



**Ministry of Women,
Youth and Children and
Family Affairs**

**2011 PANATINA COMPACT
ON
TEMPORARY SPECIAL MEASURES FOR WOMEN IN SOLOMON ISLANDS
LEGISLATURE**

**28-30 SEPTEMBER, 2011
HONIARA, SOLOMON ISLANDS**

1. The 2011 National Women's Convention on Temporary Special Measure (TSM) to review the 2009 TSM approach and take stock of campaign efforts to date; was held at the Commonwealth Youth Program South Pacific Centre, Panatina, Honiara, on the 28-30 September.
2. The Convention brought together 50 Women and men from NGOs, Church Organisations, National and Provincial Councils of Women, Provincial Assemblies, Provincial Women's Desk Offices and Honiara City Council. Heads of Government agencies from the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs (MWYCA), Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Development Planning and Aid Coordination and the Office of the Solomon Islands Electoral Commission fully participated. Donor partner representatives from the EU, UN Women and RAMSI were in attendance.
3. The keynote address was delivered by the Speaker of Parliament, Sir Allan Kemakeza who deplored the fact that there are no women in Parliament or in Cabinet. He stated that "*in a country where the population of women is just below 50% of the population the situation is simply outrageous*" and urged "*that something has to be done - and it must be done now, to address this grotesque inequality in the public and political landscape of our country.*"
4. The Convention reviewed the TSM campaign by the WISDM Coalition and noted the gaps identified by a study commissioned by WISDM that the TSM campaign has been limited to a women only campaign and has been Honiara centric. That in order to be more effective, it needs to be more broad-based and taken out to provinces and to local communities.
5. Recognising that since Independence in 1978 an increasing number of women have stood for election to the National Parliament, but that only one woman has ever served in that House and just over a dozen women have ever

served as members of Provincial Assemblies; the Convention noted the persistent significant barriers to women's entry to Parliament including structural barriers, discriminatory cultural attitudes and physical threats, and financial constraints as evidenced in the diagnostic studies on barriers faced by female candidates following the 2006 and 2010 elections, also noting the intensive preparations of the women candidates for the 2010 elections, but none of whom were successful and actually fared worse off than the 2006 national election women candidates.

6. In reviewing the 2009 TSM campaign, the Convention determined that the TSM campaign needed to be more broad-based, involve wider stakeholders and be driven at the provincial and ward levels and develop strategies for TSM awareness and civic education to be spearheaded at the Provincial level using the Provincial Women's Resource Centres. The Provincial campaign is to be driven by a core group involving the Provincial Councils of Women, Church groups, Provincial Assemblies Members, Honiara City Councillors, and Provincial Women's Desk Officers, while the national campaign will continue to be driven by the national WISDM Coalition group.

7. Noting gender policy commitments of successive governments, the ratification of CEDAW in 2002 and the 2010 GEWD Policy and welcomed the policy commitment of the NCRA government to provide several seats for women in Parliament, the Convention urged participants to seize the moment while the environment is conducive and at the same time call for the immediate implementation of regional and international obligations by the government to support the campaign at all levels.

8. The Convention received presentations from the Office of the SIEC and the Ministry of Home Affairs including illuminating information about the electoral cycle and the electoral system and agreed to pressure for urgent legislative and electoral reforms to enable the application of temporary special measures for women in the 2014 general and provincial elections.

9. The Convention noted, with great appreciation, the full participation of the key government agencies such as Provincial Assembly members, MWYCFA, Ministry of Home Affairs and the Office of the Solomon Islands Electoral Commission. It also recognised the financial support of Development Partners such as EU, UN Women and RAMSI and look forward to a harmonised approach to addressing the lack of women's representation in Solomon Islands legislature and participation in all levels of Government decision making.

10. Upon considering the aforementioned, the 2009 Panatina Declaration and the 2010 Tandai Call for Action, the participants resolved that:

We, the women and men of this Convention:

11. **Hereby, Affirm** our resolve to pursue fair representation of both women and men in Parliament, and commit to steadfastly lobby for electoral reforms that guarantee women's representation in Solomon Islands National Parliament and Provincial Assemblies;
12. **Call upon** the NCRA Government with relevant authorities to urgently form a taskforce to provide legislative options for the guarantee of seats for women in parliament for further deliberation by women at both national and provincial levels;
13. **Further call** for a broad commitment to fast track women's representation in the Solomon Islands National Parliament, Provincial Assemblies and Honiara City Council through temporary special measures;
14. **Reaffirm** and unanimously endorse the 2009 TSM proposition:
 - That there be an additional 10 reserved seats for women at the National Parliamentary level
 - The additional 10 seats are allocated on a provincial basis – one for each of the nine provinces and one for Honiara
 - Candidates for the reserved seats will be elected by all registered voters from each province through the single ballot box
 - The process and results is enshrined in law
 - The members of Parliament (MPs) in these reserved seats will have the same status, rights and privileges as other MPs.
15. **Endorse** the revised 10 Point National Strategy:
 1. Consolidation of the National WISDM Coalition
 2. Formation of an Electoral Reform Taskforce to pursue Legislative Reform
 3. Formation of Provincial and Honiara City based WISDM Provincial Coalitions
 4. Formation of Ward level based WISDM Taskforces
 5. Follow Up Reform and Monitoring National Convention
 6. Mobilise for and engage with Parliamentary sessions to consider legislative electoral reforms
 7. Campaign for 2014 National and Provincial elections
 8. Training of 2014 Candidates Pre Elections
 9. Training of Members of Parliament Post Elections
 10. Diagnosis of the 2014 Elections and Planning for the 2018 elections including lobby for electoral system change to List Proportional Representation
16. **Agree** to take the relevant information from this Convention and communicate it to the people in our provinces down to the village level, and agree to mobilise the necessary resources, develop a log frame for monitoring

purposes and provide strategic support for women candidates and to take advantage of the different opportunities to participate in the election processes.

17. **Commit** to establish respective Provincial WISDM Coalition and Taskforces and to have the Provincial Women's Resource Centres (WRCS) as focal points to coordinate the dissemination of the 10 Point National Strategy and to conduct civic education at ward and local communities to implement provincial plans in line with the 10 Point National Strategy in the lead up to the 2014 National and Provincial Elections, taking the triple M approach – Multi-stakeholder, Multi-level, and Mainstreaming.

18. **Firmly resolve** to broaden and step up this campaign, until women are fairly represented at all levels of government decision making.

Honiara, Solomon Islands
30 September, 2011

Convention Participants and Signatories:

Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs
Solomon Island Electoral Commission – Chief Electoral Officer
Ministry of Development Planning & Aid Coordination
Ministry of Home Affairs, Under-Secretary
Office of the National Parliament
National Council of Women
Solomon Islands Christian Association Federation of Women
UN Women
European Union
Solomon Islands Broadcasting Association
Vois Blo Mere Solomon
Mere Kam Up
Matana'ara Women's Association
Casper Fa'asala, Consultant & Community Worker
Solomon Islands National Teacher's Association
Correctional Services Chaplain
Central Provincial Council of Women
Central Provincial Minister for Women and Youth
Central Provincial Women's Development Officer
Choiseul Provincial Council of Women
Choiseul Provincial Women's Development Officer
Guadalcanal Council of Women
Guadalcanal Provincial Minister for Women
Guadalcanal Provincial Women's Development Officer
Guadalcanal Women's Resource Centre
Honiara Council of Women
Honiara City Councillors and Deputy Mayor

Isabel Provincial Council of Women
Isabel Provincial Women's Development Officer
Makira Provincial Council of Women
Malaita Provincial Council of Women
Malaita Provincial Minister for Gender, Youth and Sports
Malaita Provincial Women's Development Officer
Renbell Provincial Council of Women