

Constitutional Reform Unit

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PRESS RELEASE

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Hon. Manu'ari declares his support for Federalism process

Member of Parliament for West Makira Honourable Derrick Manu'ari said that while he stands as a member of the Opposition to the Government; upon viewing the presentation on Unitary to Federalism he fully supports the proposed Federal system.

His comment was met by a full round of applause from participants of Makira/Ulawa's Awareness on the 2nd 2014 Draft Federal Constitution of Solomon Islands, which includes chiefs, church and community leaders, women, business representatives, government officials and professionals from Makira/Ulawa province, former and current politicians and Members of Provincial Assembly.

Hon. Derrick Manu'ari gave his remarks among other participants after Fundamental Reform Sector Secretary Mr. Warren Paia made the presentation, which highlighted the history and features of the current unitary system and the proposed Federal system for Solomon Islands.

Hon. Manu'ari would be the first, as a national Parliamentarian, to openly endorse and give his support to the Reform and proposed Draft Federal Constitution.

He thanked the Constitutional Reform team for the opportunity to participate in the process and said it is also good to see some of their chiefs participate in it.

"The step where the government is taking this time, that is to leave the process in the hands of the people, I think it's the right way forward," said Hon. Manu'ari.

He reiterated that he has seen a lot of unfair distribution in resources especially to the rural people and thus endorses what the federal constitution proposes in fair distribution of development and revenue sharing.

On this note, he encouraged people to see the change holistically.

"It cannot come only from legislation," he said, "Some of the problems we see today that is posed by the current system, is human made. It comes down to ill decision-making we make as leaders."

He said this is more like a transformation process, which has come through legal means (as in the Constitution) at the same time, should transform the human part of that process.

“So while we talk about constitutional transition,” he said, “it’s more importantly a transformation, which should begin with us as a people.”

Hon. Manu’ari said that the system is like the vehicle, and the people as drivers of the vehicle.

“As drivers of the system we have to revisit ourselves,” he said, “If we are not transformed and retain our old skills of driving, then we might drive this system to destruction.”

Elaborating on this, he suggested that State Constitutions should look in detail on mechanisms and how to address corruption.

“We should also have ‘checks and balances’ that ensures leadership decisions have areas where ordinary people can check too, so that everything is in their best interest,” Hon. Manu’ari said.

Out of others held so far, Makira/Ulawa is the first consultation to have its national Members of Parliament, attend the Provincial Awareness program on the 2nd 2014 Draft Federal Constitution.

MUP Constitutional Congress and Eminent Persons Advisory team made invitations to their National MPs to join in on the program this week, which Hon. Manu’ari and Hon. Alfred Ghoro attended.

Both were present to hear views expressed regarding aspects of the proposed Federal Constitution at the start of the program, since Monday 10 August 2015.

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