

**Constitutional Reform Unit**

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**PRESS RELEASE**

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## **Makira/Ulawa women urge worth of women leadership**

**Women representatives in Makira/Ulawa Awareness on the 2<sup>nd</sup> 2014 Draft Federal Constitution of Solomon Islands, said while supporting contents of the proposed Federal Constitution were also vocal about women's leadership not being ascribed in the current Draft.**

These concerns were raised during the five-day meeting at the Assembly Chambers in Kirakira, Makira/Ulawa Province held from Monday 10<sup>th</sup> to Friday 14<sup>th</sup> August 2015.

Women's Rep Everlyn Kahia said that they are aware that Makira/Ulawa was the only province in 2012 that endorsed the provision on women's political participation in the 2011 Draft Federal Constitution.

"I understand that every other province did away with this provision," she said, "although for Makira Ulawa, some of our men were against this section, most of them who came to that Convention in 2012 supported that provision on women."

Makira/Ulawa delegation had made this assertion to retain the provision in Section 69 of the 2011 Draft Federal Constitution during its 2012 Convention in Kirakira.

Section 69 of the 2011 Draft version stipulated women's political participation in the Federal System, endorsing the ten-reserved seats arrangement for women in Federal Parliament.

The 2013 Joint Plenary of Constitutional Congress and Eminent Persons Advisory Council took Section 69 out of the proposed Draft after Honiara City and Provincial Conventions reviewed it and concluded that most were not in support of it.

"I want it put on record so that our future generations and children will know that Makira Ulawa was the only province to endorse women's political participation to be included in that Draft in 2012," she said.

Another women rep reiterated that women should be seen as supporting men in leadership and not to be feared as taking over men in such roles.

She said that naturally for a woman who sees that decisions are not made wisely by the man in her home, she can step in her support role to take charge of helping such situations.

She added that time and again has proven this quality in Solomon Islands' women quiet and humble leadership in communities.

In all about eight women actively participated in the Awareness meeting, all of them making constructive contributions on the 2<sup>nd</sup> 2014 Draft Federal Constitution.

They were part of the 50 participants that included chiefs, community and church leaders, business representatives, government officials and professionals, veteran and current politicians, and Members of the Provincial Assembly of Makira/Ulawa.

The Awareness program ended on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> August 2015.

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