



GRAND COALITION FOR CHANGE GOVERNMENT

POLICY FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT

**PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE
HONIARA
MAY 2006**

Foreword

The Grand Coalition for Change Government (GCCG) is very serious about leading this country in the direction that will benefit and uplift the people of Solomon Islands. To this end, it has to be reform-minded, people-focused and rules-based. It will remove barriers that impede 'development with a human face' to occur at the grassroots level, and will carry out policies through government structures that will deliver results. GCC Government's vision is to give this country hope, prosperity and peace in a secure environment.

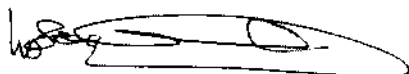
I am pleased to submit to the people of this country, your Government's Policy Framework Document, which has combined the positions taken by all the parties in the Grand Coalition. This framework document contains the thinking of the new Government on many important issues which we hope should impact on improving the lives of ordinary Solomon Islanders. We want to present to you realistic and achievable intentions.

From this document, the appropriate Ministries headed by responsible Ministers and aided by their Permanent Secretaries and Senior Officials should translate these statements into their ministerial work programs and projects, taking into account many positive on-going reform exercises carried out under the previous Administration. From this exercise should emerge a workable Programme of Action for the next four years.

We hope to release the Programme at the end of June. In relation to this, we are now working on a successor plan to the out going, but invaluable, National Economic Recovery, Reform and Development Plan 2003 – 2006. As the policy framework document is now in your hands, we request all stakeholders within and outside of Government to take serious note of the intentions outlined therein.

We cannot continue to be feeble and indecisive about the business of governing. Thus, some of the government's intentions might appear radical or unorthodox to some stakeholders. However, the Government of the day will rely on the best advice and support available to carry out its policies, and therefore the support and co-operation of our people and development partners would be appreciated as the GCC Government moves to create a new and better Solomon Islands.

It is my hope and prayer that this document will help everyone to focus on the huge task of nation building. May the almighty God guide and bless Solomon Islands and its people.



Manasseh Sogavare
Prime Minister

Executive Summary

The Grand Coalition for Change Government has put forward in this two-part document critical issues to be addressed in the immediate future and eleven Strategic Themes in its Policy Framework Document. Under each theme are listed policy intentions that target specific areas of concern.

Policy-based programs and priorities are expected to be formulated from the Document. It should be noted that the document also indicates the direction towards which the Government wishes to lead the country and the approaches, standards and rules it proposes to follow.

While the framework document covers a wide variety of subject areas, it is clear that

- A firm and ethical leadership;
- Clear demarcation of the statutory roles of each constitutional arm of government;
- A sustainable and effective law and order system;
- Implementation organizations that are accountable, transparent, results-driven and well-resourced;
- A conducive and secure environment for economic growth;
- A financial system that caters for increased access to services by the majority of the people;
- A fair and equitable justice system;
- The pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals and
- Rural development, to mention but a few – are critical issues that the Document has highlighted for priority attention.

The Grand Coalition for Change Government is in a position to pursue its aims and objectives in a responsible manner in close co-operation with the people, development partners, resource owners and investors. Creating network and synergy between stakeholders and the Government to animate and achieve common policy intentions is what the GCC Government desires to encourage as it leads.

Ultimately, though, it is a country renewed, a people healed, a nation economically well off, independent, free and complying with the norms of the international community, which the GCC Government visualizes and plans to achieve through this Policy Framework Document.

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PART I: POLITICAL DIRECTIONS

Introduction

The Grand Coalition for Change Government (GCCG) that assumed political leadership in Solomon Islands on 4th May 2006 is conscious of the deep-seated socio-economic and national security weaknesses that have been prevalent in the country for decades, and which have resulted in the national tragedies of 2000 and 2006.

To avoid the repetition of such unfortunate happenings, this Government is determined to bring about fundamental changes in the form of leadership and in critical policy areas.

In regard to its relationship with the international community, the government is not unmindful of its obligations, especially to its development partners and neighbours.

The transition to a people-centred, growth-focused, more effective governance and transformational leadership will be challenging. However, your Government is determined to make a difference to the lives of the people in Solomon Islands. With this in mind, the GCC Government presents this road map policy framework to guide the nation into the foreseeable future.

Vision

A God-fearing society that is equitable and just, honest, trustworthy and forward-looking with a leadership that is consistent with the highest ethical standards in the process of strengthening the country's democratic, constitutional, community institutions and structures, and which respects its diverse cultures, worthy values and religious heritage as a foundation of a peaceful, united, secure, progressive and sovereign nation for all its people.

Mission

The mission of the Grand Coalition for Change Government is to achieve development through a bottom-up and holistic approach that encompasses the empowerment of the people through rural advancement strategies, the pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals, the revitalization of the economy, improved law and order, effective service delivery and the devolution of powers and functions and decision-making authority to the periphery.

It is essential that in order to bring about genuine economic, political and social transformation partnership between stakeholders has to be of acceptable quality.

Principles and Objectives

- Honesty in public dealings and principled in every conduct;
- Government, non-state actors and public institutions to always put public interest above personal ones; national aspirations above parochial worldview;
- Transparency, accountability, responsibility and respect for the rule of law and traditional values as foundations for good governance;
- Indigenous resource owners to be fairly rewarded in the exploitation and utilization of their natural resources;
- The promotion of 'Diversity in Unity' on the basis of mutual respect for the country's human differences, diverse cultures, worthy values and religious heritage;
- The adoption and implementation of a 'selective engagement' approach in conducting Solomon Islands' foreign relations so as to ensure that security from external threats and regular flows of support from development partners remain positive in the face of changing geopolitical realities;
- The support and promotion of United Nations principles on the right of all people to education, and on human rights generally;
- Preventative and curative health services to be readily accessible to all Solomon Islands' citizens;
- A dynamic private sector as an engine for economic growth and development;
- The promotion and proper management of gender concerns in all areas and levels of public and private sector leadership;
- Working within a government system that is responsive, disciplined, non-corrupt and proactive in dealing with people's wishes;
- A 'governance plus growth' focus, where government's priority foci are not only on governance matters but also on peoples' economic empowerment and growth in the process of transforming the society;
- Justice in land matters and other critical areas;

- Mainstreaming the roles of Parliamentary Standing Committees with MPs to participate actively in them as a way of strengthening good governance.

PRESSING ISSUES

CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM

The Government will pursue Constitutional reform so as to move governance and decision making authority closer to the people, while promoting Diversity in Unity through the transference of powers and functions to the periphery.

ECONOMIC RECOVERY, FISCAL & MONETARY MEASURES

The Government will focus on rural development and bottom up approach in planning and will make structural changes to critical institutions, where appropriate. It will strive to achieve independent growth with targeted and focused growth strategies and will redirect economic policies to empower resource owners to have meaningful long-term participation in the economy.

The Government will support the on-going tax reform exercise, debt relief management and will put in place the measures to enhance revenue collection with a view to achieving financial sustainability.

While appreciating the previous administration's work in this sector as expressed in the *National Economic Recovery, Reform and Development Plan 2003 -2006*, the GCC Government, in formulating the next development plan will, however, emphasize rural development, independent economic growth, access to credit and the fair distribution of wealth and opportunities.

ETHICAL LEADERSHIP

The Grand Coalition for Change Government will introduce in Parliament:

- An Anti-Corruption Bill
- A Freedom of Information Bill
- An MPs Code of Conduct Bill
- A Political Parties Integrity Bill
- An Auditor-General Independency Bill,
- The establishment of an Independent Commission of Enquiry

FOREIGN POLICY

The Government will pursue a foreign policy based on selective engagement and pragmatism in order to ensure the country gets maximum benefit from its diplomatic relations.

It will broaden its horizon so as to capture possible gains from engaging actively with the Asian Region.

REGIONAL ASSISTANCE MISSION TO SOLOMON ISLANDS

The Government will continue to sustain law and order in the country; it will review the Facilitation Act in order to clarify the role, functions, engagement plans and RAMSI's programmes of action with a view to aligning these with Solomon Islands' independence and long-term sustainability.

INDIGENIZATION

The Government will recognize and incorporate cultural values as well as customary land ownership into the country's laws.

TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

The Government will set up a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the main objectives of which would be to involve all relevant stakeholders in the reconciliation process premised on genuine facts and confessions so as to enhance national healing, and it will devise strategic policy options that would prevent similar situations from recurring;

HONIARA RIOTS

The GCCG will immediately set up a Commission of Enquiry into the Honiara Riots.

SOVEREIGNTY

As a free and independent state with its people owning vast amounts of natural resources and guided by its own laws, the Government is determined to defend and protect its sovereignty.

PUBLIC SERVICE REFORM

The Government will pursue the current review of the public service with a view to achieving effective and efficient service delivery.

For the effective translation of government policies and programs of action the GCC Government will appoint political secretaries to assist the executive government.

CONSTITUTIONAL BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT

The three branches of government, namely the Legislature, the Executive and the Judiciary are independent of each other in terms of powers, functions and status. However, for many years Parliament and the Judiciary have not been properly resourced in the administration of their autonomous statutory functions. This Government will put in place appropriate mechanisms to ensure that the intentions of the Constitution in regard to the autonomy of the Legislature and Judiciary are carried out.

PART II: FRAMEWORK POLICY STATEMENTS.

STRATEGIC THEMES

POLICY ISSUE 1

CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM

The people's desire to adopt a Federal system of government in Solomon Islands has been a long standing one but in recent years it has gathered fresh momentum towards its fulfillment. The leadership, both in Government and Opposition, is not divided on the issue. The Grand Coalition for Change Government will, therefore, thoroughly review the Draft Federal Constitution so as to encompass the autonomy aspirations of Solomon Islanders, and agree on a time table for the adoption of a new Constitution for Solomon Islands.

Policy Statement

Government will:

- (a) Pursue the adoption of a federal constitution forthwith. The process will take into account the interests of all stakeholders in the reform. Such a reform should not be allowed to place future states in disadvantageous positions. The present top-heavy status quo will, nevertheless, be changed as powers and functions are transferred to the proposed states;
- (b) Thoroughly review and revise the Draft Federal Constitution so as to properly accommodate the autonomy aspirations of the people, with specific focus on the rights and ownership of resources and fair distribution of revenues between the Central and Provincial governments;
- (c) Parliament will be sought, as soon as possible, to agree on a time-table for the introduction of a federal constitution;
- (d) Introduce legislation to regulate Members of Parliament moving from one political party to another so as to ensure political stability in the nation;
- (e) Ensure that each and every ministry formulates a legislative program that will facilitate the implementation of the Grand Coalition for Change Government policies and programs;

- Put in place transitional arrangements for Provinces in terms of human resources capacity development and institutional strengthening in preparation for the introduction of the proposed federal government system;
- Discuss with development partners provisions for enhancing the transfer of powers, functions and human resources to the Provinces/states.

POLICY ISSUE 2

POLICE AND NATIONAL SECURITY

The Grand Coalition for Change Government believes that an efficient and effective Police Force is absolutely necessary for national security, peace and stability in the nation and that it will take measures to professionalize and better resource policing in Solomon Islands to match international standards. It also recognizes that the improvement and continuous training of Prison and Fire Services officers is necessary for protecting human rights and ensuring the safety of people and property.

Policy Statement

Government will:

- (a) Make sure Solomon Islands has a well-trained, disciplined and well resourced Police Force, and will strengthen its leadership in view of the increasing social problems and criminal activities;
- (b) Ensure an equitable Provincial representation in the recruitment of Police, Prison and Fire Services officers;
- (c) Upgrade the Police Academy to offer internationally recognized qualifications and policing standards;
- (d) Through the upgraded Police Academy ensure that professional standards are improved and maintained through continuous training in police and prison services work and other specialized areas;
- (e) Review and strengthen the Royal Solomon Islands Police (RSIP);
- (f) Re-instate Community Policing;

- (g) Government will address the general welfare of the police and prison officers in Honiara and Provincial centres;
- (h) Develop and maintain the Prison Service at internationally recognized professional standards;
- (i) Put in place distance-learning education/training programs for inmates so that they can acquire new skills or upgrade existing ones. Solomon Islands College of Higher Education (SICHE), in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Human Resources, will be tasked to execute such learning programs;
- (j) Put in place measures for the proper rehabilitation of prisoners;
- (k) Ensure that the territorial integrity of Solomon Islands is maintained and safeguarded, and work with regional countries to ensure that transnational crimes, terrorism, trafficking in people and drugs and gun smuggling are prohibited;
- (l) Localize, modernize, strengthen and professionalize the country's intelligence service;
- (m) Improve the Fire Services' capacity, capabilities and effectiveness;

POLICY ISSUE 3

JUSTICE AND LEGAL AFFAIRS

The proper administration of law ensures a just and fair society where all persons regardless of position or status are treated equally. The Grand Coalition for Change Government acknowledges the benefits of the Facilitation Act 2003 that has brought the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands for the restoration of law and order, resulting in peace and justice. The Government will take further measures to vigorously pursue Law Reform that will lead to the recognition of the values, benefits and roles of traditional and religious institutions in mediation, reconciliation and sentencing options.

Policy Statement

Government will:

- (a) Ensure that the court system, operating at various levels of society, is given all the support it requires to carry out its functions;

- b) Ensure that the authority of chiefs and other traditional leaders are recognized, especially in the administration of justice at the local level and in relation to custom and traditional matters;
- c) Ensure that the law and justice sector is properly resourced and re-localized as and when appropriate in accordance with a RAMSI exit strategy;
- d) Include humane traditional justice and cultural values as part of our laws;
- e) Adequately resource the Law Reform Commission to enhance justice sector reforms;
- f) Strengthen the sector's capacity to plan, budget and implement its developmental policies;
- g) Enhance the capacity and safeguard the independence of the judiciary;
- h) Ensure equitable and easy access to legal and judicial services throughout the country;
- i) Develop alternative sentencing options and invigorate existing ones;
- j) Enhance the prosecutorial services in the law and justice sector and ensure that all offenders regardless of status or position are treated equally before the law.

POLICY ISSUE 4

NATIONAL RECONCILIATION AND PEACE

While the law and order situation and social stability continue to show desired improvements in the country, peace-building and reconciliation processes remain major challenges to the Grand Coalition for Change Government. Until outstanding grievances and other sensitive issues are carefully addressed with understanding, conflict situations could remain a national concern.

Policy Statement

Government will:

- (a) Continue to promote and strengthen the on-going reconciliation and peace processes between groups and communities in the country to enhance nation building and unity;

- (b) Align the roles and functions of the National Peace Council with Government intentions and establish a Peace and Integrity Council where the country's traditional leaders and senior citizens can participate actively in peace-building and reconciliation processes, as well as the involvement of NGOs, faith-based entities, community leaders and other organizations;
- (c) Set up a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the main objectives of which would be to involve all relevant stakeholders in the reconciliation process premised on genuine facts and confessions and the examination of the root causes of the ethnic conflict and the Honiara Riots, and to devise strategic policy options that would prevent similar situations from recurring;
- (d) Address the effects of the Bougainville crisis, ethnic tension and the Honiara Riots;
- (e) Take into consideration the resolutions of the Guadalcanal and other Provinces Leaders' Summits on issues pertaining to national unity and peace-building efforts;
- (f) Examine and strengthen traditional mediation methods in peace building, healing and reconciliation;
- (g) Strengthen the capacity of existing government agencies and other stakeholders to enhance peace and reconciliation processes;

POLICY ISSUE 5

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

The Grand Coalition for Change Government will conduct its foreign relations in a mature and pragmatic manner. It wants to make sure that real benefits from trade, investment, aid and geopolitical security are derived from Solomon Islands' relationship with other countries, international organizations and Agreements.

To this end, the GCC Government plans to improve both its internal and external capacities and expertise to enhance its functions in the global arena.

Policy Statement

Government will:

- 1.2 Pursue a foreign policy based on selective engagement and pragmatism in order to ensure that the country gains maximum benefit from its diplomatic relations;
- 1.3 Promote a selective 'Look North Policy' so as to capture possible gains from engaging actively with the Asian region, while retaining traditional regional links;
- 1.4 Review Solomon Islands' foreign policy in view of global trends such as foreign interventions; global and trade liberalization; the preponderance of transnational crimes and terrorism; and the need to sustain border integrity and security;
- 1.5 Pursue the enactment of an International Treaties and Conventions Bill;
- 1.6 Ensure that Solomon Islands accedes to relevant and important international treaties and conventions, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the Convention Against Torture, and that Solomon Islands complies with its reporting obligations under these international instruments;
- 1.7 Review the roles, functions, engagement plans and the programs of action being carried out by RAMSI. Align RAMSI's activities with Solomon Islands' sovereign status and long-term sustainability. In consultation with the Pacific Forum, formulate an exit strategy for the Mission. Review the Facilitation Act, 2003 in due course.
- 1.8 Review the Overseas Service Regulations with a view to improving the terms and conditions of officers serving abroad in the country's diplomatic Missions;
- 1.9 Review the country's overseas representations with a view to making the country's diplomatic Missions more cost-effective, strategically located and more attuned to promoting development in Solomon Islands.
- 1.10 Explore also the concept of Roving Envoys as an option;
- 1.11 Broaden the functions of Missions to include the promotion and marketing of Solomon Islands' products and investment opportunities by ensuring that the Missions are adequately funded in order for them to participate actively in trade related negotiations and activities;
- 1.12 Train and maintain a small but effective cadre of career diplomats to manage Solomon Islands' foreign relations. In certain cases, the Government would commission non-cadre personnel, especially senior citizens, to represent the country;

- (l) Ensure that Solomon Islands' interests are protected or safeguarded and that the country benefits from both international and regional trade and economic arrangements, including benefits from MSG and other regional and world Trade Agreements;
- (m) Build both professional and technical national capacity to enable Solomon Islanders to participate and engage actively in trade, economic and other negotiations;
- (o) Continue to adhere to internationally accepted principles for establishing diplomatic relations;

POLICY ISSUE 6

FINANCE AND PLANNING

There is still much to do in the Public Finance area. Tax reform, monetary and fiscal policy management, Solomon Islanders' access to credit, debt management and the need to upgrade the capability and skills of Solomon Islanders to manage Solomon Islands' financial system with integrity – will remain some of the main priority areas in the sector for the Grand Coalition for Change Government. The lessons learnt from recent experiences have made the Government become more vigilant in protecting and managing its finances, for in so doing would mean protecting a source of sustenance for its people.

Finance and Treasury

Policy Statement

Government will:

- (a) Enhance on-going efforts to improve the management of government finances at all levels by maintaining strict accountability and transparency;
- (b) Create an environment conducive to both domestic and foreign investment to stimulate and broaden the country's economic base;
- (c) Ensure that the management of the Solomon Islands' exchange rate policy is closely attuned to the country's international trade and development needs;
- (d) Devise effective revenue collection methods to eliminate tax avoidance, cumbersome techniques and dubious collection payment-points; continue with on-going tax reform programs;

- 4. Adopt a less complicated budgetary format that provides a standardized and transparent financial reporting mechanism to all levels of Government;
- 5. Introduce specially designed credit facilities to encourage wider and optimum participation of Solomon Islanders in development;
- 6. Manage the financial system by paying particular attention to existing macro-economic management indicators, such as interest rate movements, inflation and money supply, so as to enhance rather than impede necessary capital accumulation and economic growth;
- 7. Continue with the program for genuine national debt relief by strengthening the roles of appropriate ministries that deal with the matter;
- 8. Identify promising young and capable Solomon Islanders to undergo thorough training in finance and management so that in the medium term they can maintain a high standard of financial management in this sector;
- 9. Ensure that the independence of the Auditor-General's Office is maintained and its functions strengthened;
- 10. Initiate policies that would liberalize money creation power since it is a sovereign right that would enable Solomon Islanders to have access to financial capital;
- 11. Introduce an administrative mechanism for the disbursement of the Rural Constituency Development Fund (RCDF) and ensure that proper planning and accounting procedures are followed.
- 12. Introduce legislation for the establishment of a Prices and Income Board to regulate prices and incomes;
- 13. Continue with existing tax reform policies relating to all equipment that enhance rural economic activities
- 14. Review the Public Finance and Audit Act, as well as any relevant constitutional provisions to facilitate the formulation of separate budgets for the Judiciary and Legislature to ensure their independence;

- (p) Review the 2006 Appropriation Act 2005 to accommodate the Government's new policy aims and objectives.

POLICY ISSUE 7

BANKS AND OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

The banks have a moral obligation to provide financial services throughout the country. The government, in partnership with banks, will positively pursue the development of necessary infrastructure to improve this vital service and ensure the wider participation of citizens in investment and the development process.

Policy Statement

Government will:

- (a) Ensure that the Central Bank performs its traditional role, while being proactive in its developmental functions;
- (b) Consider making appropriate amendments to relevant banking laws in order to facilitate the introduction of a reformed monetary system;
- (c) Encourage financial institutions to be more active in informing the public about their roles and services;
- (d) Revitalize and restructure the Development Bank of Solomon Islands (DBSI) and ensure it re-assumes its developmental role in the economic growth process, and consider facilitating the possibility of canceling or restructuring clients' debts arising from the ethnic tension;
- (e) Review the National Provident Fund Act to facilitate the possibility of canceling or restructuring member's debts with the NPF arising from the ethnic tension;
- (f) Allow for other international and regional banks to invest in the country and provide them with special concessions in regard to entry cost and establishment requirements;
- (g) Consider pegging the Solomon Islands' currency to a more appropriate single foreign currency that is suitable for the development and trading needs of the country;

- **Establish** a Venture Capital scheme to enable Solomon Islanders to participate in large scale and capital-intensive projects, for example, in the extractive industries.
- Combine the Home Finance Corporation and the NPF Housing schemes into one affordable housing scheme.

POLICY ISSUE 8

DEVELOPMENT PLANNING, AID COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT

The Government will introduce a bottom-up approach to planning to ensure maximum community engagement in the planning cycle of government development plans at ward, constituency, provincial and national levels.

While the Government appreciates the assistance of development partners in providing aid and other assistance to the country, it is important that aid delivery and implementation are aligned to Government's development priorities, particularly as they relate to income generating projects at the grassroots level.

Policy Statement

Government will:

- a. Review the current planning strategies and approaches so as to properly address sectoral development and rurally based industries in the country.
- b. Target financial resources towards the creation and promotion of subsistence sector commercial infrastructures and projects;
- c. Re-introduce National Government's five-year Development Plan cycle, as well as Provincial Development Plans, taking into account the bottom-up and people-centered approach to development planning,
- d. Accommodate and manage aid assistance to Solomon Islands, incorporating such perspectives as assistance to focus more on technical areas rather than on governance or policy-making area.

- (e) Improve transparency in the management of bilateral and multilateral donor activities, as well as in development loans;
 - (f) Establish a machinery or unit that will ensure proper coordination between Provincial and Central Governments in the formulation and implementation of Provincial plans;
 - (g) Consider the possibility of amalgamating the recurrent and development budgets through dialogue and consultation with development partners;
- Ensure aid results in economic growth instead of it creating dependency.
- (h) Establish a Technical and Non-state Actors Aid Coordination Unit, the functions of which would be to orientate, guide and rationalize Government/NGO donor-recipient relationships, as well as Technical Assistants' and NGO programs in the country.

POLICY ISSUE 9

ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE

Solomon Islands has the resources and potential to grow further, create more jobs and raise the general living standards of its citizens. However, the Government is fully aware that for key sectors like agriculture, mining, fishing, tourism, construction and utilities to generate more growth, there is need to put in place right policies supported by adequate physical and financial infrastructure. In this regard, the Government is committed to take the necessary reform measures to address existing impediments to economic growth potentials.

AGRICULTURE

Policy Statement

Government will:

- (i) Draw up a comprehensive Agricultural White Paper in which a short, medium and long term agricultural strategy for Solomon Islands is laid out. Focus on activities that people can do in small-scale commercial ventures;

- Encourage and support further research into the protection and use of existing cash crops. Introduce new agricultural methods, appropriate technologies and crop species suited to Solomon Islands' highland/lowland terrain and climatic conditions. Strive to increase local agricultural output for both consumption and import substitution/export;
- Dramatically improve the domestic and export marketing infrastructure (outlets, storage, accessibility, facilities, management) for agricultural products produced by rural farmers;
- Ensure that food security for Solomon Islanders is improved and maintained to keep pace with a growing population;
- Formulate a more sustainable and pragmatic policy for strengthening agricultural extension services, keeping in mind the need for gender balance in extension services and in the agricultural sector as a whole;
- Re-strengthen Research and Development in the sector by making certain that R & D institutions are revitalized and accorded priority action;
- Retrieve existing research data and information on the sector to improve agricultural policies;
- Re-establish the Agricultural Information Unit to disseminate available information, knowledge and skills to farmers;
- Pursue the development of small-scale agro-based farming, including down-stream processing of agricultural products;
- Support the development of Guadalcanal Plains Plantations Oil palm Ltd (GPPOL), Aluta Basin, Vangunu Oil Palm Project, RIPEL, Tobulu and other potential areas, with the involvement of foreign investors and resource owners;
- Develop and encourage out-grower schemes for oil palm and assist host provinces and land owners to hold shares in large-scale agricultural projects;
- Revive and further develop livestock farming by assisting small-holder as well as large commercial farms;
- Establish demonstration farms to enhance farm-based extension services in partnership with landowners and other existing institutions, such as Rural Training Centers;

- (n) Establish market outlets for locally grown rice.
- (o) Upgrade Quarantine services and facilities to comply with international requirements;
- (p) Encourage organic farming and discourage genetically modified food farming technology;

LAND OWNERSHIP AND LAND USE

Policy Statement

Government will:

- (a) Amend/repeal existing land laws so as to make customary land a bankable or transferable commodity or introduce new legislation for the purpose;
- (b) Work closely with land owners to discuss ways - such as the registering of tribally owned customary lands and the opening up of such lands to prospective developers - to enhance economic projects. Introduce land reform policies to optimize the utilization of the asset;
- (c) Address the following areas in carrying out land reform: recognition of indigenous tribes as corporate entities; indigenous tribes as corporate owners of land as opposed to individual ownership and the protection of land from further alienation;
- (d) Consider offering current Temporary Occupation License (TOL) holders in crown lands the option to convert their licenses into Fixed Term Estates so that proper development, especially for residential purposes, can be carried out, while placing a moratorium on the issuance of further TOLs;
- (e) Actively encourage and assist prospective developers/investors to make full economic use of the vacant Crown Lands;
- (f) Review the effectiveness of the policy of returning alienated lands to original owners, as many returned lands have not been put to productive use;
- (g) Encourage and facilitate both village and town planning by using the Town and Country Planning Act.
- (h) Ensure that land allocation, utilization and administration in all urban centres strictly follow the requirements of existing regulations;

- Enforce existing legislation to discourage land speculation in regard to underdeveloped government-allocated lands, and ensure that such lands are immediately returned to the Crown for further allocation;
- Remove the powers to allocate land vested in both the Commissioner of Lands and the Minister responsible for lands and instead accord the same powers to an independent Land Trust Board.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Policy Statement

Government will:

- a. Actively encourage co-operation between investors and resource owners to facilitate the exploration and exploitation of minerals, oil and natural gas in Solomon Islands;
- b. Explore ways with investors and resource owners for the latter to gain better financial rewards from large extractive industries;
- c. Put in place a Sea Tenure legislation aimed at effectively managing in-shore marine resources so that owners of coastal resources can benefit substantially;
- d. Introduce a new forestry legislation by working on the new draft legislation. Solicit the views of all stakeholders before changing the existing Act;

MINERAL RESOURCES AND MINING

Policy Statement

Government will:

- a. Make sure that the Gold Ridge mine on Guadalcanal is successful in running its business in a secure environment, and its operation will be taken as a benchmark or pattern for new projects in the sector;
- b. Encourage mining developments that meet proper criteria in protecting sustainability, stakeholder interests and national interest;
- c. Issue mining licenses only after access, lease, environmental impact assessment, social impact study, rehabilitation plan, and mining agreements have been duly accepted;

- (d) Make sure that mutual benefits between all stakeholders are realized in this sector. Resource owners, Investors and Government will receive agreed quantum shares from all extractive industries by way of effective, mutually beneficial and enforceable agreements. Our experience with the Forestry sector have taught us that once we do not get the basics right, we will forever struggle to try and rectify the adverse impacts of ill-conceived public policies;
- (e) Ensure that resource owners and Government become shareholders in mining and/or petroleum projects;
- (f) Compel corporate entities to meet social responsibilities, such as providing scholarships, supporting youth work and community improvements;
- (g) Review the Minerals and Mining Act to ensure that prospecting and exploration companies are transparent, accountable and responsible;
- (h) Improve the Department's in-house laboratory capability in order to improve its capacity to professionally check the accuracy of prospecting reports;

PETROLEUM

Policy Statement

Government will;

- (a) Give top priority to preparatory work on the development of the petroleum sector by introducing or improving petroleum legislation;
- (b) Review any existing legislation to bring it into line with relevant international agreements/requirements. Meet the rising interest in the country in this sector;
- (c) Ensure that petroleum licenses are issued in accordance with stringent criteria and strict terms and conditions, particularly in relation to quantum shares and other benefits that Resource Owners, Government and Developers should get;
- (d) Push for an early start on petroleum exploration;
- (e) Explore the possibility of establishing an oil refinery in the country to handle imported crude oil;
- (f) Put in place realistic tax incentives that would entice possible investors into the sector;

~~Establish~~ a reliable vetting system that would help government to choose internationally renowned petroleum companies;

Introduce stringent control mechanisms to regulate the ownership of data and information derived from prospecting;

ENERGY

Policy Statement

Government will:

- a. Provide affordable electricity in all provinces using renewable energy sources, (hydro, solar, wind) and make sure adequate government assistance is made available for the purpose;
- b. Introduce policies that will result in the reduction of prices for petroleum products consumed in the whole country;
- c. Review the Solomon Islands Electricity Authority with a view to improving its management, accountability, operations and outreach program so that Honiara and Provincial centers are provided with affordable and reliable electricity supply;
- d. Pursue the implementation of the Master Plan for Renewable Energy Development;
- e. Amend the SIEA Act to liberalize ownership of power generation and distribution so that other providers can enter the sector.
- f. Reactivate the Komarindi Hydro Project so as to provide affordable, adequate and reliable power and water supply for Honiara and its surroundings;

FORESTRY

Policy Statement

Government will:

- a. Strive to adopt a holistic management approach to the country's forests by properly controlling the activities of the logging industry;
- b. Strive to achieve a better balance in the pecuniary and social benefits received by Government, Operators and Resource Owners;

- (c) Review the current draft Forestry Bill with a view to requiring all logging companies to begin processing locally 20 per cent of all logs harvested. Government will also assist Solomon Islanders/resource owners to process and export their timber and timber products;
- (d) Establish a scheme in which proper marketing of resource owners' timbers, round logs and other lumber-based products is done with government assistance. Examine the advantages and disadvantages of establishing a central point for log purchasing in the country;
- (f) Reduce the annual log harvest-quota by introducing a moratorium on the issuance of new logging licenses;
- (g) Support existing and planned reforestation programs, and make it mandatory for logging companies to carry out reforestation in the logged-out areas;
- (h) Assist forestry research institutions so that they could identify and regulate the use of appropriate endemic species in reforestation projects;
- (i) Avail more forestry services to rural communities to assist them in advising and managing the commercial use of the resource, as well as to transfer skills and technologies to them;
- (j) Reinstate the Forestry Levy scheme and re-designate it Forestry and Development Levy to effectively address reforestation and other productive programs in the logged out areas. Consider granting the Levy in kind to resource owners.

ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION

Policy Statement

Government will:

- (a) Introduce legislation to protect and manage flora, fauna and eco-systems relating to the export and import of plants and animals species;
- (b) Implement the National Environment Management Strategies for Solomon Islands, which embraces a holistic approach to conservation;
- (c) Devise appropriate control mechanisms for reducing and monitoring of the adverse effects of pollution on the environment;

FISHERIES

Policy Statement

Policy Statement will:

- Treat the development of in-shore fisheries and aquaculture, especially mariculture, with urgency for subsistence and commercial development for the benefit of coastal and atoll dwellers. Aquaculture will also be pursued for populations that live near rivers and lakes inland.
- Review the Soltai Fishing and Processing Ltd with a view to making it more efficient, competitive and profitable;
- Explore the possibility of establishing a second fishing and fish processing company in another part of the country;
- Review SFPL's or Soltai's operations with a view to incorporating the harvesting and marketing of in-shore marine products by small-scale fishermen or fishing communities so as to allow them to actively participate in in-shore fisheries activities;
- Explore the possibility of requiring Solomon Islands' licensed fishing boats to supply certain percentage of their catches to the local cannery;
- Resurrect the existing fisheries centres and make them more involved in dealing with marine resources generally;
- Provide incentives such as subsidies, technical expertise and market outlets for individuals and communities involved in commercial fishing and aquaculture developments in both small-and medium-size ventures;
- Formulate a comprehensive in-shore marine resource development plan to guide economic activities in the sector so that acceptable partnership with investors can be fostered;
- Encourage mariculture (e.g. fish, mud crab, pearl, seaweed) and other types of farming, while at the same time encourage the conservation of marine resources to ensure sustainable harvesting;
- Formulate appropriate policies that will enable quality control in the areas such as farming and preservation techniques, storage, handling and packaging to be effective and consistent with internationally accepted standards and practices,

- (j) Review, strengthen and coordinate all marine institutions (e.g. ICLARM) with a view to providing government with research information that can be disseminated to farmers;
- (k) Ensure that proper policies are put in place to oversee the commercial activities taking place within this sector, such that vigilant surveillance (in conjunction with FFA) of our EEZ and optimum returns from Solomon Islands marine resources, are realized.
- (l) Improve the public revenue collection mechanisms in this sector so as to curb corrupt practices in the Department of Fisheries and in the industry.

INVESTMENT AND TRADE

Policy Statement

Government will:

- (a) Pay close and urgent attention to promoting trade and investment in the country;
- (b) Drastically overhaul the current trade and investment regime in the country, as well as thoroughly review the tax system so that innovative and realistic incentives can be provided to genuine investors;
- (c) Improve administrative procedures and processes by establishing a semi-autonomous Trade and Investment Board (TIB) by law; it is to be manned by appropriately qualified and non-political personnel. This will ensure the effective handling of investment proposals on a timely manner with work and residential permits, company registration, Council and Provincial permits done on a one-stop basis.
- (d) Ensure that the proposed TIB is mandated to handle the subjects of investment and trade in a professional and corporate manner.
- (e) Amend or repeal the new Foreign Investment Act 2005 and introduce an Act similar to those of Singapore, Fiji and Papua New Guinea, which would allow for the establishment of a TIB;
- (f) Assist Solomon Islanders find finance to participate in joint-venture investment activities;
- (g) Establish free-trade zones where low production costs and tax concessions apply, and where, for example, turn-key projects carried out by foreign investors can be accommodated;

- Actively encourage investments in manufacturing, assembling, down-stream processing and labour-intensive enterprises which require simple skills to carry out (e.g. assembling of bicycles, computer hardware or the canning of fruits);
- Ensure that land reform and FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) policies are developed simultaneously so that foreign investors can be readily attracted;
- Ensure that the financial system is sufficiently accommodating to ease the entry of new domestic and foreign investors into the economy;
- Enact legislation to promote fair trading practices;

TOURISM

Policy statement

Government will:

- a. Improve existing *physical infrastructures* such as airfields, wharves, roads, transportation systems, marine channels and mountain trails in order to gear such assets to the interest of the industry;
- b. Improve existing or build new *tourism infrastructures* such as resorts, eco-villages, hotels, golf courses, sports fields, convention centers, art galleries, museums, cultural sites, natural habitats of endemic species of flora and fauna, birds, fishes and reptiles - to provide more cost-effective options to tourists. Encourage each Province to financially support the improvement or construction of these assets according to its needs and absorption capacity;
- c. Provide assistance and encourage best practice in all areas in which service providers in the industry are involved. Establish an *Institute of Tourism Studies*, to be accommodated at SICHE. Acquiring skills in such areas as hospitality and catering, housekeeping, financial management, marketing, general management and business communication, will take time, proper organization and industry-specific training
- d. Encourage, promote and provide funding for tourist facilities in village settings so that rural people can participate and generate their own income;
- e. Re-orient the tourism status quo in the country to make it more proactive and effective;

- (f) Encourage the building of proper conferencing facilities in Provinces in conjunction with Government and investors to attract international as well as domestic meetings;
- (g) Set up a taskforce comprising representatives of tourist operators, wholesalers, hoteliers, other relevant actors and government policy-makers to address such issues as the physical and tourism infrastructures, cost factors affecting tourist arrivals, industry opportunities and threats, as well as ways to give the industry a new impetus.
- (h) Review the roles and responsibilities of Solomon Islands Visitors' Bureau (SIVB) to ascertain its effectiveness and relevance. As an important entity in the industry, it ought to be results-driven;
- (i) Government will increase the tourism development budget to cater for the rising demand for tourism services in the country.

COMMERCE AND INDUSTRIES

Policy Statement

Government will:

- (a) Subsidize commercial firms that undertake R&D in Solomon Islands' commodities and/or natural resources for the purposes of meeting market demands. Provide criteria and qualifications for granting such subsidies;
- (b) Provide more incentives such as tax free periods, equipment subsidy, free legal, management and accounting services to indigenous businessmen/women as they enter the commercial sector;
- (c) Establish an Industrial and Modernization Fund (IMF) to help Solomon Islanders enter key business areas such as manufacturing, information technology, food processing, tourism, agriculture, aquaculture, as well as certain science-and technology-based industries;
- (d) Establish by law a National Training Council to consist of appropriate government and private sector representatives with the aim of strengthening industry-specific training; this will be done in conjunction with other relevant training bodies;
- (e) Provide appropriate advice and technical support to indigenous Solomon Islanders who may wish to allow their customarily-owned land and sea resources for joint-venture investment purposes;
- (f) Ensure that a competent and skilled labour force is developed and made available to investors;

Support and encourage Solomon Islanders' participation in small, medium, and large-scale industries, particularly in value-added cottage industries, agro-forest projects, handcraft-making (carving and weaving), rural fisheries and food processing;

Identify, reserve, monitor and protect business activities specifically intended for indigenous Solomon Islanders and naturalized Islanders;

Upgrade local skills and support commercial activities owned by Solomon Islands' entrepreneurs, such as those possessed by Langalanga boat builders and other groups.

Review policies on price control strategies in response to money creation, wages and cost of governance, which are currently militating against the behavior of consumer prices.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT

Policy Statement

Government will:

- a. Undertake a major review of where, why and for what purposes infrastructures have been built in given areas. What criteria were used and how have the infrastructures facilitated economic development?
- b. Make existing infrastructures, including those built by logging companies, more permanent and make sure maintenance practices are of quality standard;
- c. Open up new development infrastructures around Provincial 'economic growth centres';
- d. Explore the feasibility of establishing a National Transport Authority (NTA)¹
- e. Make sure that the development of multi-mode transport policy is introduced to stimulate growth of existing and new industries;
- f. Consider building a dry-dock that can adequately accommodate bigger vessels;

1. NTA covers land, sea and air transport arrangements. Land Transport includes proper registration and maintenance of vehicles.

- (g) Review Solomon Islands' Water Authority (SIWA) operations and management in order to improve its service delivery functions;
- (h) Continue to encourage Solomon Islanders' participation in the shipping sector and subsidize non-profitable routes.

COMMUNICATION, AVIATION AND METEOROLOGY

Policy Statement

Government will:

- (a) Review the Aviation Act with a view to establishing an independent Civil Aviation Authority and harmonize the legislation with those of the member countries of the Pacific Safety Organization (PASO);
- (b) Establish and upgrade to international standards entry points east and west of the archipelago, taking into account security and surveillance;
- (c) Upgrade all Provincial airfields;
- (d) Review the operation and management of Solomon Air Line with a view to improving its services;
- (e) Encourage other carriers to enter the industry;
- (e) Review Telekom's Agreement with a view to providing improved service delivery through competition;
- (f) Provide affordable, accessible, reliable and cost-effective telecommunications network in the entire country;
- (g) Rehabilitate, upgrade and expand meteorology services in the country;
- (h) Review the civil aviation regime in the country;

REGIONAL AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Policy Statement

Government will:

- a Promote and develop 'economic growth centres' throughout the country;
- b Introduce appropriate subsidies for basic tools and equipment, as well as finance to assist rural family units and individuals in the development of copra, cocoa and other products;
- c Revive all forms of extension services in agriculture, business and fisheries and extend the same to new entities and sectors;
- d Encourage large investment projects to drive regional development; small projects to drive rural development and Government to facilitate the linkages between them;
- e Make the shift in development approach as a preparation for and widening of provincial economic bases in a lead-up to the eventual adoption of the federal system of government;
- f Grant every province opportunity to improve its managerial capacity for the purposes of enabling it to participate more actively in economic development;
- g Deploy national human resources to various provinces for the purposes of promoting rural development;
- h Create a new entity that will be responsible for monitoring, assessing and reporting on the impacts of all development projects in the rural areas;
- i Thoroughly review all micro-projects and grassroots schemes to ascertain their disbursement criteria, types of target beneficiaries, sectoral impacts and approval procedures.

POLICY ISSUE 10

SOCIAL SERVICES SECTOR

Health and medical services, education and training and women and youth are sectors that can have great social and political impact in the country. Clearly, a healthy working population will have much to contribute to positive economic development. Moreover, education and training that embraces quantity, quality, equity and effectiveness in its programs can only improve the sustainability of all sectors.

Obviously, youth and women concerns in the country need to be treated with seriousness in government policies. The Grand Coalition for Change Government is very conscious of this and is taking measures to rectify the abysmal handling of the women and youth sectors to date.

HEALTH AND MEDICAL SERVICES

Policy Statement

Government will:

- (a) Ensure that the Health Sector receives adequate funding to carry out an effective and efficient health care service;
- (b) Promote primary health care in the country through the Primary Health Care Policy and establish Health Promotion Centres in all communities;
- (c) Emphasize, strengthen and promote preventative health care through all appropriate avenues;
- (d) Upgrade and maintain health care facilities such as hospitals, clinics and aid posts and provide the necessary equipment to enable health workers to discharge their duties more effectively;
- (e) Provide proper and adequate training and improved terms and conditions for medical and health workers;
- (f) Ensure that better networking in the provision of health care services among all stakeholders such as communities, churches and NGOs and international health organizations;
- (g) Recognize the value and safe use of traditional medicines by scientifically verifying the potency and curative properties of such medicines;

- 2. Ensure that clean water and proper sanitation is accessible to all communities;
- 3. Work towards better awareness of the dynamics of population growth and its effects on development;
- 4. Encourage community participation in health promotion and delivery, and promote healthy lifestyles;
- 5. Encourage the use of mobile medical teams to reach remote communities in the country on a regular basis; in this regard, mobile medical ships and/or trucks can be used;
- 6. Review the overseas referral policy with a view to include several other overseas hospitals;
- 7. Reactivate the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Health;
- 8. Take drastic measures to prepare as well as address pandemic infectious diseases, such as STL, HIV/AIDS and Avian Flu;
- 9. Strengthen mental health services and take measures to extend such to vulnerable groups;
- 10. Encourage and support other health care providers in the country;
- 11. Improve and maintain existing public health programmes.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Policy Statement

Government will:

- a) Provide educational and training opportunities, including special need education, as a right to all citizens;
- b) Ensure that enrollment opportunities in all institutions of learning recognize gender balance;
- c) Improve and expand the capacity of all educational institutions to respond to student demand for places;

- (d) Create more opportunities for those who have not completed primary and secondary education to complete/augment their education through the provision of literacy and community/adult education programs, as well as overseas practical training attachments;
- (e) Encourage the establishment of privately-owned and publicly-accredited institutions of learning;
- (f) Seek to achieve the highest standards in educational resource management and financial transparency;
- (g) Ensure that the primary and secondary curricula include the study of health, environmental awareness, indigenous cultures and customs (including music, creative arts, carving, fine arts and traditional architecture), catering and sports;
- (h) In partnership with host communities, subsidize early childhood and primary school education;
- (i) Harness both local and overseas teacher training institutions to meet the increasing demand for trained teachers;
- (j) Build the capacity of the Teaching Service Division (MEHRD) in the Ministry to eliminate the existence of ghost teachers and upgrade the untrained teachers throughout the country;
- (k) Revive School Inspection Programs in the country;
- (l) Complete the monitoring device - Solomon Islands Standardized Tests of Achievement (SISTA) – and establish a national baseline data for literacy and numeracy;
- (m) Ensure that the Solomon Islands Secondary Entrance Examination (SISEE) is used only as a basis for placement of students in secondary schools;
- (n) Strengthen and promote Rural Training Centers (RTCs) to higher levels of relevant vocational education and training in the rural areas;
- (o) Pursue the TVET (Technical, Vocational, Education and Training) program on vocational schools and institutions to elevate technical education in the country;
- (p) Pursue the establishment of the fourth USP campus in Solomon Islands;

- 14. Complete the SICHE restructuring exercise with a view to upgrading the institution to a National University College;
- 15. Formulate policies which will enable citizens to pursue higher learning opportunities through government-secured loans;
- 16. In conjunction with development partners and the private sector, provide funding for in-country industry-related scholarships;
- 17. Ensure that enrolment opportunities and access to scholarships are strictly based on the provincial quota system and the needs set out in the National Skills Training Plan.

SOCIAL WELFARE

Policy Statement

Government will:

- a. Provide groups such as the handicapped, single parents and other vulnerable groups with substantial assistance to help them take active part in society;
- b. Promote the rights of children, youth and women and introduce appropriate legislation and/or policy guidelines to protect such rights;
- c. Review the current legislation dealing with juvenile offenders with a view to using legal and cultural approaches to their rehabilitation;
- d. Continue to support charitable organizations in the country;
- e. Strengthen existing educational institutions and recuperation centers for the mentally-ill and handicapped citizens and/or establish new ones in each Province and provide them with specialized staff and counselors;
- f. Explore the possibility of establishing a national social security scheme, for example, a National Aged Care Scheme to financially support Solomon Islanders who are 65 or over in age.

HOME, CULTURAL AND ECCLESIASTICAL AFFAIRS

Policy Statement

Government will:

- (a) Introduce a public holiday to promote the 'Diversity in Unity' theme and find poets or writers to compose suitable verses of affirmation for encouraging patriotism;
- (b) Promote respect for God, religions, other cultures, traditional beliefs and human dignity;
- (c) Promote and protect human freedoms of conscience, association and worship, which are embedded in the Constitution;
- (d) Enhance the management of the National Disaster Council by providing adequate financial resources so as to elevate disaster preparedness and rapid response;
- (e) Establish policies to deal with sensitive customary and cultural issues, for example, traditional norms and cultural taboos;
- (f) Provide direct financial grants to churches based on the one-tenth principle on a given amount of state revenues;
- (g) Encourage the teaching of culture and the recording of customs by each tribe;
- (h) Look into the possibility of establishing a National Arts Council.

WOMEN

Policy Statement

Government will:

- (a) Re-activate and prioritize all policies, draft legislation or strategic intent relating to women and gender issues;
- (b) Pursue the implementation of the National Women's Policy;

- c) Create a separate Women's Department with its own budget, trained personnel and organizational capacity;
- d) Implement legislation embracing the functions of other Ministries (e.g. Police and Justice) on the protection of women and children in line with international standards;
- e) Publish, distribute and promote the contents of CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women) with a view to formulating a broad based policy;
- f) Link the approach for addressing violence against women to regional and global Human Rights institutions in order to elevate and strengthen government policy implementation in the area;
- g) Assist all women organizations and/or family support institutions not only with funding but also with expert advice;
- h) Facilitate and develop synergy between Ministries, such as Police and Justice, the courts and Health and Medical Services with a view to enhancing the role of the Police Sexual Assault Unit that deals with women related violence;
- i) Ensure more women are trained in law, counseling, psychology, sociology and other non-welfare areas;
- j) Provide, through the newly established women's department, training, advice, skills and knowledge, as well as gender-specific financial assistance that will enable women to participate actively in development;
- k) Provide additional resources to the National Council of Women;
- l) Assist to minimize the barriers that impede women from participating in decision making at all levels and facilitate research activities relating to women's issues;

YOUTH

Policy Statement

Government will:

- (a) Review the National Youth Policy 2000;
- (b) Revise the Youth Action Plan 2002-2007 with a view to incorporating more approaches to youth development;
- (c) Study all relevant reports and consult with key stakeholders in the sector with the aim of adopting pragmatic and realistic recommendations made therein;
- (d) Turn the National Youth Congress into a statutory body with its own budget, staff and expert personnel;
- (e) Incorporate the functions of SIG Youth Division into the new body to be called "Solomon Islands Youth Authority" that can devolve decision making functions and powers to 'state' governments; that can deal directly with aid donors; that will have powers in society to prioritize youth concerns, such as youth credit schemes;
- (f) Strengthen all government agencies dealing with youth affairs and assist non-state actors with funding and other incentives;
- (g) Establish a taskforce to examine all aspects of youth (and women's) concerns, and formulate policies dealing with subjects such as rural/urban youth concerns, core socio-economic needs of young people, unemployed youths, youth with talents, as well as promoting organizational synergy between all stakeholders;
- (h) Establish a National Youth Corp in the country through the proposed legislation for the establishment of a Youth Authority, and require all young people at an appropriate stage (after Form 5) to undertake National Service through government-driven programs;
- (i) Introduce National Youth Awards to recognize special talents, inventions, efforts to promote and/or facilitate national integration and unity and , good leadership;

Assist existing youth organizations (scouts, guides, church youth clubs...c9) with appropriate assistance

Develop sports and sporting facilities throughout the nation as a means to educating and uniting

Policy Statement

Government will:

- (a) Establish a *Ministry of Public Service* of government. It will upgrade and properly resource the Institute of Public Administration and
- (b) Ensure all new recruits into the public service to pass entry requirements for subjects such as General Orders, Financial Instructions, Administrative Procedures, Elementary Law, verbal and written Communication, Financial Management, Basic Accounting, Organizational Leadership, Official Etiquette (e.g. no smoking in offices), Report Writing;
- (c) Retire inefficient and non-productive public officers early and replace them with professionally trained or qualified Solomon Islanders;
- (d) Compile a register of all qualified Solomon Islanders in the country and establish their current locations;
- (e) Re-introduce the production of a Civil List in which all public officers are listed along with their qualifications and postings. This would make it easier for government to outsource important tasks to be carried out within rather than hire expensive TAs;
- (f) Re-introduce the compilation of Departmental Annual Reports which would normally be tabled in Parliament;

- (g) Encourage ethical leadership, impartiality in decision making, maintaining public respectability and the promotion of personal integrity and discipline;
- (h) Maintain a conducive and cost-effective public service structure that is capable of implementing Government policies and delivering quality services;
- (i) Harmonize the Schemes of Service and review terms and conditions for government professional staff;
- (j) Review appropriate legislation with a view to allowing the Public Service Commission to assume greater control of its mandated statutory functions and responsibilities in the management of the Public Service and State Owned Enterprises;
- (k) Identify training needs of public officers in preparation for the implementation of the proposed federal system of government, and the provision of direct service delivery to constituencies;
- (l) Improve industrial relations between Government and its workers;
- (m) Ensure that all SOEs and other semi-government bodies comply with statutory accountability requirements.