



## PRIME MINISTER ADDRESS

Dear fellow Solomon Islanders, I stand before you today not only as your Prime Minister but also as a son of our beloved nation, Solomon Islands.

The events of the past few days have been painful and heart wrenching. We witnessed and experienced destruction of properties and threats to human lives. Our city, Honiara was brought to its knees, however, we must be united to keep our country together.

We cannot allow elements of disunity, chaos and anarchy driven by the narrow political agendas of a very few individuals to overrun us. We are a democratic country and we shall stand by the principles of democracy and the rule of law come hell or high water.

On behalf of the people and the Government I want to thank the Royal Solomon Islands Police for their sacrifice, commitment and courage in the face of insurmountable adversity. They could have resort to use of deadly and lethal force but they exercised great

restraint, even in the face of clear and present danger to their lives. I thank you for your bravery and courage. You have my highest respect and undying gratitude and that of our people of Solomon Islands.

I would also like to pay tribute to communities throughout Honiara who have stood shoulder to shoulder with RSIPF to protect our city, Honiara. These are patriotic fellow Solomon Islanders who have had enough of unlawful criminal activities.

The silent majority of our people wants a peaceful and stable city and country. While the protests and ransacking was prevalent in the past few days, we also saw our people rallying behind our RSIPF to protect properties and lives. We had fellow Solomon Islanders working side by side with RSIPF manning check points and roadblocks. I thank you for your courage and commitment.

Fellow Solomon Islanders, I also want to express my heartfelt appreciation to our people who cleaned up our city yesterday and today. I am deeply humbled and appreciative of these actions. Such demonstration of civic duty and patriotism gives me comfort, hope and courage to continue the fight for democracy and the rule of law.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the people of Australia and Papua New Guinea and their Governments for

responding to our request for assistance and have landed military and police personnel on the ground to assist our local forces. I am in constant communication with them. The Prime Minister of Fiji has also reached out and we will continue to dialogue to bring our situation under control. This is a great morale booster for our local forces who at times been overstretched by the well planned attempt by the perpetrators of this evil.

I am sincerely grateful to my colleague MP's for their ongoing support and solidarity to stand for the principles of democracy despite the threats and intimidations which they have been receiving and deeply saddened that certain people and Members of Parliament have been targeted.

The intention is very clear, and that is to put pressure on me to resign. It is very clear that the recent events were well planned and orchestrated to remove me as the Prime Minister for unsubstantiated reasons that have been distorted to misrepresent the facts.

I want to assure the nation that the government fully intact and nothing will move us. We must and will never bow down to the evil intention of a few people. We must stand up to intimidation, bullying and violence. We owe this to our children and the majority of our people who cannot defend themselves.

There are certain things that is worth dying for. Defending democracy, rule of law and protecting the weak and vulnerable is one of these things.

Fellow Solomon Islanders, I condemn in the strongest terms the threats and intimidation that have been made against our leaders. Threats have been made on their lives arid that of their families as well as against their properties. As you all may already know, my residence at Lungga was attacked and damaged.

The life of my family was threatened. This was designed to pressure me into resigning, and it was a message to my Ministers that they will be next. However, the principles of democracy and the rule of law must always be protected. I was elected as your Prime Minister to be a steward and protector of these vey principles, upon which our democracy is built on, and I will continue to defend it.

The carriage that weexperienced in the past fewdays have already cost us more than \$200 million in damages and more than 1000 jobs. This figures will only increase. The global pandemic has made our country vulnerable but the recent events have made us even more vulnerable.

The government is already working on a recovery package for those businesses that have been damaged and destroyed by the carriage as a means of minimizing the impact on our already struggling

economy. These are the people who pay taxes to the government to finance the essential services that the very people who are engaged in these destructions and their master-minders enjoyed. It is for this reason that the Government will not let our business community down, and will do all we can, to rebuild their lives.

Fellow Solomon Islanders, the long arm of the law will catch up to the instigators of the criminal activities that we have experienced in the past few days. Be rest assured that they will face the full brunt of the law and arrests are already being made as investigations continue with more arrests to follow. We will not stop until we get all the people who masterminded the lawlessness to face the law.

Propaganda and misinformation has become viral on social media, including fake FB accounts being created in my name which the government, through our Communications Unit, will continue to clarify these distorted facts that are being circulated by those who are behind this attempt to overthrow democracy by using uninformed young people to carry out criminal activities to force my resignation, supposedly in the best interests of this nation.

The Democratic Coalition Government for Advancement has been relentless in its efforts to serve the national interest by striving to protect the country from COVID 19 while also working to sustain the economy, maintain unity and progress transformational

developments during this financially challenging period that has negatively impacted the global economy.

The tragedy we have experienced in the past days only serves the narrow political and selfish interests of self-serving leaders who have been hiding behind members of our public that they have misled and influenced to fuel hatred and violence in the name of democracy.

The truth will prevail and investigations will reveal the masterminds behind this tragedy so they can be held accountable as the real criminals responsible for coercing vulnerable members of our public to carry out unnecessary damage and destruction causing collateral damage to innocent victims.

This Government in collaboration with our friend will continue to work together to return normalcy to our city and country.

The future of our country and our children is premised on the principles of democracy and the rule of law. For me, these are principles worth dying for, because without these principles we are nothing. Without democracy and the rule of law, it is the rule of the jungle that will prevail. We cannot allow this to happen.

We must stand together in solidarity with a single purpose, and that is to defend and protect these principles, our country, people and children.

Fellow Solomon Islanders, let us all stand together against this tyranny and bigotry. Let us all unite and protect our democratic principles, values, people and country. There is more that unites than divide us.

May God Bless you all and May God Bless Solomon Islands from shore to shore.