



Ministry of Information & Communications Technology

Office of the Minister

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Welcome Statement by Minister for ICT, Hon.

Timothy Masiu, MP

On the Pacific ICT Ministers Dialogue

28th August 2023 - APEC Haus, Port Moresby, PNG

Ladies and gentlemen, esteemed colleagues, fellow Pacific ICT Ministers.

A very warm welcome to each one of you to the Pacific ICT Ministerial Dialogue, an event of great significance for our region's digital future.

As we convene here today, I am deeply honored to stand before you and reflect upon the path that has led us to this momentous occasion. But first, deep in my heart, I want to thank each one of you for accepting the invitation by the Government of Papua New Guinea and traveling across the Pacific Ocean into Port Moresby.

We all have one thing in common, and that is, we realize the need for us; the Pacific ICT Ministers, to come together, to forge a bond of unity and collaboration.

My dear Colleagues and Pacific Islanders, under the theme "*Smart Pacific, One Voice – Creating a Digital Future together for the Pacific,*" it is indeed a privilege to have you all here in Papua New Guinea as we embark on a transformative journey of unity, collaboration, and digitally empowered Pacific.

Let me take you back to November 2022, during the recent ITU Plenipotentiary Conference in Bucharest, Romania. I attended the Conference where I witnessed other regions (the Africans, the Caribbeans) and even the smaller sub-regions stood together to push their common proposals. It saddened me that our voice, the voice of the Pacific, the isolated and vulnerable Island nations in the huge Pacific Ocean, remained fragmented and silent.

Those of us that attended the PP22 will recall that we had a side meeting at Bucharest, and we committed to finding a way to collaborate. This Pacific ICT Ministerial Dialogue is the seed that we sowed there and then.

Let this not die but flourish for the good of our people in our region.

My dear Colleagues, we recall and acknowledge the previous attempts by the ICT Ministers under the Pacific Island Forum, noble efforts aimed at fostering collaboration and cooperation.

However, it has become increasingly evident that the existing mechanisms fell short of effectively driving the collective progress we envision for our region.

Thus, we find ourselves at the crossroads of transformation – a juncture where the Pacific ICT Dialogue emerges as the beacon of renewed collaboration, infused with fresh vigor and purpose.

This dialogue, my esteemed colleagues, is not merely a congregation of officials, but a celebration of collective willpower, dedication, and shared destiny.

Our nations, diverse and unique, are bound by common threads of challenges, opportunities, and aspirations.

Through the medium of digital technologies, we possess the means to bridge divides, create opportunities, and amplify our collective voice on the global stage.

In embracing the Pacific ICT Ministerial Dialogue, we are embarking on a journey of innovation, empowerment, and unity.

Through our collective endeavors, we aim to address the common challenges that we have before us, leveraging the transformative power of digital technologies.

As we gather here, we resurrect our commitment to speak with one voice – a voice that resonates not only within our region but echoes across international and regional forums, advocating for our shared interests and concerns.

So, let us embark on this voyage together, my dear Colleagues, with renewed purpose and a steadfast commitment to the ideals that underpin the Pacific ICT Ministerial Dialogue. Let us harness the potential of collaboration, innovation, and technology to carve a brighter, digitally connected future for our Pacific region and our people.

Thank you for gracing this occasion with your presence,
and I look forward to engaging in productive deliberations
as we chart the course ahead.

God Bless us all.

