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## CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM UNIT

PRESS RELEASE

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### **USP SI ends draft Federal Constitution awareness on high note**

**The University of South Pacific Solomon Islands (USP SI) campus have concluded the awareness on the 2nd 2014 Draft Federal Constitution of Solomon Islands with the Constitutional Reform Unit (CRU) on Thursday 5th May 2016.**

CRU's Consultant Lawyer Mr. Reginald Teutao went through the draft with about forty-five (45) participating students and staff, since Monday 18th to Friday 22nd April, continuing into Monday 2nd to Thursday 5th May.

USP SI's participation was very thorough as students and staff critically looked into the 2nd 2014 Draft, raising comments, questions and suggestions to the sections within the proposed federal constitution. Thus an extended time was requested to CRU for the completion of the awareness consultation with USP SI.

In closing on Thursday evening, Mr. Teutao said he is sincerely thankful for USP's participants' strong contributions and suggestions that have made the Draft a more workable document.

"I also thank you for giving up your time for this work," he said, "Remember, this is the highest law of the land, and it's good for more people to participate. This is your legacy that your families will be proud of. Participating in this awareness makes you all a part of this legacy."

Mrs. Jenny Tuhaika, Chairlady of Constitutional Congress (CC), on behalf of CC and Eminent Persons Advisory Council (EPAC), thanked both students and lecturers for their time, noting that though they had very busy schedules, they still made time for this consultation.

"I noticed that you have raised a lot of points that is new to me too, and it shows that you are keen on this document and being part of this process," said Mrs. Tuhaika.

A representative from USP SI Mr. Vincent Nomae, humorously closed the awareness, signifying the proposed Federal Constitution as the savior of Solomon Islands.

He thanked CRU for recognizing the status of this university, and for including them in this final consultation. Mr. Nomae thanked all students and staff for their admirable participation.

The areas in the proposed constitution that were critically looked at were sections on human rights; the federal, states and community governments; legislative competence of each sphere; public finance and revenue sharing; the legal systems; public institutions; national security; and the transitional provisions.

This is the final awareness consultations with tertiary institutions in Solomon Islands according to CRU work program for 2016.

The sessions were held during the evenings at the university's centre in Honiara, due to consideration of their study schedules during the day.

*CRU is a division established within the Prime Minister's Office to oversee the completion of the Solomon Islands' Constitutional Reform program.*

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