Workshop on political stability starts here Tuesday
Tuesday, 26 August 2008

THE Government will convene a two-day conference starting Tuesday to explore solutions to political instability and governance here.

A Government five-member Working Committee established recently by Prime Minister Dr Derek Sikua is organising the conference.

This is part of an ongoing consultative process to determine a most appropriate direction for parliamentary and political party integrity reform. The Government has invited 30 participants.

They represent political parties and the civil society – some of whom are former politicians with experience in political and electoral reform in Solomon Islands. Academics who have published books on politics here were also invited.

Speaker of Parliament, Sir Peter Kenilorea will present the keynote paper on the causes and problems of political instability and governance and what solutions can be offered.

Retired judge Frank Kabui will outline a reassessment of the National Constitution and if decision makers can build on the existing weaknesses.

These will be followed by participatory discussion of problems with the Solomon Islands political system and the underlying causes as well as the potential solutions.

Problems could include among others, weak majorities in parliament, frequent motions of no confidence, and ineffective parliaments because the executive has more power.

They also include politics motivated by personal ambition, societal pressures on MPs, weak controls over representatives and government, and the influence of foreign actors.

Seven speakers namely Dr Alice Pollard, Dr Philip Tagini, Dr John Roughan, Dr Nathan Kere, Dr Transform Aqorau, Gary Fa’aaitoa and the Temotu Nende MP, Pateson Oti will speak on the benefits and costs of reform.

Other speakers are Professor Don Patterson and Joe Foukona who will present an analytical assessment of Papua New Guinea’s Organic law on the integrity of political parties and candidates and its relevance to Solomon Islands political environment.

Ruben Nawaqakuta, the Legal Draftsman in the Attorney General’s Office, will present that of Fiji’s political party system.

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