



OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER AND CABINET

**GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION UNIT**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER SECURES SCHOLARSHIPS FROM MOROCCO**

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Home Affairs Douglas Ete has successfully negotiated scholarships from the Government of Morocco for Solomon Islanders to study in the North African country.

Mr Ete was in Morocco last week to attend the Crans Montana Forum in Dakhla, Morocco from the 12th -14th March, 2015.

The Forum brought together leaders from Africa, Europe, Middle East, Asia and the Pacific, including representatives of international organizations, NGOs and the private sector to discuss ways to enhance South-South cooperation and development.

The Forum discussed key development issues including the Strengthening of Development Cooperation, Sovereign Funds Investment, the necessity of Foreign Investments in Africa, management of natural resources, security, climate change, tourism and gender.

At the margins of the Forum, Hon. Ete held bilateral talks with the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Morocco, Mr. Salaheddine Mezouar in which he requested the need to develop a framework for further bilateral cooperation between Solomon Islands and Morocco in various disciplines covering education and training, tourism, agriculture, health-care, aviation and climate change.

Mr. Mezouar has assured the Deputy Prime Minister that a technical team of experts will be sent to Solomon Islands at the invitation of the Solomon Islands government to assess and formalize areas of cooperation that would benefit both countries.

During the talks, the government of Morocco and the Directorate of the Moroccan Development Agency agreed to a proposal to grant 10 fully-funded scholarships annually to Solomon Islands students to study in various tertiary institutions in Morocco. Details of this arrangement will be organized by the Morocco Embassy based in Canberra, Australia and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Honiara.

To further strengthen and deepen the existing diplomatic relationships between Solomon Islands and Morocco, Hon Ete proposed that Solomon Islands will accredit its Ambassador in Brussels, H.E Mr. Moses Kouni Mose to the Kingdom

of Morocco. The DPM also proposed to invite the Foreign Minister of Morocco to Honiara during the MSG Leaders' Summit as a guest of Solomon Islands and an Observer to the summit. The Foreign Minister of Morocco has assured Hon Ete of his attendance.

Hon. Ete was accompanied to the Forum in Morocco by the Minister for Environment and conservation, Hon. Samuel Manetoali, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Mr. John Wasi, Solomon Islands Ambassador to Belgium and the EU, H.E. Moses Mose, Chairman of the Solomon Islands Tourism Board, Mr. Wilson Ne'e and Assistant Secretary (supervising) in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade, Mr. Joseph Atkin Tada.

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DPM Ete and Morocco's Foreign Minister Salaheddine Mezouar