

**SECOND OFFICIALS PREPARATORY TALKS
ON BOUGAINVILLE – HELD IN CAIRNS, QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA
NOVEMBER 18-23 1997**

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

Introduction

The purpose of the Cairns Talks was to follow up on the Burnham II Talks wherein it was agreed that a small working group comprising officials from the PNG National Government, the BTG/Resistance and the BIG/BRA to work on an agreed agenda for the next leaders meeting to be held before the end of January 1998.

The delegation were officially welcomed by the Foreign Affairs Minister of Australia, Hon. Alexander Downer, on Wednesday 20th November 1997. The ceremony was chaired by Hon Sir Leslie Boseto, Minister for Home Affairs, Solomon Islands. The Solomon Islands presence and chairmanship of the meeting was endorsed by delegation leaders.

The meeting began with statements by delegation leaders after which the meeting adjourned for the leaders to agree on the structure of the talks. The meeting recommenced on Thursday 20th November 1997.

The summary of issues raised during the Talks are:

1. Review of developments since the Burnham Truce,
 - Awareness and Reconciliation
 - Effect of the Truce
 - Treaty Document
 - Declaration by all parties supporting the Draft Document.
2. Agenda for the next leaders Meeting:
 - Cease-fire Agreement
 - Peacekeeping Force
 - Demilitarization
 - Laying down of arms
- Disarmament
- Demobilization
 - Withdrawal of the PNG Security Forces
- Reconstruction, Restoration and Development
- Political Issue
 - Venue for the Leaders Talks

1. Developments since the Declaration of the Burnham Truce.

1.1 Progress of the Truce Monitoring Group (TMG).

Representatives of both Australia and New Zealand. Mr David Ritchie (First Assistant Secretary, South Pacific, Middle East and Africa Division, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade). Mr Bede Corry (Private Secretary to the NZ Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade) were invited by delegates leaders to brief the delegates on the progress of the TMG. An overview of the Resource Groups visit to Bougainville, the consultations

held between the parties the groups recommendations and the actions taken was presented. An important aspect of the presentation was the draft Treaty engaging the Truce Monitoring Group. Country participation. TMG's roles responsibilities and the requirements necessary to formally engage the TMG. The Australia and New Zealand representatives stressed that the TMG was simply there to monitor the Truce: responsibility for maintaining the Truce vested with the parties to the Burnham Truce. A copy of the ninth (9) draft on which the presentation was based, is attached. The treaty awaits formalization by Governments of respective participating states.

The main task of the TMG as briefed to the delegates were:

- to observe and monitor
- to investigate any breach
- to liaise
- facilitate the peace process
- discourage potential breach of the Truce
- report any breach of the Truce.

New Zealand will lead the TMG with Brigadier Mortlock as the Commander and an Australian civilian as his second in Command. The TMG, numbering 150, will comprise both military and civilian personnel will be unarmed. Australian monitors will comprise civilians from Foreign Affairs and members of the Australian Police Force. The logistics support will be provided by the New Zealand and Australian Defence Forces. A small engineer capability will be part of the TMG to support its own requirements.

All parties acknowledged the presentation and endorsed the 9th draft treaty document.

1.2 Cairns Commitment on the implementation of the Treaty.

All parties also endorsed the Cairns Commitment on the implementation of the Treaty.

With reference to Article 25 of the Treaty on the Bougainville Truce Monitoring Group, the BIG/BRA requested that the parties be fully consulted before any supplemental agreement is intended to be entered into between PNG and other participating states. And it was so agreed.

2. Awareness and *Reconciliation*

The meeting acknowledged and noted the progress made on the awareness of the Burnham II Talks and the reconciliation ceremonies being held on the ground. The meeting also noted certain constraints impacting on the furtherance of the Burnham II Talks: notably the need for improved communication and consultations.

The PNG National Government Delegation reported on the work done through the Ministry of Bougainville Affairs and the Department of Prime Minister, the submission and the subsequent endorsement by the National Executive Council to facilitate the Burnham II Talks, consultations with the BIG/BRA at Laguai and Arawa, the New Zealand Government and the Australian Government, BTG and Resistance in respect of the TMG.

BTG reported the endorsement of the Burnham II Talks by the Bougainville Transitional Executive Council and the awareness being done. On its part, the BIG/BRA has issued orders to assist facilitate the Truce.

3. Effect of Truce

The PNG National Government officials queried why the BIG/BRA continue to conduct road blocks and check points where as all parties had agreed in Burnham that all restrictions be lifted. The BIG/BRA briefed the delegates that their check points were necessary to control and monitor undesirable people who might, through their activities, jeopardize the peace process.

The BIG/BRA raised concern over the influx of people into Bougainville during the Truce period and qualified this by saying that they do not want to see outsiders squatting on traditional land. They noted that business is booming in Buka but cautioned that the situation is not yet conducive for outsiders to be indulging in business activities. This could affect the delicate peace process.

The BIG/BRA acknowledged that they had confiscated two weapons in South Bougainville from some Resistance members but explained that the presence of these Resistance members had not been subject to “appropriate clearance” and the bearing of arms was viewed as a possible threat to the truce. They assured that these weapons will be given back through the TMG at the appropriate time.

Threats against BIG/BRA personnel allegedly by the Security Forces were raised and denied by the PNGDF representative commander. Assurances were given by the PNG National Government Officials that the matter would be looked into further.

The PNG National Government officials briefed the delegates that PNG was ready to raise the Auxiliary Police concept for Bougainville and that preparatory work is underway.

The BIG/BRA endorsed the Auxiliary Police concept but insisted that a neutral third party be involved in the exercise. The rationale being that Bougainville is already an independent country and the raising of a Bougainville Police Force be within the context of a Bougainville Police Force for the independent state of Bougainville. The raising of the Auxiliary Police, as far as BIG/BRA is concern, is tied to the Political issue.

Next Leaders Meeting Agenda

4. Cease-fire

All parties agreed that the leaders should address the issue during the Leaders Talks. The Resistance members wanted an extension of at least three months to the Truce in order to keep the peace momentum going. Their concern was that the Truce expires on 31st January 1998 and the Leaders may not deal with this issue thereby creating a security vacuum on the ground that could lead to a breakdown of the peace process. Other concerns were that the TMG term expires at the same time as the Truce. There needed to be some guarantee of security at least until the leaders had reached agreement on the cease-fire issue.

The BIG/BRA would rather have the cease-fire to take effect after the Truce expires. But, if there should be any delay, an extension would be considered. The BIG/BRA sees the cease-fire as a prelude to the deployment of a Peacekeeping

Force and thus have suggested that work should now start on the draft Cease-fire agreement.

5. Peacekeeping Force

The Leader of the PNG National Government delegation sought opinions from the delegates on the need for a Peacekeeping Force given the fact that the situation on the ground has improved.

The PNG National Government Delegation does not support the involvement of the United Nations in the Peacekeeping. It wants the Bougainville leaders to take the lead in solving the conflict stressing that the prime responsibility for solving the problem rests with PNG and Bougainville. The PNG National Government Delegation questioned how the United Nations involvement will solve the problem on Bougainville if it has not been successful in other parts of the world. The emphasis now is on regional involvement as with the TMG, drawing participants from the Pacific region.

The BIG/BRA delegation stated that there is a need for an outside organization to assist us in solving the problem which we ourselves have not been able to solve for the last nine years. There is a need for a neutral body to oversee the process. The delegation wanted the United Nations involvement to be minimal and to be mainly symbolic as to be consistent with the Burnham Declaration.

It was agreed that the Peacekeeping Force issue be included in the agenda for the coming Leaders Talks.

6. Demilitarization

All parties agreed that this issue should be included for the Leaders to discuss during the coming Talks. The BIG/BRA viewed Demilitarization to include:

- laying down of arms
- disarmament
- demobilization
- withdrawal of PNG Security Forces.

Referring to the BIG/BRA's Statement to withdraw the Security Forces from Bougainville, the Resistance highlighted that this did not appear consistent with the Burnham Declaration which called for the withdrawal of the Defence Force only.

The Resistance stressed that disarmament must be of all Bougainvilleans under force of arms. The PNG National Government Delegation explained that the PNG National Government position is that there will be no withdrawal of the Security Forces from Bougainville.

7. Restoration of Services

The PNG National Government delegation expressed the need for the restoration of services to be carried out - out of concerns raised by Women leaders on the sufferings on Bougainville. Particular mention was made on health services, education and other infrastructure and for the people at the care centers to be resettled to their villages.

The BIG/BRA welcome essential services to be done under special arrangement but were of the view that the important consideration was to provide an

environment conducive for restoration to take place. Whilst they agreed with the current arrangements that is being done by PNG to restore essential services, provided that these are done in full consultation and agreement with the BIG/BRA. It was acknowledged however, that there is already some evidence of restoration provided by a number of NGO groups.

The BTG/Resistance view is that restoration of services should be carried out on Bougainville and that it should be approached tactfully. The strategy could be to look at what can and should be done immediately; medium term development; and long term development. The guiding principles that needs to be taken into account are as follows:

- promoting self reliance
- reducing or preventing handout mentality
- sensitivity
- equal distribution of benefits

8. Political Issue

There was a common understanding in principle for the establishment of a government on Bougainville that is representative of all people. In high-lighting the need for the PNG National Government to deal with one authority on Bougainville, and that the BTG extension to December 1998 is only a temporary measure, the PNG National Government delegation stated that the final form of Government for Bougainville is to be determined by the PNG National Government and the Bougainville Leaders.

The PNG National Government delegation maintains an open mind on the issue of the Political question. However, the PNG Constitution does not allow for secession. Various options or models should not be ruled out as the political issue means different things to different people. The delegation wanted to know what the bottom line was on the political question.

The PNG National Government delegation also questioned why the Bougainville leaders could not join together and speak as a group for the people of Bougainville.

The BTG/Resistance and the BIG/BRA response was that they would have to come together sometime in the future and that the extension of the BTG would give time to address the issue of political leadership. In the meantime, the BTG and BIG will remain separate entities until the leaders of the PNG National Government and Bougainville decide on the political issue.

The BIG/BRA delegation submitted that there must be democratic election to form a Bougainville Government and an administration that represented the people of Bougainville and that this principle must be applied, whether such a Bougainville Government eventually remained within the PNG framework or not. The BIG/BRA also maintained the need for referendum as contained in the principles of the Burnham Declaration, based on the right to self determination as a basic human right.

The BTG/Resistance delegation stated that BTGs position on the political issue is that Bougainville be given the highest possible autonomy and that any political outcome must be negotiated among all parties. On the question of Bougainville political leadership, the BTG/Resistance delegation proposed that all

Bougainvillean leaders must be included in any future government that will negotiate the political status of Bougainville with the PNG National Government. The BTG/Resistance delegation cautioned about the sensitivity of discussing political outcomes and that the process should be allowed to continue. It also stated that there was a need for a representative leadership to facilitate and implement what has been achieved so far in the process. It proposed that certain economic powers be given to Bougainville over a period of ten years.

9. Venue and Date for Leaders Meeting

The meeting agreed that the next leaders meeting be held in New Zealand. The PNG National Government Delegation proposed tentative dates for the Leaders meeting to be held between 15-23 January 1998. The Meeting agreed that three (3) days before the Leaders meeting, the officials would meet.

The PNG National Government Delegation requested an early indication of who the Bougainvillean leaders might likely be to participate in the coming leaders talks.

The BIG/BRA indicated they recognize the current leadership in the BTG/-Resistance as well as the Bougainville Parliamentarians in the PNG National Parliament and that they all should be included for the coming leaders talks.

It was agreed that participation by Bougainvilleans to the Leaders talk should be broad based but must be one that is manageable.

The PNG National Government Delegation indicated that its participation in the Leaders Meeting will be at the Ministerial level.

This will include the Minister for Bougainville Affairs, the Vice Minister and other Bougainville National Parliamentarians. The participation of the Prime Minister remains to be confirmed but has given some indication that he could attend.

The BIG/BRA expectations were that the Prime Minister should attend the leaders meeting.

10. Chairmanship of the Leaders Meeting

The PNG National Government delegation expressed support for the Solomon Islands Government's participation at the Leaders meeting and their possible Chairmanship.

The BIG/BRA intimated their willingness that the Solomon Islands Government could attend the talks as observers but left the proposal for Solomon Islands Government to chair the Leaders Meeting to be discussed further.

On the question of logistics, BIG/BRA endorsed the PNG National Government Delegations proposal for the PNG Government to formally request the New Zealand and Australian Governments.

11. Joint Communiqué

All parties agreed to issue a joint Communiqué.

(signed)
ROBERT IGARA
LEADER - NATIONAL GOVERNMENT
DELEGATION

(signed)
MARTIN MIRIORI
LEADER - BIG/BRA
DELEGATION

(signed)
LUDWICK KEMBU
DEPUTY COMMISSIONER - POLICE

(signed)
SAM KAUNA
COMMANDER - BRA

(signed)
PENIEL NILIGUR
LT. COLONEL - PNGDF

(signed)
KAPEATU PUARIA
LEADER - BTG DELEGATION

(signed)
HILLARY MISIRIA
RESISTANCE FORCES