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Melanesian Agreement between the Governments of Papua New Guinea and Bougainville

JUNE 26, 2025

Melanesian Agreement

Endorsed in Plenary, 12th June 2025

Burnham Military Camp, Burnham, Aotearoa New Zealand

An agreement between the Government of Papua New Guinea (GoPNG) and the Autonomous Bougainville Government (ABG), collectively, (the Parties), to craft and pursue a clear political pathway forward, in accordance with the requirements of S342 and Part XIV of the Constitution of Papua New Guinea (the National Constitution), which implements the Bougainville Peace Agreement.



Recognising the historical significance of Burnham Military Camp, Christchurch, Aotearoa New Zealand, as the spiritual birthplace of the negotiation process, leading to the Bougainville Peace Agreement, and the outcomes of the third Joint Moderated Consultation (JMC) held in Burnham, New Zealand from 9-13 June 2025;

Appreciating the support of the government and people of Aotearoa New Zealand in enabling this important round of joint consultations;

Recalling the work undertaken by the Parties so far in giving effect to important political agreements, such as the Sharp Agreement, the Kokopo Joint Statement, the Post Referendum Results Implementation Roadmap (Wabag Roadmap), the Port Moresby Joint Statement, and the Era Kone Covenant;

Guided by the outcome of the constitutionally-sanctioned Bougainville Referendum, declared on the 11th of December 2019, in which an overwhelming majority of 97.7% of Bougainvilleans had voted in favour of separate independence, based on the definition of independence used on the Bougainville referendum ballot paper;

Acknowledging the crucial role that the Joint Moderated Consultations have played in resolving important issues pertaining to the post-referendum process;

Noting the wider consultations that have taken place with civil society organisations, women's groups, churches, business representatives and youth, and the shared aspirations of women and youth for a peaceful and inclusive pathway forward;

The Parties have agreed to the following:

1. Joint Commitments:

1.1. The Parties agree to the role of the National Parliament in the decision making process in accordance with Section 342 of the National Constitution;

1.2. The Parties recognise the legitimate choice of the Bougainville people for independence as expressed in the Referendum result;

1.3. The Parties recognise that the context of Bougainville is unique in Papua New Guinea, as reflected in the Bougainville Peace Agreement, the Papua New Guinea Constitution's provisions on Bougainville and the Bougainville Constitution;

1.4. The Parties are committed to maintaining a close, peaceful and enduring relationship between Papua New Guinea and Bougainville;

1.5. The Parties agree that the process for bringing the Referendum results to the National Parliament will be by way of a sessional order as determined by the National Parliament. The sessional order will be recommended by the Speakers of both the National Parliament and the Bougainville House of Representatives;

1.6. The Parties acknowledge that the National Parliament and Bougainville House of Representatives have a central and integral role to play in the process leading up to the National Parliament and thereafter;

1.7. The Parties acknowledge the importance of the Bipartisan Parliamentary Committee on Bougainville in consulting and disseminating the joint key messages, as assisted by the Moderator, for members of the 11th National Parliament, and the people of Papua New Guinea, on the Bougainville Referendum and the post-referendum process;

1.8. The Parties further acknowledge the importance of a public awareness raising programme by the Government of Papua New Guinea and the Autonomous Bougainville Government on the joint key messages for the people of Papua New Guinea and Bougainville, on the Bougainville Referendum and progress made in the post-referendum process.

2. Principles:

2.1. The Parties commit to exploring the joint creation of a Melanesian framework with agreed timelines, for a pathway forwards, that may form part of the Joint Consultations Report presented to the 11th National Parliament;

2.2. The results of the Bougainville Referendum and the Joint Consultation Report will be taken to the 11th National Parliament immediately after the Bipartisan Committee has completed its work in line with its Terms of Reference;

2.3. The Parties shall accept the decision of the National Parliament, in the first instance, regarding the Referendum results, and commit to further consultations, if required and agreed, according to an agreed timeline;

2.4. The Parties jointly commit to institutional strengthening and institutional building of the ABG administration as per the Sharp Agreement;

2.5. To ensure progress is made and political commitment is sustained, monitoring of this Melanesian Agreement could include an international component, a Parliamentary component, and the Bipartisan Parliamentary Committee, all with UN support.

We endorse this agreement on this day 26 June 2025.

HON. JAMES MARAPE, MP

Prime Minister

Government of Papua New Guinea

HON. ISHMAEL TOROAMA, MHR

President

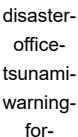
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"The Bougainville Peace Agreement is the real basis for us all being here today. It provides us with an exclusive right to self-determination. We can choose and shape our future, a right unique in PNG, and rare internationally. We should celebrate this right." - President Chief Dr. John Momis

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