

**SC'S REMARKS AT THE FUNCTION TO MARK THE TENTH ENHANCED  
CONSULTATIVE MECHANISM ON RAMSI  
20 AUGUST 2014.**

Ladies and Gentlemen, may I begin tonight's formalities by warmly welcoming you all to this gathering.

A special welcome goes to our friends from the Forum Secretariat, especially to the outgoing Secretary General, Tuiloma Neroni Slade.

Sticking with tradition, the Special Coordinator would host a function on the eve of the Enhanced Consultative Mechanism (ECM) meetings to welcome new members of the ECM and the former Forum Ministerial Standing Committee.

Tonight's function, however, is a little different in that we are not only welcoming new members of the 10<sup>th</sup> ECM but we are also saying farewell to the outgoing Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum.

Sir you came into the Pacific Islands Forum when RAMSI, the largest Forum initiative under the Biketawa Agreement, was only 5 years old. At that time RAMSI had restored law and order and were into the next phase - stabilising government finances, promoting longer term economic recovery, rebuilding the public sector, and strengthening the government's ability to deliver services to the people of Solomon Islands .

I am told that since you took over the reigns as PIF Secretary General, you have attended almost all ECMs and FMSC meetings despite your very busy schedule. This is indicative of your commitment and dedication to the Solomon Islands and its people as well as to the 15 contributing countries that make up RAMSI.

During your tenure in office you have overseen many significant RAMSI-related initiatives. These include the successful completion and implementation of the Solomon Islands RAMSI Partnership Framework, the implementation of the recommendations of the Solomon Islands Government's Task Force Report on RAMSI in 2008; following up the Forum Leaders decision that established the ECM and Forum Ministerial Standing Committee and most recently, the transition of RAMSI to a regional policing mission in 2013.

All these major achievements owe their success to your personal support and that of the PIF leaders.

I am confident that when the time comes for historians to reflect on RAMSI, I have no doubt in my mind that part of their books will be about leaders like you who have contributed so much to make our region a place of peace, harmony, security and economic prosperity, so that all of its people can lead free and worthwhile lives.

We do, of course, look forward to the arrival of Dame Meg Taylor as the next Pacific Islands Forum Secretary-General, and will offer her our full support, as I know the region will as well.

But we did not want to miss this opportunity to say, Secretary-General, that as you move on, we will certainly miss your counsel and wisdom. Sir, we are sad that you are leaving the Forum but we are comforted by the fact that you are not leaving the region and so we look forward to seeing you again in another capacity.

Once again, may I welcome all delegates to this year's tenth Pacific Islands Forum Enhanced Consultative Mechanism held in sunny Honiara.

I thank the Solomon Islands Government for its hospitality in hosting our meeting tomorrow, and for our ongoing partnership in promoting peace and stability across the nation. And I also offer my congratulations to the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat for its excellent arrangements in bringing the meeting together and facilitating the arrival of delegates.

I look forward to productive discussions tomorrow during the Enhanced Consultative Mechanism. I'm keen to see a full and frank exchange of views, and as always, value highly the opportunity to share ideas with regional experts on the unique and visionary Pacific arrangement that is RAMSI.

Secretary-General, in recognition of your service, I would like to present you with a small gift from RAMSI so that you don't forget us!

We pray that the Almighty God will continue to shine his face on you and we wish you and your family the very best in all your future endeavours.

Thank you.