

DFA NEWS



Department of Foreign Affairs Newsletter



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PNG/Aust 30th Ministerial Forum affirms relations



FOREIGN Affair Minister Hon Justin Tkatchenko, at the conclusion of the 30th PNG/ Australia Ministerial Forum, reassured co-chair, Foreign Minister Senator Hon Penny Wong, Depu-

ty Prime Minister Hon. Richard Marles and colleague ministers from the Australian delegation of the importance PNG has placed on its bilateral relations with Australia.

These sentiments were expressed in a Joint Press Conference with forum co-chair Senator Wong.

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* Capitalizing information for Institutional Strengthening and

Minister Tkatchenko acknowledges outpouring of support for victims of Enga landslides

FOREIGN Affairs Minister Hon. Justin Tkatchenko MP expressed that the overwhelming messages of support from the International community for the recent Enga landslides have been nothing short of humbling.

Minister Tkatchenko confirmed that messages received by his office include Condolence messages from H.E Xi Jinping, President of the Republic of China, Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, Malaysian Foreign Minister Mohamad Hasan, and Ambassador of Ukraine to Indonesia Vasily Hamianin.

These follow messages also from US President Joe Biden, Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, Deputy Prime Minister Richard Marles and Foreign Minister Penny Wong among others.

The Chinese Embassy in its message relayed "assurances of its highest consideration" on behalf of President Xi and the Peoples Republic of China.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed deep sadness for the loss of lives and damage caused by the devastating landslide.

"Our heartfelt condolences to the affected families and prayers



for speedy recovery of the injured. India is ready to offer all possible support and assistance," PM Modi's statement read.

Malaysian Foreign Minister Mohamad Hasan also expressed deep sadness for the loss of lives and damages caused.

"My sincere condolences and sympathies to the bereaved families of the victims and the people of Papua New Guinea," he said.

"Malaysia stands in solidarity with Papua New Guinea and extends our prayers for a swift relief and recovery effort to save those who are still trapped."

Ukrainian Ambassador Hamianin also expressed sincere condolences in his official message.

"It was with pain in heart that we learned in Ukraine about numerous human losses as the result of landslide," the message read.

"Please accept my sincere condolences and forward the words of support and sympathy to the families of the perished."

Minister Tkatchenko, while acknowledging the messages, noted that commitments of funding support have also been received.

Messages of support from world leaders...

"His Holiness Pope Francis...assures everyone affected by this disaster of his spiritual closeness. Praying especially for the dead, those who mourn their loss, and for the rescue of the many persons still missing."

- **Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican Secretariat of State**

"Australia stands with the people of Papua New Guinea. (Relief package) will assist the urgent needs of those affected...and we stand ready to consider additional support."

- **Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong on Aust's \$2.5mil commitment**

"My wife and I were deeply shocked and saddened...I have witnessed first-hand and have great admiration for the extraordinary resilience of the peoples of Papua New Guinea and the Highlands. PNG is very much in our special thoughts and prayers."

- **King Charles**

"Our prayers are with all the families impacted...and the first responders who are putting themselves in harm's way to help their fellow citizens. The United States stands with Papua New Guinea - our close partner and friend - today and always."

- **US President Joe Biden**



PNG/Aust 30th Ministerial Forum affirms relations

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Minister Tkatchenko stated in declaration, that "friendship should be built on trust", and that PNG values Australia as an important bilateral partner, further acknowledging and thanking the Government of Australia for its continued support for PNG's development aspirations since independence, 1975.

Minister Tkatchenko highlighted the focus of discussions at the meeting, on the Pillars of PNG and Australia's Comprehensive, Strategic and Economic Partnership (CSEP), from which both ministerial delegations reaffirmed their committed to.

He also noted the Joint Communiqué, which reflects discussions at the 30th Ministerial Forum.

"Our meeting focused on pillars of our CSEP that aimed at strengthening our relationship and enhance cooperation on a number of bilateral issues of mutual interests in different areas," he said.

"We discussed ways to further strengthen our strategic cooperation for security and stability between our two countries in key strategic areas such as regional security outlook; bilateral security agreement; policing and justice; defence cooperation; border and maritime security, including Torres Strait Treaty; cyber security and telecommunications; and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief."

In the areas of economic partnership for prosperity, Minister Tkatchenko stated that both delegations welcomed the progress to ensure a mutually beneficial PNG-Australia Economic Partnership through our commitment to explore ways to boost economic growth and resilience, business ties, trade and investment.

He added that discussions on social and human development focused on Australian Development Partnership with PNG.

"We welcomed the Australia-PNG Development Partnership Plan 2004-09, including their align-

ment with goals set out in PNG's Vision 2050 and Medium-Term Development Plan IV with more emphasis on socio-economic development in important sectors such as education, health, gender and women's empowerment and climate change," he said.

"Additionally, our CSEP Pillar 2, focused on strengthening ties with our neighbours and global partners.

"I acknowledge PNG and Australia working together to reinforce Pacific unity and encourage Pacific consensus through transparent and inclusive decision-making in regional forums."

Minister Tkatchenko in conclusion reassured Deputy Prime Minister Marles and Senator Wong, of PNG's support for collaboration on addressing issues of mutual interests.

"We share a common history, and this has been the cornerstone of PNG-Australia relations, and we are committed to maintain this going forward."

Minister Tkatchenko farewells Chinese Ambassador

FOREIGN Affairs Minister Hon Justin Tkatchenko MP says the friendship and bilateral relationship between PNG and the People's Republic of China is even bigger, better and stronger than before.

Minister Tkatchenko attributed China's strong bilateral relationship with PNG to outgoing Chinese Ambassador His Excellency Mr Zeng Fanhua.

"You put your heart, your strength and all your ability in making the relationship between China and PNG bigger and better than it's ever been before. That shows our relationship as well with our two heads of government," the minister said.

"Ambassador, your term here has been remarkable, it's been one of consultation with all of us, one of energy, friendship and you have put the commitment, responsibility and the initiative into ensuring that our China-PNG relationship grows stronger going forward into the years ahead."

Speaking at the farewell function of Mr Zeng Fanhua, Minister Tkatchenko said the Marape-Rosso government holds the One-China policy and works with the Chinese government for the benefit of both countries in the bilateral relationship moving forward for bigger and better partnerships.

"We've had many successful visits and the last visit was by the Foreign Minister of China, His Excellency Mr Wang Yi who came here and we signed many MOUs and different agreements for the benefit of our country economically and physically."



"It's been a privilege to work with you side by side as Foreign Minister and thank you for your efforts in working with all our governors, MPs, Prime Minister and even business houses, Chinese community in PNG, they appreciate your leadership, your honesty, trust and professionalism.

"We look forward to receive the new ambassador and we will work closely with him as we have done with you.

"Our China-PNG relationship will continue from where you left off and we look forward to our future relationship going forward."

Mr Zeng arrived in PNG in May 2021 and had served for three years.

He travelled to 11 provinces besides NCD and had made many friends whom he will miss.

"It was a journey of learning about and to fall in love with PNG," he said.

"It's hard for me to leave so

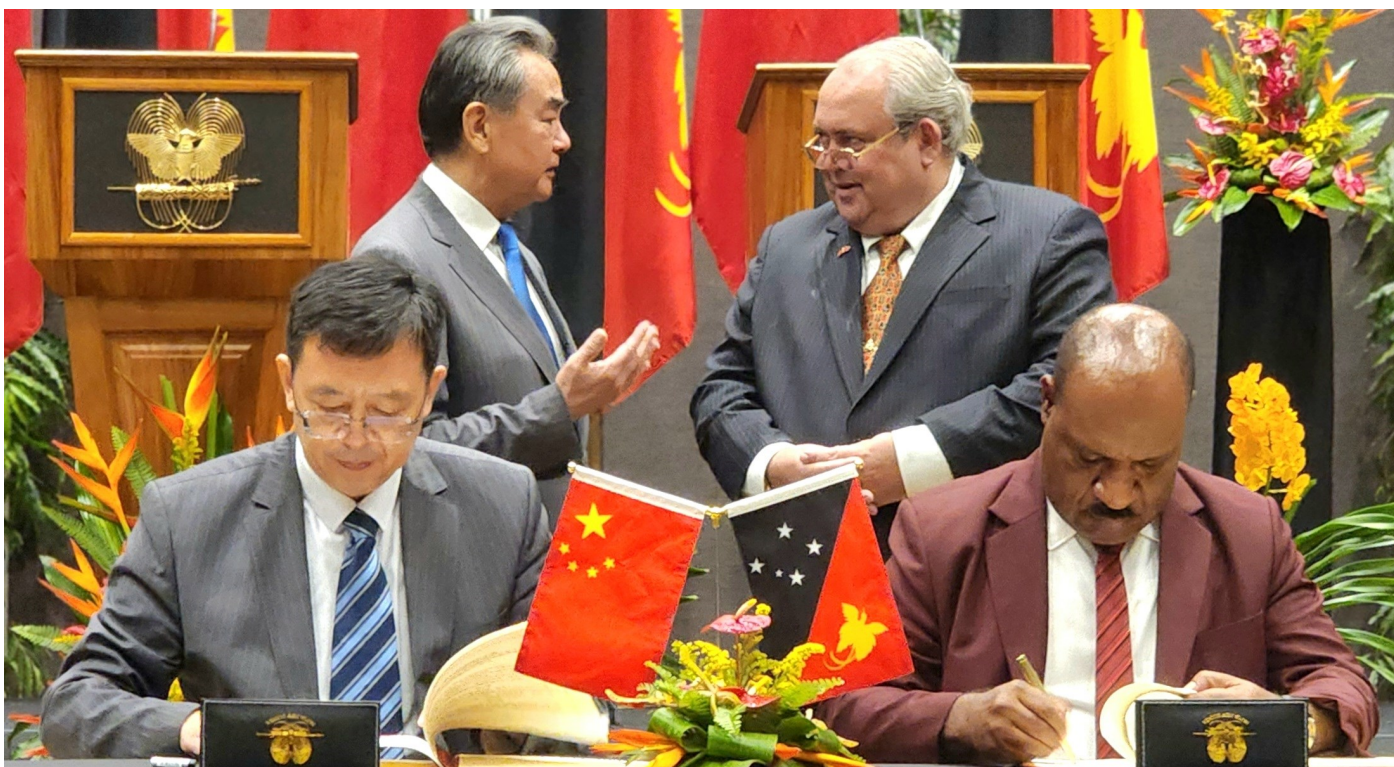
many friends I made this time, leaders, officials, representatives of the government, parliament, agencies, universities, communities, PNG and Chinese companies and colleagues of the diplomatic Corp, you all have given me a lot of help and support.

"Together, we have gone through the Covid pandemic, we shared, joys and sorrows, we were partners at the beginning and gradually became good friends and brothers.

"I would like to thank you all for your help and friendship.

"I will leave PNG happy and satisfied, through joint efforts we have achieved many successes we can be proud of."

HE Zeng Fanhua's new posting will be Chinese Ambassador to Berlin, Germany where he had previously worked in another capacity.



MOU paves the way for farmers to benefit in export

PAPUA New Guinean coffee and cocoa farmers will now have market access for their produce to be exported to China following the memorandum of understanding (MOU) signed in April.

Foreign Affairs Minister Hon. Justin Tkatchenko speaking at the signing of five MOUs between Papua New Guinea and China, said this was welcome news for the farmers as this would further create employment and income generating opportunities for the people.

Minister Tkatchenko added that the signing of protocols of the phytosanitary requirements for the export of unroasted coffee and cocoa beans from PNG to China is a step in the right direction as Papua New Guineans are great farmers who grow coffee and cocoa products.

Separate MOUs were signed for the protocols on phytosanitary requirements for the export of these coffee and cocoa.

The process of phytosanitary relates to the health of plants, especially with respect to the requirements of international trade which is also known as "a point-of-origin phytosanitary certificate".

The phytosanitary certification is undertaken by a National Plant Protection Organisation to ensure the consignments meet the phytosanitary import requirements.

Minister Tkatchenko and his counterpart, Foreign Minister for the People's Republic of China, His Excellency Wang Yi, witnessed the signing of the MOUs that took place in Port Moresby on April 20, 2024.

The other three MOUs included Funding of US\$1 million (K3.8 million) for the disaster relief donation, Information Communication Technology Cooperation, US\$270,000 (K1.02m) for the Joint Feasibility Study for the Free Trade Agreement.

"I want to acknowledge and

encourage China's continued support in its implementation of Chinese Government funded projects in PNG that has greatly contributed towards our development aspirations," Minister Tkatchenko said

He also said China's presence in the Pacific region is to promote development cooperation and enhance collective efforts towards addressing challenges faced by both Pacific Island countries and China as developing nations.

"I want to reassure Foreign Minister Wang Yi of the importance PNG places on its bilateral relations with China that friendship should be built on trust, and PNG values China as an important bilateral partner."

H.E Wang Yi, who arrived on April 20 on an official visit to PNG, held bilateral meetings with government ministers, in relation to economic cooperation arrangements in the different sectors.

Preparations begin for Papal visit in September

THE Government of Papua New Guinea, the Catholic Bishops Conference and the Vatican have begun preparations for the historical visit by head of the Catholic Church Pope Francis in September this year.

Foreign Affairs Minister Hon. Justin Tkatchenko announced that an inter-government agencies committee responsible for the Papal visit has been working since January on the preparations for the week-long visit to ensure that it is a success and a memorable one.

He said the Pope's visit would be completely different to the normal programs for State visits for the Heads of State and Heads of government and other VIP guests.

Minister Tkatchenko said the Holy See would be accorded an official State visit with a 21-gun salute, guard of honour and respect.

"We've got the right people in the right place and we have all very experienced Papua New Guineans who have handled all the visits from the Royal Family to Heads of governments and Heads of State."

The Catholic Bishops Confer-



ence confirmed the visit by His Holiness Pope Francis to PNG from Sept 6-9, 2024.

Archbishop of Port Moresby Cardinal Sir John Ribat said the four-nation visit planned in 2020 was deferred due to Covid.

Cardinal Ribat said it's good news for the Christians because he is a State and spiritual leader for everyone.

"We have to ensure that this visit is not only memorable for him but also for all of us."

Chairman of the Papal visit Bishop Rozario Menezes said it would be a State visit as well as an apostolic, pastoral and spiritual visit as head of the Catholic Church around the world.

"It is a moment for us to come together as a church and as a country so we can experience the blessings he brings along."

Upon arrival from Jakarta, Indonesia, His Holiness will pay a courtesy visit to Governor-General Sir Bob Dadae at Government House followed by an audience with the civil society and the diplomatic community at APEC Haus.

He will hold a public gathering at the Sir John Guise Stadium before his one-day visit to Vanimo, West Sepik.

He will also meet with the youths in Port Moresby upon his return from Vanimo prior to his departure to Timor Leste.

Comp launched in lead-up to 50th Independence Anniversary

FOREIGN Affairs Minister Hon. Justin Tkatchenko, on June 17, 2024, announced the Government's plans to mark the country's 50th Independence Anniversary celebrations next year.

Minister Tkatchenko, who is the chairman of the 50th Independence Anniversary, said that Papua New Guineans had been given the opportunity to partici-

pate in a competition to design the 50th Independence Anniversary logo, as part of the preparations for the big day.

The competition is open with free entry to all interested artistic Papua New Guineans, with a K10,000 cash prize on offer for the winning design.

All designs must be original and in colour.

Deadline for entries is set for July 12, with the winning design to be announced on July 19.

"We are inviting our people to participate in this competition and hopefully one young talented Papua New Guinean will be chosen," Minister Tkatchenko said.

Special moment as ministers walk across PNG-Indonesia border

FOREIGN Affairs Minister Honourable Justin Tkatchenko MP and his Indonesian counterpart Her Excellency Minister Retno Masurdi on May 9, created history by crossing the Indonesia-PNG border on foot.

Minister Tkatchenko and Minister Masurdi crossed over from Indonesia to Papua New Guinea from the Skouw Border Post, through the "no-mans land" stretch, and onto PNG soil at the Wutung Border Post on foot, in a momentous occasion for PNG-Indonesia relations.

The historic occasion followed bilateral meetings at the 4th Joint Ministerial Commission and the 3rd Senior Officials Meetings in Jayapura on May 8.

"Today will go down in the history of our two countries," Minister Tkatchenko said.

He officially received Minister Masurdi upon their arrival at the Wutung Border Post, in a significant and gracious welcome gesture. West Sepik Provincial MP Hon.



Tony Wouwou and Foreign Affairs Secretary Elias Wohengu were also present.

Indonesian Ambassador to PNG His Excellency Andriana Supandy also accompanied both ministers.

Minister Tkatchenko said that while this may seem irrelevant and unimportant to some, the day was indeed a special moment.

"We are joined together forever. Our borders will always be here. Our issues and challenges will al-

ways be there." Minister Masurdi applauded PNG for the initiative to host the meetings in Jayapura.

"Minister Tkatchenko will write history today. This is the first time that a bilateral meeting between Foreign Ministers of Indonesia and PNG is taking place in Jayapura," she said.

The ministers continued on to Wutung Primary School, where K5 million grant aid Indonesian assistance under the West Sepik Integrated Development Project Phase 1 is in progress.

This includes the upgrade of 10 classrooms and a brand new administration building for the school, a fire station and fire engine, and new waste management system for the Vanimo township.

"Our relationship with the People's Republic of Indonesia has never been stronger, from the leadership of our Prime Minister and the President of Indonesia, and through to Foreign Minister Masurdi and I," Minister Tkatchenko said.

Secretary leads 3rd PNG-Indonesia Senior Official Meeting

SECRETARY for the Department of Foreign Affairs Elias Wohengu chaired the 3rd Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) between Papua New Guinea and the Republic of Indonesia in Jayapura City, Papua Province of Indonesia on May 8, 2024.

The meeting focused on a number of bilateral issues of mutual interests and development cooperation between the two countries in the areas of security and intelli-

gence, custom cooperation, trade and economic, education and capacity building, health, and other critical infrastructural development for PNG.

Discussions on border management include comprehensive review of the PNG-Indonesia Basic Border Agreement and Special Arrangement for strengthening and enhancing cooperation in addressing outstanding common border issues.

Other pending matters of mutual interest include land transport agreement, agreement on visa on arrival for ordinary passport holders, electricity supply for border villages, MOU on women empowerment and child protection.

Secretary Wohengu also affirmed support for sports engagements between the two countries for social interactions including networking and cultural exchanges.

PNG and Israel to build strong relationship with new embassy in Jerusalem

PAPUA New Guinea will build a strong bilateral relationship with Israel through its new embassy in Jerusalem, says Foreign Affairs Minister Hon Justin Tkatchenko MP.

Minister Tkatchenko, speaking at the commissioning of the new head of missions on June 12, 2024, said the Marape-Rosso Government had made an important decision to open four different missions throughout the world, including Israel.

He added that the embassy in Jerusalem would benefit Papua New Guinea through a long term relationship and partnership.

Minister Tkatchenko said that after careful consideration, the National Executive Council had granted approval for the embassy in Jerusalem to be officially opened and commissioned by the Department of Foreign Affairs.

"We have close association and a lot of our Papua New Guineans have close relationship with Israel, especially through religiously events as well as through agriculture, economy, trade and security," he said.



ty," he said.

"We are working with the Israeli Government in those aspects and we look forward to our new relationships with Israel.

"PNG is first Pacific Island country to open an embassy in Jerusalem and we already have two staff manning that embassy.

"It was officially opened by the Israeli prime minister and our prime minister on Sept 5 last year.

"We look forward to our new

ambassador who has been commissioned today His Excellency Mr Henry Mokono to take over the role as Ambassador and the Deputy Secretary of the Department of Foreign affairs Mr Brian Kaumu as the deputy ambassador.

"This is an important strategic embassy for PNG and we will work closely with them in the situations that they face and share our common bond and knowledge with the government of Israel and most importantly the people."

Eight foreign mission heads take up postings

FOREIGN Affairs Minister Hon Justin Tkatchenko MP, at a farewell function on May 31, 2024, for foreign service officers who will take up new postings, highlighted the significance of the eight (8) heads of mission appointments.

"These appointments are a significant step in the direction that this Government intends to achieve on the international relations front with our bilateral partners," the minister said.

"Through the Government's support and commitment, we are satisfied that your postings, by your own merits, credentials and hard work, will be of great value to this direction and change that we are working towards."

The appointments by the National Executive Council are:

1. Mr. Sakias Tameo, High Commissioner to New Zealand.
2. Mr. Kapi Maro, High Commissioner to Singapore,

3. Ms. Helen Aitsi, Ambassador to the Republic of Korea.

4. Mr. Simon Namis, Ambassador to Indonesia.

5. Mr. Jimmy Ovia, High Commissioner to Malaysia.

6. Mr. Joseph Varo, Ambassador to Brussels, Secretary-General to the European Union.

7. Mr. Fred Sarufa, Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations.

8. Mr Vincent Sumale, High Commissioner to India.



‘Great need for outcomes, action on national gun violence issues’

FOREIGN Affairs Minister Hon Justin Tkatchenko MP, on April 15, 2024, called for immediate outcomes and action on the growing issue of gun-related violence.

Minister Tkatchenko made the call in his remarks on behalf of Prime Minister Hon James Marape MP at the opening of the National Workshop on Coordination Mechanisms and Comprehensive National Strategy on Small Arms Control, at the APEC Haus, Port Moresby.

He affirmed that there was political will from the Government for action, as a result of assertions of instances of political sponsorship of weapons.

“It is the big issue that we must all address together,” he said.

“If we're all thinking about the good of our country, then these political issues must come to a compromise.

“This workshop is very timely as it

is an opportunity for us to discuss on a comprehensive strategy to address this scourge.

“It is an opportunity to collaboratively lay down a path to effectively tackle the problem of illicit trafficking of Small Arms Light Weapons (SALW), looking both at demand and supply-driven factors.

“From these discussions and data collected on the ground, the UN organization will give us a full detailed report of their findings as well as recommendations for how we can best achieve effective reduction of gun violence.

“It's not hard, we do not need to be rocket scientists to work out how to remove guns from the provinces.

Minister Tkatchenko noted an extensive report which was put together by Retired Major-General Jerry Singirok in 2005.

“If you read through it, it's only

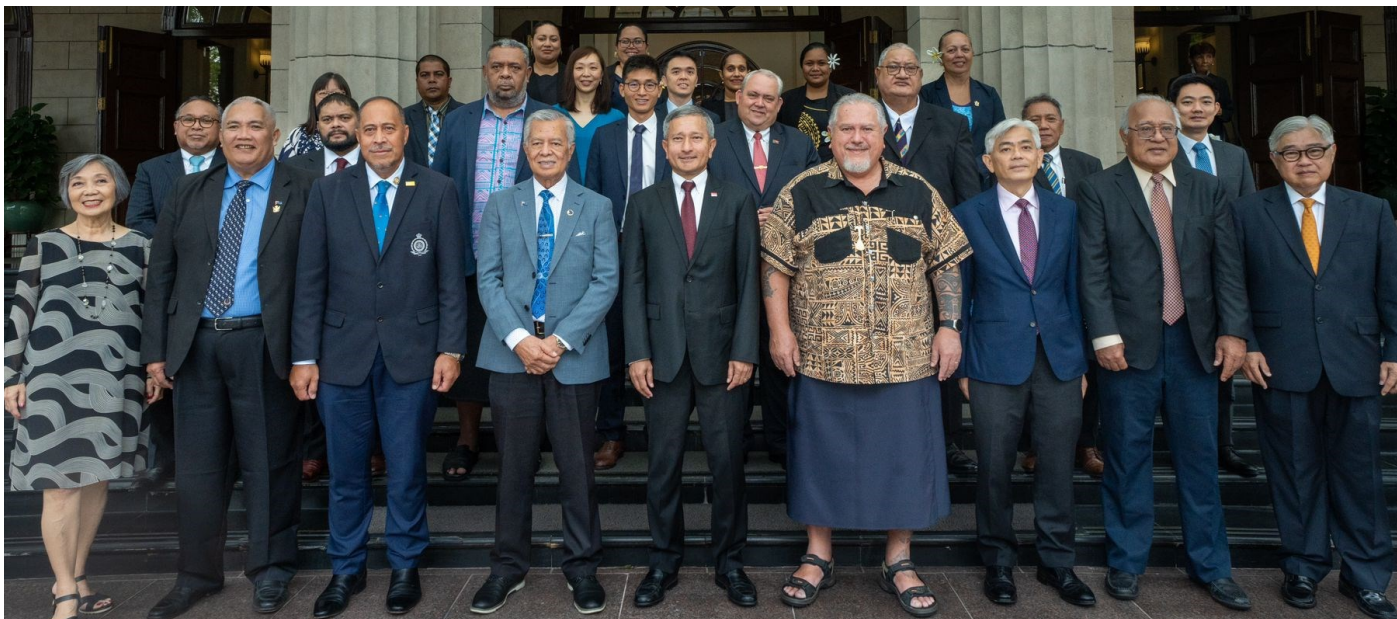
for our Government to implement a lot of those recommendations which will help our police implement the removal of small arms and firearms throughout Papua New Guinea,” he said.

“If you read through it, it's only for our government to implement a lot of those recommendations which will help our police implement the removal of small arms and firearms throughout Papua New Guinea.

Minister Tkatchenko expressed his gratitude to the UN Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific, the UN Country Team in the country and the European Union for the support to Government for the workshop.

The workshop was organized under the Saving Lives Entity (SALIENT) Initiative, jointly implemented in PNG by the UN Resident Coordinators Office, UNRCPD, UNDP PNG and UNFPA PNG.

Papua New Guinea has a lot to learn from Singapore - Minister Tkatchenko



PAPUA New Guinea, as the biggest Pacific Island nation, is a leader in the region, says Singaporean Foreign Minister Dr Vivian Balakrishnan.

Dr Balakrishnan, in his meeting with his Papua New Guinean counterpart, Foreign Affairs Minister Hon Justin Tkatchenko, expressed that Singapore had much to offer in respect to securing some of Papua New Guinea's natural resources.

The ministers met on the sidelines of the Third Singapore-Pacific High Level visit in Singapore.

Minister Tkatchenko said Papua

New Guinea was strategically based both in Southeast Asia and the Pacific and plays a big role.

"Singapore recognizes that we have huge potential as one of the biggest food bowls in the region where we can produce and supply much needed food resources to Singapore," he said.

"The potential is there for Papua New Guinea to get its act together and work towards some agreements with Singapore in providing a variety of resources, produce or products to Singapore going forward."

"We look forward to working

with the ministry for agriculture, trade and other respective agencies to explore what we can contribute to the ever-growing needs of Singapore.

"This will work well with our daily flights going into Singapore and shipping - being a close neighbor in Southeast Asia.

"They are also there to assist, where we can learn from in the various areas of service delivery, such as water sanitation, health and creating a better environment.

"Singapore is willing to share their experiences and their mistakes so that we don't go down

Minister Tkatchenko meets with new Singapore PM

FOREIGN Affairs Minister Hon Justin Tkatchenko MP on May 22, met with New Singapore Prime Minister Hon Lawrence Wong in an official meeting at the Third Singapore-Pacific High Level Visit in Singapore.

Minister Tkatchenko personally relayed to Prime Minister Wong, a

congratulatory message from Prime Minister Hon James Marape, on behalf of the Government, and the people of Papua New Guinea.

"Mr Wong has been a long-term MP, and through succession and announcement nearly two years ago, has now become Prime Minister," Minister Tkatchenko said.

"He comes with a lot of experience, a lot of knowledge and has been groomed for this position and succession."

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Wong said that he was looking forward to an official meeting with Prime Minister Marape in the near future.

Minister Tkatchenko shines light on potential of Philippines-PNG cooperation agreements

PAPUA New Guinea and the Philippines have abundant natural resources and can learn from each other's experiences through mutual cooperation.

Foreign Affairs Minister Hon Justin Tkatchenko said this in a joint press conference with Philippines Foreign Affairs Secretary Enrique A Manalo on the occasion of the Inaugural PNG/Philippines policy consultations and meetings on April 4, in Manila.

The MOU on policy consultations was concluded on the margins of the 2023 APEC Leaders' Summit in San Francisco, California, USA, and the meeting marked the first occasion towards the implementation of this arrangement. The purpose of the policy consultations was to establish a mechanism to enhance communication and coordination



harnessed and developed by both countries through cooperation for mutual benefits.

"PNG and the Philippines established formal diplomatic relations immediately after PNG's independence at the ambassadorial level and have since maintained cordial relations.

"The extent of bilateral ties is productive and rewarding; however, there is scope for both countries to further expand cooperation in business,

trade and investment, tourism and downstream processing."

between the two governments on bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest.

"I am pleased that trade and economic relations between the two countries is steadily increasing and should continue to expand and diversify," Minister Tkatchenko said.

"There are vast untapped opportunities that can be further

Meanwhile Minister Tkatchenko stressed the importance of the Philippines Government's participation as a dialogue partner in the Pacific Regional forum, given the current pressing global challenges in areas of climate change and geo-politics.

Visa-on-arrival for Filipinos in planning stage

Foreign Affairs Minister Hon. Justin Tkatchenko has announced that Papua New Guinea is planning to offer its visa-on-arrival (VOA) facility for Philippine passport holders.

Minister Tkatchenko made this announcement at a joint press conference with Philippines Foreign Affairs Secretary Enrique Manalo in Manila on April 5, 2024.

During his official visit to Manila, PNG Foreign Minister Justin Tkatchenko confirmed that Ma-

nila and Port Moresby were negotiating on a memorandum of understanding that would reciprocate the Philippines' visa-free scheme for PNG nationals.

"We have already cleared that with our state department, and we look forward to that reciprocation with the Philippines so Filipinos can come to PNG and enjoy our wonderful country and feel much welcome," he said.

PNG's VOA is only available to the nationals of Japan, Israel, Indonesia, China, and member states of the Melanesian Spearhead Group "on reciprocal basis".

At present, Filipinos traveling to

PNG for tourism and business must secure an e-Visa.

The proposed visa waiver arrangement is among the subjects being discussed in the ongoing inaugural Philippines-PNG policy consultations in Manila.

Secretary Enrique Manalo said Manila seeks to further increase tourism exchanges and the number of flights between PNG and the Philippines.

"While approximately 3,000km apart, our two proud maritime democracies share common values and realities that serve as impetus for closer and more productive bilateral engagement," he said.

Minister Tkatchenko congratulates Solomon Islands Prime Minister-elect Hon Jeremiah Manele

FOREIGN Affairs Minister Honourable Justin Tkatchenko MP has congratulated Prime Minister-Elect, and former colleague Foreign Minister of the Solomon Islands, Hon. Jeremiah Manele on his successful election into office as 13th Prime Minister of his country.

Minister Tkatchenko while conveying his congratulations, extended his congratulations to the 31-majority elected members of the 12th Parliament of the Solomon Islands, for recognising Prime Minister-Elect Manele's calibre of leadership.

"In his former capacity as Foreign Minister, Prime Minister Manele and I shared mutual views, with extended and close consultations on issues on the Pacific Island Forum (PIF), the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) and Inter-government front," he said.

"Our discussions over time were consistently on issues of mutual respect, reflecting our strong friendship, and the working relations between our two countries.

"In a period of time where close bonds needed to be stronger recently, in the face of rising geopolitical conversations especially in the region, our relations with the Solomon Islands through the former Foreign Minister was a constant assurance of our united front as the closest



of neighbours."

Minister Tkatchenko further noted his last meeting with Prime Minister Elect Manele two weeks before the elections, where both expressed mutual views for PNG and Solomon Islands relations going forward.

"From our conversations then, I have every confidence that the Prime Minister will ensure continuity in our stances on the various issues at the regional and international level - maybe to even greater heights, in his new capacity as leader of his country,"

Minister Tkatchenko added.

Minister Tkatchenko also heaped praise on the people of the Solomon Islands for allowing a peaceful and successful democratic election process, which has installed a Government truly for the people of the Solomon Islands.

"Congratulations to Prime Minister Manele, and the people of the Solomon Islands," he said.

"I look forward to officially meeting with him in his new capacity, and to the conversations that we will continue to have."

Secretary Wohengu receives report on projects in West Sepik

THE Department of Foreign Affairs Secretary Elias Wohengu had the opportunity to receive a report of the West Sepik Integrated Development Project funded by the Government of the Republic

of Indonesia.

The project includes Wutung Primary School building, Vanimo town fire station and Vanimo waste management project.

The report was presented by the West Sepik Provincial Administrator Mr. Conrad Tilau, on May 19, 2024 at Wutung Primary School.

Government commends outgoing UNICEF country rep for efforts in addressing children's issues



THE Government of Papua New Guinea will continue its support to UNICEF as the leading partner addressing children's issues in the country.

Foreign Affairs Minister Hon. Justin Tkatchenko made these remarks at a meeting on April 23, 2024, with outgoing UNICEF Country Representative, Dr Claudes Kamenga.

"Thank you Mr Kamenga, your work in the country is commendable and I appreciate what you have done," the minister said.

"You have helped our children in a massive way coordinating with our departments and various agencies.

"It's not easy working in a country like PNG, things take a bit longer and more time to do.

"Your time here is greatly appreciated and we look forward to receiving your predecessor."

Dr Kamenga joined the UN in PNG in 2021 and assumed overall responsibility for UNICEF's activities and led a country programme

aimed at addressing inequality and ensuring that children's rights are fulfilled.

"The best for the children of this country is still to come," he said.

"The Government must lead and mobilise all its partners to ensure that the right of every child in this country is fulfilled.

"I take this opportunity to express my profound gratitude for excellent collaboration between the government of Papua New Guinea, UNICEF and for all the support I received during my tenure here.

"The Government has been very supportive in facilitating the goods that we import to support the Government.

"Please convey to the Prime Minister my utmost gratitude for his leadership and his support to the work that we have done and continued to do."

Mr Kamenga acknowledged the departments of National Planning and Monitoring, Community Development, Religion and Youth,

Health, Education and Justice and Attorney-General.

He said certain areas merit special attention including violence against children, malnutrition, cold chain facilities for vaccination and report on the convention on the rights of a child.

He said about 75 percent of children have reported being victim of physical or psychological violence and close to 80 percent of fathers have admitted belting their children.

Mr Kamenga said the Government needed to change the normal.

He added that although malnutrition is a serious concern, the government's efforts with support from its partners have scaled up nutrition services.

"While the situation has improved, the situation of children in this country remains alarming," he said.

"It calls for more intensified effort by the government and its development partners."

Foreign Affairs Department says 'thank you' to staff with early Mothers' Day celebration



THE Department of Foreign Affairs marked an early Mothers' Day celebration earlier this year for its women employees with two big cakes.

Foreign Affairs Minister Hon. Justin Tkatchenko, accompanied by his Secretary Mr Elias Wohengu, acknowledged the women as a pillar in the department.

"To all you ladies, thank you for all your hard work, you are a pillar in our Department of Foreign Affairs," the minister said.

"You do a lot of hard work and are recognized at the highest level.

"Ladies, think big; you are equal part of this department you are no different to the men in this department.

"You work as hard as the male colleagues, some of you work harder than our male counterparts."

Minister Tkatchenko said women

in the department were treated equally.

"We are here to support, protect and work together with you," he told the women.

"Any issues you have the secretary and the deputy secretary to ensure that we work together equally and fairly as best we possibly can.

"You have a part to play not just as employees of this department, but also mothers and devoted wives.

"I wish you all a happy Mother's Day for Sunday, this is a little token of appreciation for Secretary Wohengu and I to say thank you for all your hard work.

"We look forward in your continual work in promoting women and gender equality in this department, which is very important.

"It's about enhancing our department making it bigger and better with quality leadership.

"We look forward to our working relationship now and into the future."

DFA undertakes national review of PNG-Indonesia border agreements

THE Department of Foreign Affairs has prioritized the National Review of the Basic Border Agreement (BBA) and Special Arrangement (SPA) between Papua New Guinea and Indonesia.

In a three-day workshop held in Port Moresby from April 3-6, 2024, the department led the initial review exercise of the two important documents.

The review of the BBA and SPA is the mutual responsibility of both the Papua New Guinea Government and the Government of Republic of Indonesia.

These agreements are reviewed every ten (10) years for strengthening border areas through recognizing priority areas of engagement for improvement and development for mutual benefits of the respective peoples living in the common border areas.

The review exercise received enormous support from line agencies including the Department of



Provincial and Local Level Government, Department of Defence, Department of Works and National Highways, Department of Lands and Physical Planning, National Maritime Safety Authority, PNG Immigration and Citizenship Service Authority, PNG Customs Service and other relevant stakeholders.

The government bodies engaged in providing technical advice

on the review of the two documents to ensure the agreements capture important areas of con-

sideration. Their inputs in the initial state of the review exercise were crucial for having profound guidelines leading towards the formulation of the final draft of the documents.

Also, the inputs made by both parties from Papua New Guinea and Indonesia on the documents will be further elaborated at the Joint Border Committee Meeting before it will be presented to the Parliament of respective governments for ratification and exchange of the Instruments of Ratification.

APEC Haus management transferred to National Events

The National Executive Council (NEC) has made a decision to transfer the management and operations of the APEC Haus to the National Events Secretariat under the Department of Prime Minister & National Executive Council.

This arrangement was in consultation with Minister for Finance Hon Rainbo Paita and the Department of PM & NEC to put the operation of the APEC Haus under National Events Secretariat.

This is so all government events and those that would like to hire

the facility privately can utilize it through this new arrangement.

The Finance Department has relinquished all administration and management duties to the National Events Secretariat to ensure proper management and coordination of the government facility.

Minister for Foreign Affairs and National Events Hon Justin Tkatchenko thanked Minister Paita and the Department of Finance for prudently maintaining the APEC Haus for the last six (6) years.

Minister Paita stated that the National Events Secretariat was the right coordinating office to manage APEC Haus and to ensure it is correctly operated.

Minister Tkatchenko specified that APEC Haus was an iconic government infrastructure and must be properly managed for its long-term benefit.

The handover of the facility will take place immediately, and a total review and audit of its operations will be conducted as well to ensure this facility serves its intended purpose.

DFA officers complete Foreign Service Training

SEVEN new Foreign Service Officers with the Department of Foreign Affairs successfully completed the Pacific Diplomatic Training Programme and received their certificates on June 21, 2024, at the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) in Suva, Fiji.

The training focused on growth and development of young foreign service officers in Pacific Islands countries including Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Solomon Islands, Cook Islands, Marshall Islands, Palau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Naru.

The officers were introduced to new set of skills relevance to the practice of diplomacy in the regional and global context.

It also provided opportunities for interaction and building connectivity for future collaborations in foreign service engagements.

The Pacific Diplomatic Training is funded by the New Zealand Gov-



ernment under the Manaaki New Zealand Scholarship Programme, and delivered by the Uni-Professional of the Victoria University of Wellington.

The Department of Foreign Affairs, through its partnership with the New Zealand Government, continues to recognize this programme as part of Department's steadfast commitment in capacity

building for institutional strengthening and modernization.

Under the 2023 Pacific Diplomatic Training Programme, 26 new foreign service officers of the Department of Foreign Affairs certified as diplomats to serve the Department and the country in their areas of responsibilities.

Secretary Wohengu meets Ambassador Designate for Norway

AMBASSADOR designate of Norway to PNG Ms Anna Crete Riise paid a courtesy call to the Department of Foreign Affairs Secretary Elias Wohengu on June 20, 2024, at the department headquarters in Port Moresby.

Ambassador Riise and Secretary Wohengu had an opportunity to discuss important issues such as climate change and protection of oceans and rainforests for sustainable development.

The ambassador affirmed Norway's contributions in addressing climate change in the Pacific region. Norway is supportive for collaboration with PNG in preserving



oceans and rainforests. Secretary Wohengu was also informed of Norway's scholarship opportuni-

ties for Pacific Islands countries; there are 19 PHD scholarship for students at the University of South Pacific in conjunction with Norway's University of Bergen.

This programme focused on developing knowledge for better managing of oceans and climate change issues and students will also have opportunities to do awareness on these issues to inform and educate communities.

The discussions also included other potential areas of interests like trade and economic investment that both countries could pursue.



2024 PNG Department of Foreign Affairs
Quarterly Newsletter Issue 2.

This newsletter covered all the important
activities undertaken by the Department
and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



*Read, stay informed, learn and be educated to make
a difference!*

Department of Foreign Affairs
Central Government Office
P.O. BOX 422, WAIGANI
National Capital District
Papua New Guinea

Public Diplomacy & Cultural Affairs Branch | Executive Division