



Prime Minister Hon. Matthew Cooper Wale, CBE

Statement of National Direction

THE GREAT COALITION GOVERNMENT POLICY LAUNCH

10 am, 6th July 2025, HP Conference Centre

SALUTATIONS;

- Honourable Chief Justice, Sir Albert Rocky Palmer,
- Honourable Deputy Prime Minister, Francis Sade MP;
- Honourable Ministers of the Crown;
- Leader of the Official Opposition, Honourable Manasseh Sogavare MP;
- Leader of the Independent Group, Honourable Peter Shanel Agovaka MP;
- Honourable Members of Parliament;
- The Attorney-General;
- Constitutional Office Holders;
- Provincial Premiers and Members of Provincial Assemblies;
- The Lord Mayor of Honiara City, Councillor Eddie Siapu, and Honourable Councillors of the Honiara City Council;
- Heads and Members of the Diplomatic Corps;
- Representatives of Development Partners;
- Representatives of International and Regional Organisations;

- Heads of Statutory Authorities and State-Owned Enterprises;
- Representatives of the Solomon Islands Christian Association, the Solomon Islands Full Gospel Association, and all Church Leaders and Clergy;
- Representatives of the Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce and Industry;
- Representatives of Civil Society Organisations and Non-Governmental Organisations;
- Senior Government Officials;
- Traditional Chiefs, Community Leaders, and Elders;
- My Fellow Solomon Islanders;
- Our Friends from Around the World;
- Distinguished Invited Guests;
- Ladies and Gentlemen;

Good Morning!

Fifty-two days ago, the National Parliament placed its confidence in a new Government and entrusted us with the solemn responsibility of leading our nation. Today, we honour one of our earliest commitments by presenting the GREAT Coalition Government Policy, a clear statement of our priorities, principles, and direction for the future of Solomon Islands.

Today marks far more than the launch of a government policy document. It marks the beginning of a new chapter in the national journey of our country. It is a moment to reaffirm our shared purpose, renew our national resolve, and set a clear course towards the future we seek to build together.

The policy we present today sets out the commitments, priorities, and reforms that will guide the work of the GREAT Coalition Government. But it is about more than policy alone. It is about the kind of nation we aspire to become. It is about the values that will shape our leadership, the principles that will guide our decisions, and the choices we must make together to secure a stronger, fairer, and more prosperous future for every Solomon Islander.

This Policy is therefore not merely a government programme. It is an invitation to the people of Solomon Islands to join us in a shared national endeavour, founded on responsibility, partnership, and hope. Together, we can build a nation that is more just, more resilient, and better prepared to meet the opportunities and challenges of our time.

Every generation inherits both opportunities and responsibilities. We inherit the sacrifices of those who came before us, and with them the obligation to leave our nation stronger than we found it. While we cannot choose the circumstances we inherit, we can choose how we respond to them. We can accept the limitations of yesterday, or we can build the opportunities of tomorrow.

The GREAT Coalition Government chooses to build. We choose to strengthen institutions that earn and sustain the confidence of our people. We choose to build a productive economy that creates opportunities for Solomon Islanders. We choose to manage our natural wealth wisely so that future generations inherit more than we received. Above all, we choose to invest in our people, because they remain the greatest asset our nation possesses.

This conviction lies at the heart of our Policy Statements contained in this document.

The Policy document we launch today is organised under the Government's sectoral framework, with each sector containing detailed policy statements that set out the priorities and reforms of the GREAT Coalition Government. In this address, I will not attempt to speak to every individual policy. Rather, I wish to reflect the broader national direction they collectively express. The four pillars that I will speak about today are drawn from, and give expression to, the policy direction contained within those sectoral policy statements. Together, they provide a coherent framework for understanding the Government's vision and the purpose that unites the many reforms contained in this Policy Document.

The GREAT Coalition Government believes that lasting national progress begins with strong institutions, a productive economy, the responsible stewardship of our natural wealth, and sustained investment in our people. These four pillars capture the common purpose that runs through every sector of this Policy Document and together define the national direction of the GREAT Coalition Government.

These are not separate ambitions. Together, they form the four pillars upon which a stronger, fairer and more prosperous Solomon Islands will be built.

Our nation has been abundantly blessed. We possess fertile land, vast forests, rich fisheries, valuable mineral resources and an extraordinary cultural heritage. We stand at the crossroads of the

Pacific in a region of growing strategic importance. Above all, we are blessed with a resilient and youthful population whose talent, determination and aspirations give us every reason to look to the future with confidence.

Yet we must also acknowledge an uncomfortable truth. Despite these blessings, too many Solomon Islanders have not shared fully in the benefits of development. Economic growth has too often failed to translate into broad-based prosperity. Too many young people continue to struggle to find meaningful employment. Too many rural communities still lack the infrastructure and essential services they deserve. Too much of the wealth generated from our natural resources has left our shores without creating lasting opportunities for our own people. Too often, public institutions have been expected to deliver results without the coordination, capacity or resources necessary to fulfil their responsibilities effectively.

These realities are not a reflection of the character, resilience or ability of our people. Rather, they remind us that government must continually strengthen its institutions, improve its policies and adapt to the changing needs and aspirations of the nation.

The GREAT Coalition Government does not begin from the position that everything done before us was wrong. Every government has contributed to the development of Solomon Islands, and those contributions deserve acknowledgement and respect. Nation-building is the work of generations, not of any single administration.

At the same time, every generation has a responsibility to confront the challenges of its own time. Ours is to strengthen what has worked, reform what has not, and prepare Solomon Islands for the opportunities and responsibilities of the future.

Our vision is therefore not simply for a wealthier nation. Wealth without justice can divide. Growth without opportunity can exclude. Development without integrity cannot endure.

Our vision is for a Solomon Islands that is stronger, fairer and more confident. A nation where government earns the trust of its people through accountability; where justice is upheld through an independent judiciary; where enterprise is encouraged through fair opportunity; where our natural resources are managed wisely and responsibly; where every province participates fully in national development; and where every child, regardless of circumstance, has the opportunity to realise their God-given potential.

That is the purpose of government.

Government exists not merely to administer public affairs, but to create the conditions in which people can flourish. It exists to remove barriers that limit opportunity, uphold justice, protect the vulnerable, encourage enterprise, strengthen national unity and exercise faithful stewardship over the resources entrusted to our care. That is the essence of the social contract between the State and its people.

The policies contained in this document are therefore not isolated initiatives. They are the practical expression of a single governing

philosophy. They reflect our belief that leadership is a public trust; those strong institutions are indispensable to democracy; that integrity is the foundation of public confidence; and that government must always place the long-term interests of the nation above short-term political convenience.

Throughout this address, I will speak about strengthening our institutions, building a productive economy, responsibly stewarding our natural wealth and investing in our people. Together, these are not four separate agendas but one national direction, one coherent programme of government and one enduring commitment to the people of Solomon Islands.

Our task is clear: to strengthen the foundations of our nation, expand opportunities for our people, preserve the wealth entrusted to our care, and equip the next generation with the knowledge, skills and values they will need to lead Solomon Islands with wisdom, integrity and confidence.

This is the purpose of the GREAT Coalition Government. This is the national direction we place before the people of Solomon Islands. And it is with humility, determination and faith in God that we invite every Solomon Islander to walk this journey with us.

Strong institutions, however, are not an end in themselves.

Their purpose is to create the conditions in which opportunity can flourish, enterprise can grow, and every citizen has the opportunity to build a better future. Institutions provide stability, but it is people, through their ingenuity, enterprise and hard work, who

generate prosperity. The ultimate purpose of good government is therefore not simply to govern well, but to create an environment in which the people of Solomon Islands can realise their full economic potential.

That brings me to the second pillar of the GREAT Coalition Government's national agenda.

BUILDING A PRODUCTIVE ECONOMY

The GREAT Coalition Government believes that lasting national progress depends upon building a productive economy that creates opportunities for Solomon Islanders.

No nation has ever achieved sustained prosperity by consuming more than it produces or by relying indefinitely on the export of raw resources. History teaches us that enduring prosperity belongs to nations that produce, innovate, manufacture and continually invest in the productive capacity of their people.

Solomon Islands possesses every ingredient necessary to become such a nation.

Our fertile lands sustain agriculture that has supported our people for generations. Our oceans contain one of the richest tuna fisheries in the world. Our forests, our tourism potential, our strategic location in the Pacific, and above all the resilience and determination of our people provide foundations upon which a dynamic and diversified economy can be built.

Yet we must also acknowledge that our economy has not always captured the full value of these advantages.

For too long, our development has depended upon exporting raw materials while importing higher-value goods that could increasingly be produced within our own country. Too much wealth has been created from Solomon Islands without sufficient opportunity being created for Solomon Islanders. Too often, our people have participated at the margins of economic growth rather than at its centre.

The GREAT Coalition believes that this must change. Our objective is not merely to expand the economy. Our objective is to broaden participation in the economy.

Economic growth that benefits only a few cannot sustain national unity or social stability. Prosperity must become more inclusive. It must create opportunities not only in our capital but throughout our provinces. It must empower farmers, fishers, entrepreneurs, women, young people and indigenous businesses to participate fully in building the nation's future.

That is why one of the Government's most significant economic reforms will be the introduction of a **Local Content Protection Policy**. This policy reflects a simple but important principle. Where Solomon Islanders possess the capacity to undertake Government work, they should be given every reasonable opportunity to do so.

Accordingly, the GREAT Coalition Government will reserve Government contracts valued below **SBD 50 million** for

indigenous Solomon Islands businesses. This is not a policy of exclusion. It is a policy of empowerment.

For too long, many capable local enterprises have struggled to compete against businesses possessing significantly greater financial resources and commercial advantages. As a consequence, public expenditure that could have strengthened domestic enterprise has too often flowed elsewhere.

Government procurement should achieve more than the acquisition of goods and services. It should strengthen national capability, create employment, build technical expertise, encourage entrepreneurship, retain more wealth within the domestic economy and contribute directly to the growth of a confident indigenous private sector capable of competing not only within Solomon Islands but across the wider Pacific region.

The Local Content Protection Policy therefore represents an investment in the productive capacity of our own people. It says to every Solomon Islander with the courage to establish a business, employ workers and contribute to national development that this Government recognises your contribution and will stand beside you as a genuine partner in building the national economy.

A productive economy, however, requires more than supporting local enterprise. It also requires creating an economic environment in which businesses can compete, industries can grow and ordinary families can afford the basic services upon which modern life depends.

One of the greatest barriers to economic growth in Solomon Islands is the high cost of doing business. Excessive energy costs, expensive finance, high transport charges and the cost of essential utilities increase the price of production, discourage investment, weaken the competitiveness of local businesses and ultimately increase the cost of living for our people. If we are serious about building a productive economy, we must also be serious about reducing these structural costs.

The GREAT Coalition Government therefore recognises that reducing the cost of living is not simply a social objective. It is one of the most important economic reforms we can undertake.

Foremost among these reforms is our commitment to make electricity affordable for every Solomon Islander. Reliable and affordable energy is fundamental to national development. It determines the competitiveness of our industries, the success of our small businesses, the affordability of public services and the quality of life enjoyed by our families.

Accordingly, the GREAT Coalition Government is committed to progressively reducing the cost of electricity to **approximately 15 United States cents per kilowatt-hour**, a significant reduction from current tariffs, which remain among the highest in the Pacific and among the highest in the world. Achieving this objective will require sustained investment in renewable energy, improved generation efficiency, modern transmission infrastructure, sound regulation and strong strategic partnerships. It is an ambitious target, but one that is essential if Solomon Islands is to become a

more competitive economy and a more attractive destination for investment.

Reducing the cost of living, however, extends well beyond electricity alone.

The Government will continue working closely with the country's catalytic service providers to improve efficiency and reduce the cost of essential services. These include **Solomon Power**, **Solomon Water**, our telecommunications providers, the **Solomon Islands Ports Authority**, and our financial institutions and banking sector. These institutions are central to national development. Their decisions influence the cost of doing business, the price of goods and services, and the daily lives of every Solomon Islander.

Our message to these institutions is both respectful and unequivocal.

We recognise that every organisation must remain financially sustainable. They must earn reasonable returns to maintain infrastructure, invest in future growth and continue delivering reliable services to the nation.

But there is also a higher responsibility that accompanies commercial success.

I have said before, and I repeat today, that there is a moral dimension to economic leadership. In an economy where many families still struggle to provide three meals a day, we must all reflect carefully on the balance between commercial success and our broader responsibility to society. Profit is

legitimate. Excessive profit that comes at the expense of the well-being of our people is not a measure of national success.

We therefore encourage every provider of essential public services to continue improving efficiency, reviewing operational costs and, where possible, reducing profit margins as part of its broader social responsibility to the nation. This is not a call to abandon commercial discipline. It is a call to recognise that strong businesses and strong public enterprises are ultimately strengthened when the communities they serve are also able to prosper.

A competitive economy is not built by Government alone. It requires partnership between the public and private sectors, responsible investment, efficient public enterprises and financial institutions that understand they are not only engines of commerce but also partners in national development.

When electricity becomes more affordable, businesses become more competitive. When the cost of water, communications, port services and finance is reduced, production costs fall, investment becomes more attractive and the benefits are ultimately passed on to consumers. In this way, lowering the cost of living becomes more than a social policy. It becomes a strategy for strengthening national productivity, encouraging enterprise, creating employment and improving the daily lives of our people.

That is the kind of economy the GREAT Coalition Government is determined to build: an economy that is competitive, productive and inclusive; an economy where prosperity is measured not only

by financial returns, but by the opportunities it creates and the dignity it restores to ordinary Solomon Islanders.

The same philosophy guides our approach to agriculture.

Agriculture is more than an economic sector. It remains the livelihood of most Solomon Islanders, the foundation of rural communities and one of our greatest opportunities for broad-based economic growth. If we are serious about reducing poverty, strengthening food security and creating employment beyond Honiara, then agriculture must once again occupy a central place within our national development strategy.

The GREAT Coalition is committed to moving agriculture beyond subsistence towards greater commercial participation while preserving the customary values and community resilience that have always characterised rural Solomon Islands. We will strengthen agricultural research, improve extension services, expand access to markets and finance, encourage downstream processing of cocoa, coconut, kava and other high-value crops, and support greater participation by women and young people in commercial agriculture.

Our objective is not simply to grow more. It is to create more value from what we grow. That same commitment to value addition will guide the future of our fisheries sector.

For decades, our tuna has travelled thousands of kilometres before being processed, packaged and sold to international markets. Every stage of processing undertaken elsewhere has represented

employment, technology, taxation and economic opportunity that could increasingly belong to Solomon Islanders.

The GREAT Coalition believes the time has come to change that trajectory.

Through our commitment to progressively achieve **100 per cent onshore tuna processing**, supported by the strategic development of the **Bina Harbour Industrial and Fisheries Project**, we intend to position Solomon Islands as a leading tuna processing nation within the Pacific. This is not simply about increasing exports. It is about creating skilled employment, strengthening supporting industries, developing local manufacturing capability and ensuring that more of the value created from our fisheries remains within our own economy.

This same philosophy will guide our approach to tourism, manufacturing, transport, aviation and the digital economy. Every sector must contribute not only to economic growth but also to expanding opportunities for Solomon Islanders to own businesses, develop skills, create employment and participate meaningfully in national development.

Economic resilience is built through diversity. No single industry can secure the future of our nation. We must therefore continue building an economy where agriculture, fisheries, tourism, manufacturing, technology and small enterprise work together to create sustainable growth across every province of Solomon Islands.

Our ambition is clear. We seek an economy that rewards enterprise, encourages innovation, supports local industry, creates employment for our young people. An economy where indigenous Solomon Islanders increasingly become owners, investors, producers and exporters rather than simply consumers.

For lasting national progress is not measured by the size of an economy alone. It is measured by whether ordinary families experience greater opportunity, greater security and greater hope for the future. That is the productive economy the GREAT Coalition Government is determined to build.

Yet no economy can endure if it consumes today without protecting tomorrow. Our economic prosperity ultimately depends upon how wisely we manage the extraordinary natural wealth with which God has blessed our nation. It is to that responsibility that I now turn.

STEWARDING OUR NATIONAL WEALTH

The GREAT Coalition Government believes that lasting national progress depends upon the responsible stewardship of our natural wealth.

Few nations have been blessed as abundantly as Solomon Islands. Our forests, our oceans, our fertile lands and our mineral resources are not merely economic assets. They are part of our national identity, our cultural heritage and our inheritance from those who came before us. Equally, they are an inheritance we hold in trust for those who will come after us.

This understanding of stewardship lies at the heart of the GREAT Coalition Government's approach to resource development.

We reject the false choice between development and conservation. A responsible nation must pursue both. Economic growth should never come at the expense of future generations, nor should environmental protection become an obstacle to responsible and inclusive development. The challenge before us is to achieve the proper balance, ensuring that our natural resources create lasting prosperity while preserving the ecological and cultural foundations upon which our society depends.

Our history offers valuable lessons. For many years, the extraction of natural resources has contributed significantly to government revenue and economic activity. Entire communities have benefited from employment, infrastructure and business opportunities. Those contributions should be acknowledged.

Yet history also reminds us that resource extraction alone does not automatically produce national prosperity. Too often, the greatest value has been created after our resources have left our shores. Too often, economic gains have been temporary while environmental and social costs have remained with local communities. Too often, the wealth generated from our natural resources has not produced the broad and enduring national development our people rightly expected.

Those experiences require honest reflection. They also require a new direction. Nowhere is that responsibility more important than in the future development of our mining and minerals sector.

The coming decades may well define Solomon Islands as a significant producer of strategic minerals that are increasingly important to the global economy. This presents an extraordinary opportunity. But it also places upon this generation an extraordinary responsibility. The decisions we make today will determine whether mining becomes one of the greatest drivers of national prosperity or one of our greatest missed opportunities.

The position of the GREAT Coalition Government is therefore clear and unequivocal.

The failures experienced within the logging industry must never, and will never, be repeated in the mining sector.

That commitment is not directed against responsible investment. Nor is it a rejection of development. It is a declaration that the future of mining in Solomon Islands must be governed by stronger institutions, greater transparency, higher environmental standards, genuine community participation and uncompromising integrity. Mining must become an industry that creates lasting national wealth rather than temporary revenue. It must strengthen local communities rather than divide them. It must leave behind stronger institutions, better infrastructure, greater skills and more resilient local economies.

Above all, it must ensure that the people of Solomon Islands receive a fair return from the resources that belong ultimately to the nation.

Accordingly, the GREAT Coalition Government will undertake comprehensive reforms to the governance of the mining and minerals sector. We will modernise our legislative and regulatory framework, strengthen environmental assessment and compliance, improve licensing systems, reinforce transparency and public accountability, and ensure that customary landowners, provincial governments and the State participate meaningfully in decisions affecting mineral development.

We also recognise that responsible resource development requires genuine partnership. Investors who respect our laws, honour their commitments, protect our environment and contribute positively to national development will always find a willing and reliable partner in the GREAT Coalition Government. Investment is essential for development. Technology is essential for development. International partnerships are essential for development.

But these partnerships must always be founded upon mutual respect and a shared commitment to advancing the national interest of Solomon Islands.

At the same time, we offer a clear warning to those who seek to exploit our institutions, manipulate our laws or profit through corruption and improper influence. The GREAT Coalition Government has **zero tolerance** for corruption, abuse of office, illegal resource exploitation and every practice that places private gain above the public interest.

Our natural resources are not commodities to be captured by a privileged few. They are part of the common inheritance of the

Solomon Islands people. Every public official entrusted with decisions concerning those resources carries a solemn duty to exercise that responsibility with honesty, impartiality and accountability. The law will apply equally to all. No position of authority will place any individual beyond its reach.

Responsible stewardship also requires that we fundamentally rethink how resource wealth contributes to national development. For too long, success has been measured by the volume of resources extracted. The GREAT Coalition believes success should instead be measured by the value created within Solomon Islands.

Wherever economically viable, we will promote downstream processing, encourage domestic manufacturing, strengthen local supply chains and expand opportunities for Solomon Islanders to participate throughout the entire resource value chain.

The wealth of our nation should not end at the mine gate, the log pond or the fishing wharf. It should continue through processing. Through manufacturing, innovation, skilled employment, local enterprise, stronger provincial economies. And ultimately through stronger national prosperity.

This philosophy finds its clearest expression in one of the Government's most significant financial reforms: the establishment of a **Sovereign Wealth Fund**.

Natural resources are finite. The responsibilities we owe future generations are not.

A wise nation converts temporary resource wealth into enduring national wealth. The Sovereign Wealth Fund will ensure that a proportion of the wealth generated from our strategic resources is professionally managed and preserved so that future generations continue to benefit long after those resources themselves have been exhausted.

This is more than sound financial management. It is an expression of intergenerational justice. It is our covenant with those who will inherit this nation after us. Our commitment to stewardship extends equally to our forests, our oceans and our environment.

The forests of Solomon Islands must be managed sustainably so that they continue supporting livelihoods, protecting biodiversity and preserving the ecological systems upon which future generations depend. Likewise, our marine resources remain central to our food security, our culture and our economy. Through stronger environmental governance, sustainable forestry, marine conservation, climate resilience and the responsible development of the blue economy, we intend to ensure that development and environmental responsibility advance together rather than in conflict.

Ultimately, stewardship is about more than managing resources. It is about exercising leadership with wisdom. It is about recognising that we inherited this nation from previous generations and that we hold it in trust for those yet to come. It is about understanding that true prosperity is measured not by what

we consume today, but by what we preserve, strengthen and pass on tomorrow.

That is the stewardship to which the GREAT Coalition Government commits itself. That is the legacy we seek to leave. And that is how we will ensure that the extraordinary blessings God has entrusted to Solomon Islands become a lasting source of prosperity, dignity and opportunity for generations to come.

Yet even the strongest institutions, the most productive economy and the wisest stewardship of our natural wealth will ultimately be judged by one simple measure:

Whether they improve the lives of our people.

It is to that greatest investment, the investment in the people of Solomon Islands, that I now turn.

INVESTING IN OUR PEOPLE

The GREAT Coalition Government believes that lasting national progress is ultimately measured by the opportunities afforded to its people.

The true wealth of a nation is not found in the size of its economy, the abundance of its natural resources or the value of its exports. It is found in the knowledge of its people, the health of its communities, the character of its leadership and the hope that every citizen holds for the future.

Governments are often remembered for the roads they build, the buildings they construct or the budgets they deliver. These are

important responsibilities, but they are not the highest purpose of government. The greatest responsibility of any government is to invest in people, because people are the source from which every nation draws its strength, its creativity and its future prosperity.

No investment yields greater or more enduring returns than investment in human capability. That is why the GREAT Coalition Government has placed **Free Education** at the very centre of its national agenda. We have done so not because it is politically convenient, nor because it is the easiest policy to implement, but because we believe it is one of the most important investments our nation can make.

Throughout history, the nations that have prospered most are not necessarily those blessed with the greatest natural resources. They are the nations that invested most consistently in educating their people. Education has liberated societies from poverty, strengthened democratic participation, driven scientific discovery, expanded economic opportunity and transformed ordinary citizens into teachers, doctors, nurses, engineers, entrepreneurs, public servants and national leaders.

Education has always been the great equaliser. It enables ability to triumph over circumstance. Allows talent to overcome disadvantage. Opens doors that poverty would otherwise keep closed. It gives every child, regardless of background, the opportunity to fulfil the gifts that God has placed within them.

For that reason, perhaps we have been asking the wrong question. Some ask why the GREAT Coalition Government is introducing Free Education. We believe the more important question is this:

Why has it taken us so long?

Why should the education of a child depend upon the financial circumstances of his or her parents?

Why should mothers and fathers carry alone a burden that the whole of society depends upon for its own advancement?

Why should any child remain outside the classroom because their family cannot afford the cost of learning?

If education is the pathway through which nations liberate themselves from poverty, ignorance and inequality, then surely education cannot simply be regarded as a private responsibility. It must become a shared national responsibility.

Indeed, this is the very essence of the social contract.

The State exists not only to maintain order or administer public affairs. It exists to remove structural barriers that prevent citizens from realising their God-given potential. If government cannot intervene in the very institution upon which society depends for its liberation, advancement and prosperity, then we must ask ourselves whether we have fully honoured our responsibility to the people we serve.

The GREAT Coalition Government therefore rejects the notion that education should be a privilege reserved for those who can afford

it. We believe education is a public good that should be available to every child.

Free Education is therefore not simply a policy to remove school fees. It is a declaration of national purpose. It is a declaration that the future of a child will no longer be determined by the income of their parents. It is a declaration that talent, determination and hard work should matter more than circumstance. It is a declaration that the future prosperity of Solomon Islands depends upon unlocking the potential that exists within every child throughout our nation.

Our commitment, however, extends well beyond removing financial barriers.

The GREAT Coalition will continue strengthening the quality of education by investing in our teachers, improving school infrastructure, expanding technical and vocational education, strengthening science, technology, engineering and mathematics, supporting higher education and research, improving literacy and numeracy, and ensuring that our education system prepares young Solomon Islanders to succeed in an increasingly competitive regional and global economy.

Education must not simply prepare young people to seek employment. It must prepare them to create employment. It must cultivate innovation, leadership, entrepreneurship and responsible citizenship. It must produce men and women capable not only of earning a living but of leading their communities and contributing to the continued development of our nation.

We see it as a public good to be guaranteed. For when we educate a child, we strengthen a family. When we strengthen a family, we strengthen a community. When we strengthen communities, we strengthen the nation. And when we invest in our people, we invest in the greatest resource Solomon Islands will ever possess.

At this juncture, I would like to share that we are deeply encouraged that many of our development partners have already embraced this vision and are working alongside the Government in support of our flagship Free Education Policy.

To our development partners, allow me to express, on behalf of the Government and people of Solomon Islands, our deepest gratitude. We thank you for your enduring friendship. We thank you for your confidence in our people. We thank the citizens of your countries who, through their generosity over many decades, have invested in the education and future of generations of Solomon Islanders.

This flagship policy is indeed a shared win.

The knowledge, skills and wisdom that will be produced through this investment will extend far beyond the shores of Solomon Islands. Just as education helped build the prosperous nations of many of our partners, so too will it help build a stronger, more confident and more prosperous Solomon Islands. In doing so, it will also contribute to the peace, stability and development of our wider Pacific family.

Investment in people must also include investment in health.

A healthy nation is a productive nation. No society can prosper when its people are prevented from contributing fully because of illness, inadequate healthcare or unequal access to essential medical services.

The GREAT Coalition Government is therefore committed to strengthening our health system by improving primary healthcare, modernising hospitals, expanding rural health services, strengthening preventative healthcare, investing in our doctors, nurses and allied health professionals, and ensuring that every Solomon Islander has access to quality healthcare regardless of where they live.

Our vision is to build a health system that is accessible, equitable, resilient and responsive, one that not only treats illness but actively promotes wellness, prevents disease, strengthens families and empowers communities to live healthier and more productive lives.

Mental health will receive renewed national attention. For too long, mental illness has remained hidden behind stigma and inadequate services. This Government will integrate mental health services into primary healthcare, schools and community systems so that support is available closer to where people live. We will strengthen community-based mental health and psychosocial services, expand mental health facilities in our provincial hospitals, and relocate the National Psychiatric Hospital into a modern acute mental health facility attached to the National Referral Hospital,

ensuring that those requiring specialised care receive treatment with dignity, compassion and respect.

While we will continue investing in hospitals, medical equipment and our health workforce, we recognise that the greatest gains in public health come not only from treating disease but from preventing it. Prevention is one of the wisest investments a nation can make.

We will build on the important achievements already made by our country. Solomon Islands has maintained its polio-free status, and we remain committed to preserving that achievement through strong immunisation programmes and effective disease surveillance. We will continue strengthening our response to leprosy so that its prevalence continues to decline and our progress towards elimination is sustained.

At the same time, we acknowledge that malaria and tuberculosis remain among our most significant public health challenges. These diseases continue to affect too many Solomon Islanders and impose a heavy burden on our families, communities and health services. We will not promise what cannot responsibly be delivered. Rather, this Government will lay the foundations for their eventual elimination by finalising, launching and implementing comprehensive National Malaria and Tuberculosis Elimination Roadmaps, supported by stronger primary healthcare, sustained investment, scientific evidence, community participation and close partnership with our provinces and development partners.

We will also implement our National Cervical Cancer Elimination Strategy so that preventable deaths among our mothers, sisters and daughters become increasingly rare. At the same time, we will strengthen immunisation programmes, maternal and child health services, reproductive health services, environmental health, water, sanitation and hygiene initiatives, and disease surveillance systems that protect our communities from preventable illnesses.

However, the greatest health challenge facing our generation is increasingly the rapid rise of non-communicable diseases. Diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, stroke, cancer and chronic kidney disease are claiming too many lives, diminishing productivity and placing enormous pressure on families and our healthcare system. These diseases cannot be solved by hospitals alone. They require a national movement towards healthier living.

Accordingly, the GREAT Coalition Government will strengthen the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases through expanded screening and early diagnosis, stronger primary healthcare services, improved access to essential medicines, healthier schools and workplaces, better nutrition, increased physical activity, tobacco and alcohol harm reduction initiatives, and nationwide public awareness campaigns that encourage healthier lifestyles for every Solomon Islander.

Our Government will also strengthen rehabilitation services as an integral part of our healthcare system so that those recovering from illness, injury or disability are supported to regain their independence and participate fully in society. Rehabilitation

services will be expanded across our major hospitals and progressively integrated throughout the national health system.

At the community level, we will establish and strengthen Village Health Volunteers and Community Health Promoters who will work alongside our healthcare professionals to promote healthier lifestyles, undertake basic health screening, encourage early intervention and support community outreach. Healthy settings programmes will be expanded across villages, schools, workplaces and markets so that health promotion becomes part of everyday life rather than only a response to illness.

Together with these health initiatives, we will strengthen our social welfare system through the full implementation of the Child and Family Welfare Act, the development of a comprehensive National Social Protection Policy, and strengthened services that protect children, families, older persons and vulnerable members of our communities.

Ultimately, the health of our nation cannot be measured simply by the number of hospitals we build or the medicines we purchase. It is measured by the wellbeing of our people, the strength of our families, the resilience of our communities and the opportunities every citizen has to live a healthy, productive and dignified life.

That is the healthier Solomon Islands the GREAT Coalition Government is determined to build.

We equally recognise that safe communities are essential to human development.

Our commitment to strengthening policing, national security and community safety is therefore a commitment to protecting families, safeguarding democracy and creating the secure environment within which economic opportunity and social wellbeing can flourish.

We also recognise the invaluable contribution of women, young people, churches, traditional leaders and civil society to the life of our nation. Government cannot build Solomon Islands alone. Nation-building has always been a shared endeavour. Our churches have shaped our moral foundations. Our customary leaders continue to preserve our cultural identity and resolve disputes within communities. Women remain the backbone of countless families, communities and local economies. Our young people represent not simply the future of Solomon Islands but one of its greatest present opportunities.

The GREAT Coalition Government will therefore continue strengthening partnerships with churches, empowering women, investing in youth leadership, supporting families and creating opportunities for communities to participate actively in national development.

Ultimately, every reform contained within this Policy document returns to one fundamental truth. Government exists to serve people. Strong institutions exist to protect people. A productive economy exists to create opportunities for people. Our natural resources exist to improve the lives of people. Everything we do as

a government must therefore be measured against one simple question:

Does it enhance the dignity, opportunity and wellbeing of the people of Solomon Islands?

If the answer is yes, then it is a path worth pursuing. If the answer is no, then we must have the courage to change course. That is why the GREAT Coalition Government does not see education as a privilege to be purchased.

That is the standard by which the GREAT Coalition Government intends to govern.

A COVENANT FOR THE FUTURE

My fellow Solomon Islanders,

Today we have set before our nation more than a collection of policies. We have set before our people a national direction.

This Policy document reflects the Government's understanding of the responsibilities entrusted to us by the people of Solomon Islands. It recognises that leadership is not measured by the promises we make, but by the confidence we inspire, the institutions we strengthen, the opportunities we create and the legacy we leave behind.

The commitments contained in this document are ambitious. They require discipline. They require partnership. They require perseverance.

Above all, they require a shared belief that Solomon Islands can become more than it is today.

The GREAT Coalition Government possesses that belief.

We believe in the ingenuity of our people. We believe in the resilience of our communities. We believe in the wisdom of our traditional leaders. We believe in the enduring contribution of our churches. We believe in the dedication of our public servants. We believe in the determination of our farmers, fishers, teachers, nurses, entrepreneurs, business owners and young people. Most importantly, we believe in the future of Solomon Islands.

Throughout this address I have spoken of strengthening our institutions, building a productive economy, responsibly stewarding our natural wealth and investing in our people. These are not independent ambitions. They are inseparable.

Strong institutions create confidence. Confidence encourages investment. Investment creates opportunity. Opportunity strengthens families. Strong families strengthen communities. Strong communities build a stronger nation.

That is the cycle of national progress. That is the direction the GREAT Coalition Government has chosen. It is a direction founded upon constitutional democracy, the rule of law, integrity in public office, responsible economic management, prudent stewardship of our natural resources and an unwavering commitment to the dignity of every Solomon Islander.

We aspire to build a nation where Parliament remains a strong guardian of our democracy. Where the Judiciary enjoys the independence and financial autonomy necessary to administer justice without fear or favour. Where integrity once again becomes the defining characteristic of public leadership. Where government decisions are guided by transparency, accountability and the national interest.

We aspire to build an economy that increasingly belongs to Solomon Islanders. An economy where indigenous businesses are empowered to grow. Where local industries are strengthened. Where agriculture, fisheries, tourism, manufacturing and innovation create meaningful employment throughout our provinces. Where opportunity is not confined to a few, but shared across our nation.

We aspire to build a resource sector that future generations will thank us for. A sector where our forests are managed sustainably. Where our oceans continue to sustain our people. Where our minerals create lasting prosperity rather than temporary wealth. Where responsible investors are welcomed as genuine partners in development. And where every decision reflects one enduring commitment:

That the failures of the logging industry must never, and will never, be repeated in the mining sector.

That commitment is non-negotiable.

The GREAT Coalition Government will maintain **zero tolerance** towards corruption, abuse of office and every practice that undermines the national interest.

The wealth of Solomon Islands belongs to the people of Solomon Islands. It is not the property of governments. It is not the property of companies. It is not the property of individuals. We hold it in trust on behalf of the nation. That trust must never be betrayed.

Above all, we aspire to build a nation where every child has hope. Hope that their future will not be determined by the income of their parents. Hope that education will be available because society believes every child deserves the opportunity to learn. Hope that hard work, talent and determination will matter more than privilege or circumstance.

This is why Free Education is more than a flagship policy.

It is the clearest expression of what this Government believes about justice, opportunity and the responsibilities of the State. It affirms our conviction that education is the great equaliser. It affirms our belief that government has a responsibility to remove structural barriers that prevent children from realising their God-given potential. And it affirms our confidence that the greatest investment any nation can make is an investment in its people.

To our development partners, allow me once again to express the sincere gratitude of the Government and people of Solomon Islands.

Thank you for your friendship. Thank you for your partnership. Thank you for standing with us as we pursue this national direction.

Your support for our Free Education Policy demonstrates that this vision extends beyond our own shores. Together we are investing in knowledge, opportunity and human dignity. Together we are building a stronger Pacific. Together we are creating a legacy that will benefit not only the children of Solomon Islands, but future generations across our region.

My fellow Solomon Islanders, history will not judge this Government solely by the policies we have announced today. History will judge us by whether we had the courage to implement them. Whether we strengthened the institutions that protect our democracy. Whether we created opportunities for our people. Whether we managed our natural wealth wisely. Whether we invested in the next generation. Whether we left our nation stronger than we found it.

That is the standard we willingly accept. For we did not seek the responsibility of government merely to administer the affairs of the day. We sought it because we believe Solomon Islands can achieve more. We believe our democracy can be stronger. Our economy can be more productive. Our institutions can command greater confidence. Our children can enjoy greater opportunity. And our people can look to the future with greater hope.

The future of Solomon Islands will not be determined by what we inherit. It will be determined by what we choose to build together.

Let us therefore move forward with courage. Let us govern with integrity. Let us steward wisely the blessings that God has entrusted to our nation.

Let us work together, not as government and opposition, not as provinces or islands, not as communities divided by geography or circumstance, but as one people united by a common purpose and a shared hope for the future.

May God grant us the wisdom to lead with humility, the courage to do what is right, and the perseverance to fulfil the trust placed in us by the people.

May God continue to bless the Government and the people of Solomon Islands.

Thank you, and may God bless our beloved Solomon Islands.