Communiqué on Political Governance: Leadership and Accountability

3 June 2005

Honiara, Solomon Islands

We, the participants in the Political Governance: Leadership and Accountability Workshop for parliamentarians and provincial Premiers, welcome this dialogue on the issues and processes of leadership, accountability, transparency and parliamentary oversight within the context of constructive national and provincial government relations in Solomon Islands.

Recognizing the social and cultural diversity of Solomon Islands which is the source of our national legitimacy, we call for institutions and processes of government to accommodate traditional values and local customs.

Recognizing the importance of drawing on local and regional experiences and approaches to leadership and accountability advancement, we, the Workshop participants, voice our support for strengthening our individual capacities and institutions to inform our approaches to leadership and accountability practices in public office, and in representing constituency concerns in the processes of lawmaking and oversight at both the provincial and national levels, whether in government or opposition.

Recognising the potential of effective political leadership, we call on members to encourage effective, open and accountable political leadership, recognising the centrality of an effective and legitimate parliament to the direction and future prosperity of the nation.
encourage members of parliament and provincial assemblies to take all appropriate measures to know the full extent of their roles and responsibilities.

to support this, we encourage the induction of new MPs at the beginning of every parliament, and the ongoing support and guidance of new and experienced MPs throughout the life of the parliament.

recommend that provincial representatives receive consistent support and guidance on their roles and responsibilities.

acknowledge the ideal of the independence of the parliament and recommend that the organs of parliament be strengthened to defend this autonomy from Executive dominance.

call on the Executive to be responsible to the parliament in all its dealings, particularly with regard to the oversight of its activities by the parliament, its committees, and by constitutional and statutory oversight agencies.

recommend that the parliament and the executive take the appropriate steps to ensure the adequate and appropriate support of parliamentary and governmental institutions of oversight, representation and lawmakers.

recognising that the parliament reflects the major concerns in society, call on members to facilitate and encourage community understanding and involvement of their roles and functions.
encourage members of parliament and provincial premiers to evaluate and prioritise appropriately provincial, national and regional concerns, and to prioritise the national interest on behalf of the people of Solomon Islands

We encourage members of parliament to engage in meaningful dialogue with provincial assemblies, civil society organisations, traditional leaders and other non-state actors on the future directions of the nation

Further, We

call for the promotion of effective and participatory parliamentary systems, able to gauge public concerns and convey them to lawmakers

stress the necessity of enhancing our democratic institutions through strengthening the lawmaking processes of parliament, through improved oversight of public institutions and assets, and through strengthened parliamentary secretariats in terms of resources and skills

support the provision of appropriate resources of members of parliament to strengthen their role in lawmaking, oversight and representation

support the continued capacity building and institutional strengthening of the national parliament and its organs, and the parliamentary secretariat, to ensure the effective oversight and scrutiny of public funds and assets, including support to parliamentary committees such as the Public Accounts Committees
Last, as elected political leaders We

recognise the need for strengthened and independent constitutional and statutory institutions of oversight, such as Leadership Code Commission, the Office of the Ombudsman and the Auditor-General

affirm the Pacific Islands Forum’s nine principles of good leadership.