

## SOLOMON ISLANDS GOVERNMENT



### GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION UNIT

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**27-02-20**

#### **CUSTOMS OFFICERS ACTION ILLEGAL: PS MAKINI**

The authorized absence from work by 47 Customs officers yesterday was unauthorized and therefore illegal, according to the Permanent Secretary of Finance and Treasury, Dentana Makini.

The officers failed to attend work and did not notify their supervisors of their proposed non-attendance and their intention is not known as there is no notice or concerns raised with his office that warrant their action.

“This represents a deliberate and orchestrated breach of the Customs Code of Conduct, as well as Public Office General Orders, therefore it is illegal, according to the Secretary,” Mr Makini said.

The Secretary revealed that this action is being coordinated by few identified disgruntled officers who are clearly not interested in their bright future and for the interest of this country, as far as improved revenue collection and economic growth is concerned.

According to Makini, his proposed big plan for the Department that will enhance modernization of customs will greatly uplift Customs Officers technical capacity and good for the Government and the economy.

“The intent of their action may be camouflaged with different agendas which aimed to sabotage the system by denying traders the ability to clear their goods through the port, adding to the cost of doing business for importers and exporters,” he said.

“Their intent may also be to deny the Solomon Islands Government revenue streams from import and export duties and tax collection,” he added.

These revenue streams are essential for SIG to run Government and fund its daily obligations such as the payment of government wages, and to provide essential services such as policing, education, health, sanitation and others.

However, the Permanent Secretary assures the trading public last night that 27 officers who defied today’s illegal action and attended their duty stations are processing all clearances through the department’s computer system in the usual manner.

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All shipments are being released upon duty payment yesterday. SIG is receiving all required duties and taxes today. In other words, from a Customs and economic perspective, it is business as usual for traders and revenue generation at Customs today.

“I take this opportunity to express our strong support for the brave stance taken by our professional officers who came to their duty stations and who understand the importance of the work undertaken by Customs in support of the national economy”, said the Permanent Secretary.

Makini further warned that appropriate actions has been taken for those who does not have any legitimate reasons for not reporting to duty today.

The Secretary further requested that all officers must return to work on Thursday, 27th February, at official starting hour, and those who do not will be disciplined accordingly.

ENDS///



PS Makini

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