



MINISTRY OF INTER-GOVERNMENT RELATIONS & BOUGAINVILLE AFFAIRS

OPENING STATEMENT
BY the HON SIR PETER BARTER KT OBE, MP
MINISTER FOR INTER-GOVERNMENT RELATIONS & BOUGAINVILLE AFFAIRS
TO THE
22ND JOINT BORDER COMMITTEE MEETING
BETWEEN
PAPUA NEW GUINEA AND the REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA
MADANG, 28 – 30 OCTOBER 2003

Your Excellency, Mr Hari Sabarno
Minister for Home Affairs of the Republic Of Indonesia

The Hon James Ydi, MP
Governor of Madang Province

Your Excellency, Mr Johannes Djopari
Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia to Papua New Guinea

Mr Constan Karma
Vice-Governor Of Papua Province

Your Excellency, Mr Christopher Mero
Ambassador of Papua New Guinea to the Republic of Indonesia

Members of both delegations

Ladies and Gentlemen

Yang terhormat bapak hari sabarno menteri dalam Negeri Republik Indonesia dan rombongan.

Sebagai pemimpin rombongan Papua New Guinea, saya sangat bergembira menyambut kedatangan bapak dan rombongan di Madang.

Selamat datang!

As leader of the Papua New Guinea delegation to the 22nd Joint Border Committee meeting and as Regional Member of Parliament for Madang Province, I join the

Governor of Madang Province, the Hon James Yali, in welcoming Your Excellencies and members of the Indonesian delegation to Papua New Guinea and in particular to beautiful Madang.

Minister, I am pleased Your Excellency has found time in your busy schedule to be here with us to represent the government and people of the Republic of Indonesia at this important meeting between our two countries.

Let me take this opportunity to thank the Governor of Madang Province and his government for hosting this meeting. I am sure both delegations will enjoy the province's hospitality.

To those members of the Indonesian delegation who are visiting Papua New Guinea for the first time, I extend a special welcome. I hope that you find Madang, its people, its natural beauty and its rich cultures enjoyable and educational.

Excellency

The Agreement on Border Arrangements and the Treaty of Mutual Respect, Friendship and Cooperation and subsidiary arrangements are the basis of our continuing good and constructive relations. They provide the principles and guidelines under which our two countries can conduct our border and wider bilateral relations.

The Joint Border Committee and its committees provide unique opportunities for frank discussion on matters of concern. This has helped strengthen our bilateral relations over the years.

Excellency

We should now move beyond administrative and management issues of the common border to include promotion of bilateral trade, culture and tourism and creating an environment that will respond to the needs of the people in our two countries.

Establishment of the Joint Ministerial Commission is in line with that broader objective. The inaugural meeting of the Joint Commission was held in Port Moresby in June this year and was attended by our two foreign ministers. I am sure the Joint Ministerial Commission will take our bilateral relations into a new era, a relationship beneficial to our respective countries in many respects.

Excellency

I wish to draw your attention to outstanding matters discussed at previous Joint Border Committee meetings that now need to be finalised. One of those matters relates to the Extradition Treaty.

At the 20th Joint Border Committee meeting in Bandung, in 2000, the Papua New Guinea delegation presented to your government a draft of the proposed Extradition Treaty. I believe our two governments would want to see that the Extradition Treaty is finalised as soon as possible.

The Government of Papua New Guinea also provided your government a draft MOU on Movement of Third Country Nationals along the Border in 1997 at the Bdikpapan meeting. At last year's meeting at Surabaya, your delegation informed the meeting that your government is still studying those documents.

With increased attacks by groups supported by international terrorist organisations, our governments need to finalise those two instruments without delay so that our countries' law enforcement authorities can cooperate to deal with law breakers that might use our territories to carry out their illegal activities.

With recent signing of the MOU on cross border compulsory motor vehicle insurance and implementation of the cross-border vehicle movement arrangements in the near future, our countries need now to finalise that Extradition Treaty and the MOU on third country nationals along the border.

Finalisation of those instruments would go far in assisting our law enforcement agencies deal with lawbreakers who use the international road between Vanimo and Jayapura.

Excellency

The Government of Papua New Guinea plans to open Wutung border post in June 2004. The opening will coincide with launching of the cross-border vehicle movement arrangements. I hope Your Excellency and myself will represent our governments at that opening as these are major milestone achievements in our border relations.

These arrangements, when finalised, will facilitate increased trade between Vanimo and Jayapura including movement of vehicles, goods and people across the border.

The Government of Papua New Guinea maintains that efficient and regular transportation with flexible currency exchange will give impetus to growth in trade and commerce between the border provinces of the two countries.

Excellency

As directed by the Joint Border Committee meeting in Surabaya last year, I am pleased to inform you that the Papua New Guinea delegation will at this meeting present to your government a draft MOU on establishment of the Joint Technical Sub Committee on Environment and Protection in the Border Area including its functions for study by your government.

Our governments need to finalise the MOU as soon as possible so the Committee can address environmental issues relating to flooding of the Fly River caused by the Ok Tedi mining project and illegal harvesting of plants, birds and animals along the border.

Another outstanding matter is the Frequency Assignment Coordination Agreement. The Government of Papua New Guinea provided a draft of that agreement to your government in 2000 at the Bandung JBC meeting.

We need to finalise the agreement so our respective government agencies can establish cross-border communications between our border stations.

In the case of Wara Smol people, I inform Your Excellency that as directed by the 21st Joint Border Committee meeting, the Government of Papua New Guinea through the Sandaun Provincial Administration has informed its citizens in the nine villages in Wara Smol area not to hoist PNG flags in their settlements.

In addition, the Governor of Sandaun Province and officers from his Administration plan to visit Wara Smol next month to meet the people and discuss their situation and to encourage them to relocate their settlements back into PNG territory. As land is a sensitive issue for Melanesians, I urge both governments to deal with this matter with great care. Mishandling might have negative implications on future administration and management of our common border.

Excellency

The Government of Papua New Guinea also intends to review the MOU on Traditional and Customary Border Crossings Arrangements signed by our governments in 1993. That MOU needs to be reviewed to take into account developments along the border such as establishment of joint border posts and the road link. Traditional border crossers and other citizens from our countries have abused these arrangements. This has resulted in increased illegal smuggling. My government seeks your government's concurrence to review that MOU to introduce new measures to control the abuse of those arrangements.

With establishment of joint border posts our agencies at those posts need to work with one another to perform their duties professionally and effectively speedily in sharing and exchanging of information on movement of people, goods and motor vehicles. To assist this exchange of information, the Government of Papua New Guinea proposed that a MOU on plant and animal quarantine collaboration be negotiated and concluded including finalisation of the MOU on exchange of customs-related information.

Excellency

To conclude, I urge both delegations that during these two days to work together to resolve outstanding matters, and progress on the important and pressing issues for the benefit and welfare of our countries and people as neighbours.

With those remarks, I declare this meeting of the Joint Border Committee between the governments of Papua New Guinea and the Republic of Indonesia in Madang, open.

May god bless you all.

Terima kasih

Thank you