

Country/entity	Solomon Islands
Region	Asia and Pacific
Agreement name	Honiara Peace Accord
Date	28 Jun 1999
Agreement status	Multiparty signed/agreed
Interim arrangement	Yes
Agreement/conflict level	Intrastate/intrastate conflict

Solomon Island Ethnic Conflict (1999 - 2004)

The ethnic conflict in the Solomon Islands has roots in the migration of Malaitan Islanders to Guadalcanal during the Second World War. Many Malaitans stayed in the area and settled in what would become the capital Honiara. Over-population and worse soil conditions on Malaita encouraged migration further and heightening tensions between Malaitans and the local Gwale population. The Isatabu Freedom Movement (IFM) began a terror campaign against rural Malaitans and set up checkpoints around Honiara, forcing Malaitans to flee. Meanwhile, the Malaita Eagle Force (MEF) was set up to defend Malaitan interests. Police fractured on ethnic grounds, and the government did little to resolve the political tension. Much of the arms were leftover armaments from the Second World War.

The Honiara Peace Accord was agreed to in June 1999, but broke-down in the face of resistance and a fear of prosecution by militants. In July 2003 the Governor of the Solomon Islands, asked for an international force (RAMSI) to intervene and by August 2003, the MEF adhered to a ceasefire. Since then, the international force has acted as an interim police force, maintaining law and order. A string of arrests of former-militants, led to the assassination of an Australian peace-keeper. 2003 marked the disbandment of the militias, but tensions continue with the presence of RAMSI officers, as well as other ethnic communities such as the racial riots against Chinese residents in Honiara in 2006. In 2009, a Truth and Reconciliation Commission was set up and in 2013, RAMSI withdrew from Guadalcanal.

Close
Solomon Island Ethnic Conflict (1999 - 2004)

Stage	Framework/substantive - partial
Conflict nature	Inter-group
Peace process	Solomon Islands peace process

Parties

Honourable Bartholomew Ulufa'alu, MP
PRIME MINISTER

Major General Sitiveni L. Rabuka
COMMONWEALTH SPECIAL ENVOY

Right Honourable Ezekiel Alebua
PREMIER GUADALCANAL PROVINCE

Honourable David Oeta
PREMIER OF MALAITA PROVINCE

Third parties

WITNESSED BY:
Solomon Sunaone Mamaloni, MP
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

Honourable Tommy Chan, MP
LEADER OF THE INDEPENDENT GROUP

Honourable Mark Kemakeza
PREMIER, CENTRAL ISLANDS PROVINCE

Honourable Joini Tutua
DEPUTY PREMIER, CHOISEUL PROVINCE

Description

Resolved to eschew violence and to co-operate with the Commonwealth Special Envoy. Identified issues at the root of the crisis including the demand for return of lands to the people of Guadalcanal; demand for compensation for the murders of the Guadalcanal people by individual Malaitans; and the demand that a state government be established in Guadalcanal and other provinces. Called on the government and provincial government to take action to honour commitments in the Memorandum of Understanding and suggested further action that could be taken to alleviate the suffering by the Guadalcanal people as a result of the capital being located in the territory. For example a review of the Lands and Titles Act was suggested so as to adequately compensate original land owners when Central Government or industrial projects are located in their territory. Also provided that the Committee set up to review the Provincial Government System should endeavour to conclude its work within six months and that all organisations formed to push demands of the people of Guadalcanal through force were to be dissolved and to surrender their weapons with no amnesty. The Government agreed to assist victims forced to relocate, and to establish mechanisms to pay adequate compensation to those who had lost properties. Parties also agreed that there should be equal and fair representation of all provinces in the national civil service and the police force, to promote a sense of national unity.

Agreement document

[SI_990628_Honiara Peace Accord.pdf \(opens in new tab\)](#) | [Download PDF](#)

Groups

Children/youth No specific mention.

Disabled persons No specific mention.

Elderly/age No specific mention.

Migrant workers No specific mention.

**Racial/ethnic/
national group**

Groups→Racial/ethnic/national group→Rhetorical

Summary: Conflict nature is ethnically-based founded on land disputes. Agreement makes references to Malaita migrants.

Page 1, WE THE PARTICIPANTS HEREBY:

(2). Observe that since 1978 the issues which repeatedly appeared in the demands of Guadalcanal and which has been at the root of the current crisis are:

(i) Demand for a return of alienate lands belonging to the people of Guadalcanal in the process of developing Honiara as the National Capital and those alleged to have been acquired illegally by migrating Malaitans who form the largest group of workers employed by the government and private sectors in Honiara.

(ii) Demand for Compensation for the murders of Guadalcanal people by individual Malaitans and a desire to put an end to this.

...(iv) Failure of successive Governments to respond satisfactorily to these demands led to the formation of a militant Guadalcanal group to press these demands by harassing Malaitans living and working in the National Capital, Honiara and the surroundings. This has in recent times led to the enforced return of Malaitans; some of whom have spent all their lives in Guadalcanal, to their territory and has involved the loss of property and tremendous amount of discomfort.

Groups→Racial/ethnic/national group→Substantive

Page 2, WE THE PARTICIPANTS HEREBY:

... (4) Recognize that the above attempts could have constituted the starting point for a lasting solution. The implementation of aspects of the memorandum of understanding in particular the payment of 2.5 million into a Reconciliation Trust Account to be held by the Guadalcanal province in recognition of the social costs being borne by the indigenous people of Guadalcanal as a result of the capital being located in Honiara is a step in the right direction. It is however observed that this action has not been sufficiently well communicated to all sections of the Guadalcanal community in particular the militants. Effective steps to ensure that this is done should be taken immediately. Furthermore the provincial government of Guadalcanal should as a matter of urgency take action to honour its commitments as stated in para. 6 page 2 of the Memorandum of Understanding and the government does same with regards to para. 7 page 2 with particular reference to the police.

Page 3, WE THE PARTICIPANTS HEREBY:

... (8) In order to promote a sense of national unity and bridge the feeling of alienation by ethnic persons of Guadalcanal from the Central Government, there should be an equal and fair representation of all provinces in the national civil service and the police force with emphasis on quality. The police in particular should be encouraged to improve its image in Guadalcanal.

Religious groups

No specific mention.

Indigenous people Groups→Indigenous people→Rhetorical
Page 2, WE THE PARTICIPANTS HEREBY:
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Other groups No specific mention.

Refugees/displaced persons Groups→Refugees/displaced persons→Rhetorical
Page 1, WE THE PARTICIPANTS HEREBY:
(2). Observe that since 1978 the issues which repeatedly appeared in the demands of Guadalcanal and which has been at the root of the current crisis are:
... (iv) Failure of successive Governments to respond satisfactorily to these demands led to the formation of a militant Guadalcanal group to press these demands by harassing Malaitans living and working in the National Capital, Honiara and the surroundings. This has in recent times led to the enforced return of Malaitans; some of whom have spent all their lives in Guadalcanal, to their territory and has involved the loss of property and tremendous amount of discomfort.

Page 1, WE THE PARTICIPANTS HEREBY:
(2). Observe that since 1978 the issues which repeatedly appeared in the demands of Guadalcanal and which has been at the root of the current crisis are:
... (ii) Demand for Compensation for the murders of Guadalcanal people by individual Malaitans and a desire to put an end to this.

Social class No specific mention.

Gender

Women, girls and gender No specific mention.

Men and boys No specific mention.

LGBTI No specific mention.

Family No specific mention.

State definition

Nature of state (general) Page 3, WE THE PARTICIPANTS HEREBY:
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State configuration No specific mention.

Self determination No specific mention.

Referendum No specific mention.

State symbols No specific mention.

Independence/ secession No specific mention.

Accession/ unification No specific mention.

Border delimitation No specific mention.

Cross-border provision No specific mention.

Governance

Political institutions (new or reformed) Governance→Political institutions (new or reformed)→General references
2.(iii) demand that a state govt be established in Guadalcanal and other provinces in order to achieve in Guadalcanal control over sale and use of land, control over distribution of wealth derived from Guadalcanal province, and control over migration of people from other provinces to Guadalcanal. 5. Noted that a committee has been set up to review the Provincial Govt system.

Elections No specific mention.

Electoral commission No specific mention.

Political parties reform No specific mention.

Civil society No specific mention.

**Traditional/
religious leaders**

No specific mention.

**Public
administration**

Page 3, WE THE PARTICIPANTS HEREBY:
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Constitution

Governance→Constitution→Constitutional reform/making
Page 3, WE THE PARTICIPANTS HEREBY:
... (5) The demand for State Government System of administration arose out of frustration over the failure of successive governments to address issues relating to the location of the National Capital in Honiara. It is also recognized that this is a constitutional issue of fundamental importance with implications on how the entire country is governed. It is noted that a committee has been set up to review the Provincial Government System. The Committee should endeavour to conclude its work within six months following which necessary constitutional amendments could be introduced in Parliament.

Power sharing

**Political power
sharing**

No specific mention.

**Territorial power
sharing**

No specific mention.

**Economic power
sharing**

No specific mention.

**Military power
sharing**

No specific mention.

Human rights and equality

**Human rights/RoL
general**

No specific mention.

Bill of rights/similar

No specific mention.

**Treaty
incorporation**

No specific mention.

Civil and political rights Human rights and equality→Civil and political rights→Freedom of movement
Page 2, WE THE PARTICIPANTS HEREBY:
... (4) ... It is suggested that further action to be taken to alleviate the handicap suffered by the Guadalcanal people as a result of the capital being located in the territory are:
... (d) All the above (a-c) should however be without prejudice to the Freedom of Movement of bonafide Citizens of Solomon Islands and to their constitutional rights to own properties in any part of the country subject to compliance to the law as applied to the particular territory of domicile.

Socio-economic rights No specific mention.

Rights related issues

Citizenship No specific mention.

Democracy No specific mention.

Detention procedures No specific mention.

Media and communication No specific mention.

Mobility/access No specific mention.

Protection measures No specific mention.

Other No specific mention.

Rights institutions

NHRI No specific mention.

Regional or international human rights institutions No specific mention.

Justice sector reform

Criminal justice and emergency law No specific mention.

State of emergency provisions No specific mention.

Judiciary and courts No specific mention.

Prisons and detention No specific mention.

Traditional Laws No specific mention.

Socio-economic reconstruction

Development or socio-economic reconstruction Socio-economic reconstruction→Development or socio-economic reconstruction→Socio-economic development
Page 2-3, WE THE PARTICIPANTS HEREBY:

... (4) ... It is suggested that further action to be taken to alleviate the handicap suffered by the Guadalcanal people as a result of the capital being located in the territory are:

... (e) In order to check the current trend of rural-urban migration and in particular the migration to Honiara, Government agrees to adopt a policy of even development of all the constituent provinces of Solomon Islands. Particular emphasis should be placed on developing infrastructures in the other provinces in Particular Malaita province so as to attract industrial development.

Page 3, WE THE PARTICIPANTS HEREBY:

... (7) Victims of the unrest of the recent past who have been forced to relocate in their province should be encouraged and assisted by Government. A mechanism should be established to pay adequate compensation to those who had suffered loss of properties. The Task Force established by Government to resettle displaced Malaitans be adequately funded. Domestic and International assistance to aid rehabilitation and repatriation of displaced persons will be intensified. A Central Government accelerated development programme for Malaita, aided and supported by international organisation and Commonwealth countries should be established immediately to enable displaced Malaitans practice their skill, arrest the wave of rural-urban migration, and to consolidate peace efforts.

National economic plan No specific mention.

Natural resources No specific mention.

International funds No specific mention.

Business

Page 3, WE THE PARTICIPANTS HEREBY:

(6) Following the acceptance of the need for all sides to compromise and sacrifice in the search for peace in the country, it is hereby resolved that:

(iii) Normal operations should resume at the industrial sites of CDC/SIPL , the Gold Ridge Mine and other industrial establishments bearing in the mind their contribution to the national economy.

Taxation

No specific mention.

Banks

No specific mention.

Land, property and environment

Land reform/rights Land, property and environment→Land reform/rights→Land reform and management
Page 1, WE THE PARTICIPANTS HEREBY:

(2). Observe that since 1978 the issues which repeatedly appeared in the demands of Guadalcanal and which has been at the root of the current crisis are:

... (iii) The demand that a state government be established in Guadalcanal and other provinces in order to achieve in Guadalcanal; control over sale and use of land; control over distribution of wealth derived from Guadalcanal province and control over migration of people from other provinces to Guadalcanal.

Page 2, WE THE PARTICIPANTS HEREBY:

... (4) ... It is suggested that further action to be taken to alleviate the handicap suffered by the Guadalcanal people as a result of the capital being located in the territory are:

... (c) A policy to be put in place within a period of time to discourage the practice of squatting particularly in Guadalcanal. Strong penalties to be instituted against offenders as a form of deterrent.

Land, property and environment→Land reform/rights→Property return and restitution

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Page 2, WE THE PARTICIPANTS HEREBY:

... (4) ... It is suggested that further action to be taken to alleviate the handicap suffered by the Guadalcanal people as a result of the capital being located in the territory are:

(a) A Review of the Lands and Titles Act to take account of the aspects of the diverse cultures in particular the land tenure system of all the provinces in such a way as to adequately compensate original land owners when Central Government or industrial projects are located in their territory. A Committee comprising representatives of all the provinces should established immediately and its recommendation should take account of the special needs of Guadalcanal in view of the fact that Honiara is located in the Province. The Committee should submit its report within a year and its recommendations implemented immediately.

Page 2, WE THE PARTICIPANTS HEREBY:

... (4) ... It is suggested that further action to be taken to alleviate the handicap suffered by the Guadalcanal people as a result of the capital being located in the territory are:

... (b) Investigation to be conducted into land alleged to have been illegally acquired by from the original owners of Guadalcanal with a view to returning the land to the original owners or pay adequate compensation and if applicable adequate compensation to the developers of the land in question. Those disposed of their land should make initial steps to complain to the Office of the appropriate authorities.

**Pastoralist/
nomadism rights**

No specific mention.

Cultural heritage No specific mention.

Environment No specific mention.

Water or riparian rights or access No specific mention.

Security sector

Security Guarantees Page 1, WE THE PARTICIPANTS HEREBY:
(1). Resolve to eschew violence as a means of resolving the crisis and cooperate with the Commonwealth Special Envoy in his efforts to find a lasting solution.

Ceasefire No specific mention.

Police Page 2, WE THE PARTICIPANTS HEREBY:
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Armed forces No specific mention.

DDR	<p>Security sector→DDR→Demilitarisation provisions</p> <p>Page 3, WE THE PARTICIPANTS HEREBY:</p> <p>(6) Following the acceptance of the need for all sides to compromise and sacrifice in the search for peace in the country, it is hereby resolved that:</p> <p>(i) All organisations formed for the purpose of pushing demands of the people of Guadalcanal through the use of force be dissolved with immediate effect. All members of the group should return home and surrender their weapons at agreed points established by the peace envoy. In the case of those who committed particular offences the process of law will be allowed to take its course as there is no constitutional provision for an amnesty.</p>
Intelligence services	No specific mention.
Parastatal/rebel and opposition group forces	<p>Page 3, WE THE PARTICIPANTS HEREBY:</p> <p>(6) Following the acceptance of the need for all sides to compromise and sacrifice in the search for peace in the country, it is hereby resolved that:</p> <p>(i) All organisations formed for the purpose of pushing demands of the people of Guadalcanal through the use of force be dissolved with immediate effect. All members of the group should return home and surrender their weapons at agreed points established by the peace envoy. In the case of those who committed particular offences the process of law will be allowed to take its course as there is no constitutional provision for an amnesty.</p> <p>(ii) The Special Envoy notes the decision of government to agree to a meeting with the militants. Arrangements will be made to effect this within the shortest possible time.</p>
Withdrawal of foreign forces	No specific mention.
Corruption	No specific mention.
Crime/organised crime	No specific mention.
Drugs	No specific mention.
Terrorism	No specific mention.

Transitional justice

Transitional justice general No specific mention.

Amnesty/pardon Transitional justice→Amnesty/pardon→Amnesty/pardon proper
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Courts No specific mention.

Mechanism No specific mention.

Prisoner release No specific mention.

Vetting No specific mention.

Victims Page 3, WE THE PARTICIPANTS HEREBY:
(6) Following the acceptance of the need for all sides to compromise and sacrifice in the search for peace in the country, it is hereby resolved that:
... (7) Victims of the unrest of the recent past who have been forced to relocate in their province should be encouraged and assisted by Government. A mechanism should be established to pay adequate compensation to those who had suffered loss of properties. The Task Force established by Government to resettle displaced Malaitans be adequately funded. Domestic and International assistance to aid rehabilitation and repatriation of displaced persons will be intensified. A Central Government accelerated development programme for Malaita, aided and supported by international organisation and Commonwealth countries should be established immediately to enable displaced Malaitans practice their skill, arrest the wave of rural-urban migration, and to consolidate peace efforts.

Missing persons No specific mention.

Reparations Transitional justice→Reparations→Material reparations
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Reconciliation No specific mention.

Implementation

UN signatory No specific mention.

Other international signatory Major General Sitiveni L. Rabuka
COMMONWEALTH SPECIAL ENVOY

Referendum for agreement No specific mention.

International mission/force/similar No specific mention.

Enforcement mechanism 3. recognized that the national govt has attempted to deal with the crisis as evident by the activities of The Task force on Guadalcanal Demands March 1999, and the Guadalcanal Peace Process Committee June 1999 and the establishment of a govt negotiating team to negotiate the Guadalcanal demands with the Guadalcanal people.

Related cases No specific mention.

Source UN Peacemaker; http://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/SB_990628_HoniaraPeaceAccord.pdf