



Appendix E – Delegation media clippings and article

PNG Post Courier

Thursday 8 October 2009, “Aussies to see health issues” (enclosed)

Friday 9 October 2009, “Australians urge ties to continue” (enclosed)

Tuesday 20 October 2009, “Australians to address health issues” (enclosed)

Sunday Chronicle

Sunday 11 October 2009, “Aussie MPs here to discuss health issues” (enclosed)

The National

Thursday 8 October 2009, “Australian MPs to discuss health issues” (enclosed)

About the House

December 2009, “Health beyond borders” (enclosed)

Aussies to see health issues

MEMBERS of the Australian Parliamentary Committee on Health and Ageing, are in PNG to discuss health issues affecting the country.

The committee will be speaking to ministers, members of Parliament, experts and administrators working to improve health in PNG.

They will visit health facilities in Port Moresby and Daru in Western Province.

They had lunch and discussions with chairman of the Special Parliamentary Committee on HIV/AIDS Jamie Maxtone-Graham, Community Development Minister Dame Carol Kidu, National AIDS Council Secretariat acting director Wep Kanawi, Health Secretary Dr Clement Malau and other people yesterday.

Today, the Australia committee are going to Daru and other places along the border to see how they can help address some of the health issues affecting the people living there.

Some of the issues the committee is focusing on include cross-border health and communicable health concerns such as malaria and HIV/AIDS, the rise of non-communicable diseases like diabetes in the region and the health impacts of climate change.

Committee chairman Steve Georganas MP said: "The



Mr Maxtone-Graham speaks to the Australian Parliamentary Committee members on Health and Ageing at a lunch discussion yesterday.

Picture: TARAMI LEGEI

committee is particularly interested in learning how it can work more closely with our neighbours in PNG on health matters."

During the visit to PNG the committee will visit health facilities such as the Well

Baby Clinic, Poro Sapot and Igat Hope initiatives, the University of PNG Medical School and Daru Hospital. When in Daru, the committee will also visit the Torres Strait Treaty villages of Mabadauan, Sigabadaru and Buji that

are close to the Australian border.

The PNG delegation includes four of the 10 committee members, Mr Georganas MP, Ms Jill Hall MP, Ms Amanda Rishworth MP and Mr James Bidgood MP.

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Australians urge ties to continue

By Jonathan Tannos

VISITING Australian Parliamentary Secretary for Pacific Affairs Duncan Kerr said PNG's relationship with his country will consolidate even further following the hectic seven-day official visit.

To emphasise the point, during an early media conference yesterday, Mr Kerr introduced Federal Member Steven Georganas, who also arrived with a Parliamentary delegation on another official visit to PNG.

He said this further enhanced the partnership advising, that Mr Georganas was head of the independent parliamentary Health and Aging Committee.

Mr Kerr, who is no stranger to PNG, having been the dean of the Law faculty at the University of PNG (1983-85) held talks with senior Cabinet Ministers including Prime Minister Sir Michael Somare, and his deputy Sir Puka Temu.

Mr Kerr is also the co-author of "The Annotated Constitution of PNG" with Dr Brian Brunton and was once counsel for the Ombudsman Commission as well as being involved with high profile cases in both the National and Supreme Courts. Mr Kerr expressed delight at having achieved a fruitful visit, mainly discussing current bilateral treaty arrangements and development assistance between the two countries.

He said the major review of the Australia/PNG Treaty on Development Co-operation was yet to take place and indications from PNG were that no final position had been finalised yet.

Mr Kerr said under Australia's sectoral approach in development assistance, two main areas include HIV/AIDS and law and justice will be promptly taken on board for budgetary considerations.

On his visit to Western Province, Mr Kerr said the revenue earnings of Ok Tedi mine was declining position because of its declining 3-4 years lifespan and its proposed seven-year extension and its border crossing status.

He said this posed both development and service delivery challenges which the Government was examining. They also visited Milne Bay.

Section: HOME NEWS

PNG Post-Courier

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Australians to address health issues

AN Australian parliamentary delegation recently visited villages in Western Province covered by the Australia/PNG border treaty.

Members of the Australian Parliamentary Committee on health and Ageing led by team leader Steve Georganas visited villages in the Torres Strait including Mabudawan, Sigabaduru and Buzi.

The committee heard views of the villagers and saw for themselves what the real situation was like on health services along the border.

They looked at health centres, aid posts, water supplies and the general health of the people.

Villagers have been crossing the border to seek medical services on the Australian side, Western Governor Dr Bob Danaya said.

Dr Danaya and South Fly MP Sali Subam accompanied the visitors on the visit.

Mr Georganas said they were grateful to visit the villages and hear the people speak about their hardships. He said the issues and the needs identified would be raised at the highest government to government level between PNG and Australia.

A workable plan would be drawn up to with adequate funding to improve health services along the South Fly coast and minimise border crossing in future.

Dr Danaya said the delegation agreed to ensure health care in the treaty villages were given priority. Mr Subam commended Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd for showing interest in the welfare of the people of PNG.

Section: SOUTHERN POST

Aussie MPs here to discuss health issues

MEMBERS of the Australian Parliamentary Committee on Health and Ageing arrived in Papua New Guinea on Tuesday to discuss health issues affecting the region.

The Committee met Ministers, members of Parliament, experts and administrators working to improve health in PNG. They will visit health facilities in Port Moresby and Daru in Western Province.

Some of the issues the Committee will be focusing on include cross-border health and communicable health concerns such as malaria and HIV/AIDS, the rise of non-communicable diseases like diabetes in the region and the health impacts of climate change.

Committee Chair, Mr Steve Georganas MP said "The Committee is particularly interested in learning how

it can work more closely with our neighbours in PNG on health matters."

During the visit to PNG the committee will visit health facilities such as the Well Baby Clinic, Poro Sapot and Igat Hope initiatives, the University of PNG Medical School and Daru Hospital. When in Daru, the committee will also visit the Torres Strait Treaty Villages of Mabataman, Sigahadaru and Buji that are close to the Australian border.

Australian MPs to discuss health issues

MEMBERS of the Australian Parliamentary Committee on Health and Ageing met with their Papua New Guinea counterparts yesterday to discuss health issues affecting the region.

The PNG delegation met with chairman of the PNG Parliamentary Committee on HIV/AIDS, Jamie Maxtone-Graham, Department of Community Development Dame Carol Kidu and Health secretary Dr Clement Malau including representatives from United Nations AIDS programme and the Education Department.

The committee arrived on Monday and will be here until Sunday.

They will be speaking to ministers, Members of Parliament, experts and administrators working to improve health in PNG.

They will visit health facilities in Port Moresby and Daru, Western province.

Some of the issues the committee would be focusing on include cross-border health and communicable health concerns such as malaria and HIV/AIDS, the rise of non-communicable diseases like diabetes in the region and the health impacts of climate change.

Committee chair, Steve Georganas said "The committee is particularly interested to learn how it

can work more closely with our neighbours in PNG on health matters."

During the visit, the committee will visit health facilities such as the Well Baby Clinic, Poro Sapot and Igat Hope, the University of PNG Medical School and Daru Hospital.

When in Daru, the committee will also visit the Torres Strait Treaty villages of Mabadauan, Sigabadaru and Buji that are close to the Australian border.

The Australian delegate includes four of the 10 committee members: Steve Georganas MP, Jill Hall MP, Amanda Rishworth MP and James Bidgood MP.



Health beyond borders

Cross-border health issues were the focus of a recent parliamentary visit to our closest neighbour.

EXTRA

Just four kilometres separate Australia from our nearest neighbour, Papua New Guinea. Under an agreement between our two countries, locals on both sides of the border may travel freely between the islands of the Torres Strait for reasons of kinship, fishing and trading. Under certain circumstances, PNG islanders may also visit health facilities on the Australian side for treatment.

Keen to find out more about the health arrangements and conditions in this remote region of our neighbourhood, members of the House of Representatives Health and Ageing Committee recently visited Papua New Guinea.

It was, as far as anyone could remember, the first time an official parliamentary delegation from Australia had ventured out to PNG's most western province. To mark the occasion, the villagers of Mabadwan, Sigabadaru and Buzi arranged a traditional welcome for the four Australian MPs: Steve Georganas (Hindmarsh, SA), Jill Hall (Shortland, NSW), Amanda Rishworth (Kingston, SA) and James Bidgood (Dawson, Qld), who were accompanied by the Governor of the Western Province, Bob Danaya,

and the local Member for South Fly, Sali Subam.

Before travelling to Papua New Guinea, the Health Committee visited Saibai Island in the Torres Strait, so they could compare health facilities on both sides of the border. The committee also conducted a roundtable discussion in Canberra of Pacific health issues to help them find out about the key health challenges facing Pacific nations.

In Papua New Guinea, committee members explored health issues that jointly affect Australia and PNG, such as malaria, dengue fever, drug resistant tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS. They also considered the scope for further cooperation on these and other prevalent health issues like diabetes, which is on the rise in Australia and the Pacific, and the health impacts of climate change.

With an estimated 40 per cent of the PNG population living in poverty, life expectancy is low and infant mortality is high. Committee chair Steve Georganas said there's very limited health care for most people.

"The health facilities are very basic in the PNG treaty villages," Mr Georganas said. "There's no electricity and no refrigeration for

storing drugs, no roads in and no roads out, no public transport and no airfield. The only way to get there is by banana boat or helicopter. I don't think you can actually understand the isolation of these villages until you've been there."

While in Daru, the delegation participated in roundtable discussions with doctors, nurses, community workers and government officials, including the Deputy Provincial Administrator and customs, immigration and quarantine officers.

From PNG, the committee members also travelled to the Solomon Islands where Australia provides funding for around 30 per cent of the health budget. Committee members visited the remote village of Vonunu on Vella Vavella Island in Western Province, where AusAID has built a new health clinic.

Australian assistance to the Solomon Islands for 2009-10 will amount to an estimated \$246 million, including development assistance from AusAID as well as other Australian support provided through RAMSI (the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands).

"Australia is playing a magnificent role in the Solomons, and it's really important that we're there," Mr Georganas said. "They are one of our closest neighbours and it's important that we assist and help with their priorities in health."

Health committee members discussed this partnership with the new Health Minister, Clay Forau and the Deputy Prime Minister, Fred Fono, who said their health priorities were three-fold: improving infrastructure, manpower

and the effective delivery of drugs and medical supplies.

According to Steve Georganas, they're making progress strengthening their health systems, but there's a long way to go.

"For example, a doctor at the national hospital was telling us they don't do mammograms because there's no treatment, so what's the point of doing the testing," he said.

The committee expects to table its report on the visit in early 2010. ■



WELCOME: Traditional greeting for the Health Committee. Photo: Sara Edson