

AMBASSADOR OF JAPAN
CANBERRA



112 Empire Circuit
Yarralumla ACT 2600
Australia

Telephone: +61 2 6273 3244
Facsimile: +61 2 6273 1848

www.japan.org.au

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Dear Senator Bishop

Written submission with regard to inquiry into the main economic and security challenges facing Papua New Guinea and the Island States of the South Pacific

1. The Government of Japan highly regards Australia's role in promoting security and economic cooperation in the Pacific region, which has contributed to the promotion of stability and prosperity in this region. In particular, Japan welcomes the Port Moresby Declaration of 6th March 2008, which mentions "the Pacific Partnerships for Development", a mechanism to provide better development outcomes, including the field of economic infrastructure, education, health and governance, for the Pacific island nations, with mutual respect, mutual responsibility and mutual commitment.
2. The Government of Japan has provided financial assistance in the form of grants, loans and technical cooperation to Pacific Island countries, in such areas as education, infrastructure and rural development. Japan has supported self-help efforts for economic growth by Pacific Island countries, in close coordination with other donors including Australia.
3. As part of the Action Plan to implement the Japan-Australia Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation, in September 2007, Australia and Japan have established a dialogue on cooperation in the Pacific and have exchanged views for stability and development in the region. Also, US, Australia and Japan have established Pacific Working Group under Trilateral Strategic Dialogue(TSD). Through this initiative, the three countries have strengthened assistance for Pacific Island countries' efforts to promote peace and prosperity in the region and have reaffirmed their commitment to ensure better development outcomes for Pacific

Island countries through discussion and collaboration. Moreover, Australia, Japan and New Zealand, have worked together, based upon the Joint Statement on Enhanced Donor Cooperation for "Okinawa Partnership for a more robust and prosperous Pacific Region" of May 2006, in support of donor assistance which reduces poverty, promotes the prosperity of Pacific Island countries and the well-being of their people and is accountable and transparent in its delivery.

4. Japan seeks to play an active role as "Peace Fostering Nation" in promoting peace and stability in the Pacific region. Japan will enhance assistance in human resource development in the area of peace-building and will assist the development of rapid response capabilities in the event of a crisis in the Pacific region. In particular, Japan is prepared to strengthen assistance to the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands(RAMSI).
5. The Government of Japan will host the Fifth Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting(PALM 5) in the first half of 2009 and strengthen assistance to the Pacific Islands countries. Through the PALM 5 and other initiatives, Japan will further promote cooperation between Australia and Japan in the Pacific region.

Your Sincerely.



Takaaki Kojima
Ambassador of Japan

Senator Mark Bishop

Chair

The Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade

Parliament House

CANBERRA ACT 2600