



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

OFFICIAL STATEMENT

Record of Meeting between the ABG President and the UN Resident Coordinator to PNG

President of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville, the Hon. Dr John Momis MHR and the UN Resident Coordinator to PNG, HE Gianluca Rampolla met in Buka on 14 February 2018. The meeting provided an opportunity for the two leaders to meet and discuss broad ranging issues related to UN support in Bougainville, including the next phase of Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) support to the region.

The President opened the meeting by conveying his best wishes to Mr Rampolla, noting that he was privileged to welcome him to Bougainville so soon after the commencement of his posting. The President conveyed the good wishes of the people of Bougainville, noting his own personal deep gratitude for the work of the UN over many years.

In response, Mr Rampolla thanked the President for his warm welcome, noting it was both a pleasure and honour to visit Bougainville. Mr Rampolla underlined the very strong partnership between the UN and the Autonomous Region of Bougainville and committed to continuing the work of his predecessor, Mr Roy Trivedy in advocating for, and supporting peace, in Bougainville.

The two leaders had a broad ranging discussion around the support that the UN is providing in Bougainville and priorities for next phase of support of the PBF, which is coming to an end in April 2018. The President underlined that by nature man seeks self-determination and that the terms of the Bougainville Peace Agreement were the means by which that would be achieved. He said, however, that there was a need to create a conducive environment for peace and the upcoming referendum, which includes engaging with key community leaders and those ex-combatants who have yet to sign up to the peace process to ensure that the referendum proceeds in a fair, open and transparent manner. In that context, the President highlighted that the people must be both the subject and the object of development, insofar as development supports empowerment, participation and economic and social inclusion. This, the President said, would require continued support and targeted funding to ensure that all Bougainvilleans feel able to participate in the peace process.

In response, Mr Rampolla acknowledged the President's very constructive comments. He indicated that the UN remained committed to working with ABG and the National Government to support the peace process. He noted that development sustains peace, and that peace ensures development, meaning that there is a need for a targeted and holistic approach to achieve this goal.

The two leaders then spoke in detail about the referendum support program, future opportunities for partnership, governance, law and order and practical measures to promote and sustain peace.

The meeting concluded with a commitment on the part of both the UN and the ABG to continue working together to achieve the aspirations and goals of the Bougainville Peace Agreement.

**Hon. Chief Dr. John Momis, GCL, MHR
PRESIDENT**