



U.S. DEPARTMENT of STATE

Media Note  
Office of the Spokesman  
Washington, DC  
May 10, 2007

## Consultations on Coordination by Core Partners in the Pacific Region: Chairman's Statement

Representatives from the United States, Australia, China, France, Germany, India, Japan, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, United Kingdom, and the European Union (Core Partners) met in Washington, D.C. on May 8-9, 2007 to discuss assistance programs and coordinate their efforts to promote socio-economic development, the rule of law, and good governance in the Pacific region. The meeting was chaired by the United States and expanded on earlier discussions among Core Partners at the October 2006 Post Forum Dialogue in Nadi, Fiji. The United Nations participated in the meeting as an observer. The Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community attended at the invitation of the Core Partners to assist in facilitating the meeting.

### Working Together To Promote Good Governance and Socio-Economic Development

Core Partners agreed to continue to work together as well as with the countries of the region for the benefit of the people of the Pacific. They agreed that good governance is linked to economic growth and sustainable development, and underscored the need to provide assistance in a manner that supports good governance and the rule of law. Discussions also focused on how to coordinate policies and aid programs to support the development aspirations of the region and promote stability, economic reforms and growth, sustainable fisheries, and environmental protection. Participants reaffirmed their commitment to strengthen regular coordination and to provide assistance based on transparency, responsibility, and accountability.

### Country Specific Cooperation

Core Partners expressed concern about the military coup in Fiji and underlined their support for the March 16 decision of the Pacific Islands Forum Ministerial Meeting, which called for the restoration of human rights and constitutional, democratic rule in Fiji, with elections to be held within 18 to 24 months, if not sooner. Core Partners expressed support for regional efforts currently underway under the auspices of the Pacific Islands Forum to help Fiji return to democracy. They welcomed the commitments to which Fiji agreed in recent consultations with the European Union and encouraged Fiji to comply with those commitments. A number of Core Partners noted their willingness to offer assistance to support the rapid restoration of democracy in Fiji, including for new elections. The eventual scope and amount of assistance will depend on political developments in Fiji and demonstrated needs.

Core Partners expressed their support for recovery efforts in the Solomon Islands and for the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands, which is currently under review. They also noted the importance of supporting Tonga in responding to the challenges it faces.

Core Partners welcomed the opportunity to meet informally with Pacific Island leaders and senior officials gathered in Washington, D.C. for the Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders organized by the East-West Center.

### Regional Institutional Reform

Core Partners that are not members of the Pacific Islands Forum stated that they look forward to consulting with the Forum and its members on emerging proposals for regional institutional reform, noting the wide range of legal, organizational and financial issues that must be addressed as part of that effort. The Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat advised the Core Partners about the review process for the Regional Integration Framework (RIF) and informed the Core Partners that before any final decisions on the RIF are adopted, they must first be approved by the governing bodies of all organizations that are member of the Council of Regional Organizations in the Pacific.

### Next Core Partners Coordination Meeting

Core Partners agreed to continue to hold meetings on an ad hoc basis. The venue and timing of those meetings will be decided in cooperation with the Pacific Islands Forum.

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Released on May 10, 2007

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