution 9: To establish a National Government Special Fund to promote provincial sustainability and service delivery

The Provincial Government has been assisted in recent years by the SIG, through the PGSP programme. To ensure the long term sustainability of provinces in respect of service delivery, the Premiers would like to see the establishment of a National Fund that directly supports the sustainability of provincial and Honiara City service delivery.

Resolution 10: To ensure that line-Ministries send well-trained and qualified persons to deliver provincial services

Provincial services are negatively affected by the lack of qualified people engaged by line Ministries to deliver those services. The Premiers consider it vital that provinces and Honiara City are supported by line-Ministries by providing well trained and qualified personnel. Where this does not happen, the Premiers ask that line-Ministries recall their staff to up-skill them to the level required to successfully carry out their roles and responsibilities.

Resolution 11: That MID supports Provincial Government in maintaining provincial infrastructure

The Ministry of Infrastructure and Development provides assistance to provinces putting in place the infrastructure needed to deliver services in the province and Honiara City. Of issue, however, is the ongoing maintenance and sustainability of these projects. The Premiers seek the assistance of MID in

sustaining a well-equipped Works Division, containing all the machinery and equipment required to perform their work, in each province to ensure that the projects completed endure for future generations.






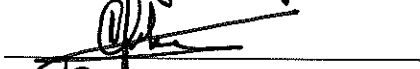



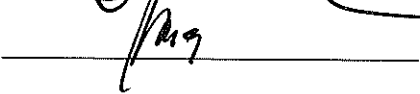
Resolution 12: *To convene a Commission of Inquiry into abandoned land in Guadalcanal*

The issue of abandoned land on Guadalcanal remains a lingering issue for peace and stability of Guadalcanal Province. The Premiers seek the establishment of a new Commission of Inquiry into this issue to provide some for addressing and settling the complex issues raised as a result of this issue. The failure to find resolution of this issue is an impediment to the political and social stability of Guadalcanal.

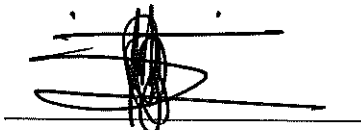
Resolution 13: *To develop standardized policies and procedures regarding the Premiers' Conference*

At this 6th Premiers' Conference, Premiers have now been in a position to reflect upon progresses made and lessons learnt in the convening of this event. Practices and procedures, including those relating to administration, voting, and resource support, need to be consolidated into an approved handbook for future Premiers' Conference. The Premiers would appreciate the development of this handbook by MPGIS, for presentation at next year's Premiers' Conference. The development of this handbook should be carried out by MPGIS, reflecting the role of MPGIS as secretariat of the Premiers' Conference and contain requirement for reporting on the progress of previous Communiqués.

We signify our assent and commitment to the content of this Communiqué this 26th day of October 2012:

<i>Premier</i>	<i>Province</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Hon. Patterson Mae	Central	
Hon. Jackson Kiloe	Choiseul	
Hon. Anthony Veke	Guadalcanal	
Hon. James Habu	Isabel	
Hon. Thomas Weape	Makira Ulawa	
Hon. Edwin Suibaea	Malaita	
Hon. George Tuhaika	Rennell Bellona	
Hon. Fr. Brown Beu	Temotu	
Hon. George Solingi Lilo	Western	
Mayor Andrew Mua	Honiara City Council	

I hereby confirm my receipt of this Communiqué this 26th day of October 2012:



Hon. Silas V. Tausinga, Minister for Provincial Government and Institutional Strengthening