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CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM UNIT



REFORM NEWS

H O N I A R A  
B O U N D A R Y  
DISCUSSED



Team Leader Joseph Huta and members of the Honiara Congress Team meet with members of the Honiara City Council on 23 November 2011. Photo: Marilyn Maeta'a, CRU

Honiara City team of Constitutional Congress has successfully engaged in consultations with Tandai Tribal Landowners Association late this year, to iron out controversial issues on Honiara city boundaries as part of finalizing its discussions on the proposed State Maritime Boundaries and Special Areas.

These were lead on discussions from previously held meetings between the Honiara City Congress team and Guadalcanal Province Congress team during the Proposed State

Maritime Boundaries and Special Areas consultations that were held in June 2010 and April 2011.

The two major events required all Congress' Provincial teams to bring in important stakeholders from respective provinces to discuss the proposed State Boundaries and issues surrounding it.

According to the team leader of Honiara City Mr. Joseph Huta, no proper conclusion was reached during both meetings due to Guadalcanal team requesting more time to gather proper legal infor-

mation for the discussions, plus the inclusion of other important stakeholders, which included the Tandai Tribal Landowners Association.

The concern was mainly on proper and legal acquisition of customary land in and around Honiara, and according to the meeting with the Tandai Tribal landowners Association; Mr. Huta said that there were important historical documentations in the Association's possession, which were relatively unknown public documents that could justify concerns raised.

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# Reform in Pictures

## FLASH-BACK ON THIS YEAR'S ACTIVITIES



PS Forestry Ronald Unusi briefing the 2nd Joint Plenary on Revenue generated by the forestry sector in September at Red Mansion conference.



Ms. Viola Malasa (Congress member) doing secretarial duties on the Draft 2009 review in August at Red Mansion Conference room.



Members of the second Joint Plenary during the review of the 2009 Draft from the 2009 Feedback.



Members of the Western delegation during the proposed State Boundaries and Special Areas Meeting in April at St. Nicholas Hall.



Team leader Choiseul Simmy Vazarabatu during the Meeting in July.



Team leaders' meeting at Pacific Casino conference room in July.

# LOOKING FORWARD TO 2012

**Constitutional Reform is fast approaching its completion phase come 2012 for the final content of the proposed Federal Constitution to go through ratification by popular consensus before it is endorsed by Parliament as the Solomon Islands constitution.**

As this is envisaged to happen throughout 2012 till early 2013, the final activities to be carried out in the provinces and on the national level will be to get popular consensus on the proposed Federal Constitution.

With conventions to be held for provinces and Honiara City respectively in early 2012, some of the concepts to discuss will concern some regions. More specifically in areas of the proposed State Boundaries, political system, the federal parliament composition, federal and States powers, and revenue sharing.

Since the provincial feedbacks on the 1st 2009 Draft, a lot of discussion has gone into these areas of interest, particularly when the draft was reviewed by the 2nd Joint Plenary in view of the feedbacks.

## Honiara team successfully completes boundary discussions

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In this meeting, a representative of the Guadalcanal Congress team Mr. Rodgers Tovosia and Legal Consultant of the Constitutional Reform Program Mr. Reginald Teutao were also present.

As the Honiara area is earmarked to be the proposed Federal Capital territory, ongoing discussions in the Constitutional Reform program have proven vital to sorting out concerns and issues of the boundaries between Honiara City and Guadalcanal province.

Now that 2012 is drawing near and the final process is just around the corner, the Constitutional Reform Unit is putting together a strategic workplan focusing on 2012 activities that will accomplish the ratification process.

In terms of public views so far, there has been mixed reactions regarding the process following various developments during the Reform programme. There are strong views supporting a change of the political arrangement into Federalism to solve existing disparities in the country, politically and economically. Meanwhile others are skeptical that the change will not solve issues of corruption and will only breed disunity as the focus is regionalistic. But in all, there is a strong sense of keeping the unity of Solomon Islands intact.

With these views, the Constitutional Congress and Eminent Persons Advisory Council (EPAC) have been working tirelessly in ensuring a Federal Solomon Islands accommodates the disparities, improves and enhances political development for the better. 

Mr. Huta said the team had very good meetings with the three stakeholders, the Guadalcanal Provincial Executive and Premier on November 11, endorsed by Team Leader Guadalcanal Congress Mr. Paul Tovua; the Trustees of Tandai Tribal Landowners Association on 17 November and; the full Honiara City Council on 23 November.

“Before the Plenary, we didn’t have a position on the land boundaries and maritime area on Honiara city,” Mr. Huta said, “that is why straight after that when we were given the imprest [funds], we went on to complete

### This Quarter's Calendar



**November 11** Guadalcanal Provincial Executive and Premier meeting with the Honiara City Congress Team.

**November 17** Honiara City Congress team meets with the Trustees of Tandai Tribal Landowners Association.

**November 23** Congress' Honiara City team meets full Council of Honiara City to brief them on the developments of the meetings with Guadalcanal Province Executive and Tandai Tribal Landowners Association.



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these very important meetings.”

Mr. Huta said that all meetings were successful in that a lot of understanding was shared between Congress' Honiara team and all stakeholders regarding this area in the Constitutional Reform process.

The team is yet to complete its report on the Honiara City Boundaries consultation and hold further discussions with the Honiara City Council regarding a possible structure of the City for the upcoming Provincial/Honiara city conventions early next year. 



Solomon Islands Government

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## ABOUT CRU

The Constitutional Reform Unit (CRU) is the body responsible for the management and coordination of Constitutional Reform Project.

It is an established division within the Office of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, and it is the Secretariat for the Constitutional Congress.

CRU has staff that carry out administrative, media, legal and financial related undertakings for the Constitutional Reform Programme.

CRU is located at the East Wing (top floor end) of the Office of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, which is situated along Mendana Avenue, Honiara.

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### For more information:

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*Seasons Greetings*

Constitutional Reform Unit wishes members of the Constitutional Congress, EPAC and the general public a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year 2012!

CRU would like to thank Congress and EPAC for the cordial working relationship, which led to successfully completing 2011 work program.

We look forward to accomplishing Constitutional Reform with you all in 2012.