



MEDIA STATEMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Pacific groups call on the UN and Pacific Leaders to intervene in Kanaky-New Caledonia

France unfit to administer decolonisation process

The Pacific Regional Non-Governmental Organizations (PRNGOs) Alliance joins the Kanak and Socialist National Liberation Front (FLNKS) and other Kanaky-New Caledonia leaders calling for calm and peace amidst violence and unrest in the Pacific Island territory sparked by the

French Government's insistence on proceeding with proposed constitutional changes expressly rejected by pro-independence groups.

The Alliance also reaffirms its stance in solidarity with the people of Kanaky-New Caledonia in their ongoing peaceful quest for self-determination and condemns the Macron Government for its poorly hidden agenda of prolonging colonial control over the territory.

For the last several months, Kanak leaders had called repeatedly for the withdrawal of the proposed constitutional changes to local electoral rolls that would endanger the indigenous peoples' right to self-determination and threaten ongoing peaceful dialogue about future arrangements for the territory.

The changes, proposed unilaterally by the Macron Government, would remove voting eligibility provisions that have been preserved and protected under the 1998 Noumea Accords as a safeguard for indigenous peoples against demographic changes that could make them a minority in their own land and block the path to freedom.

Despite repeated protests and warnings that Macron's constitutional modification initiative could end a 30-year period of relative peace under the Accords, the proposals, already passed by the French Senate, were again pushed through its National Assembly early last week.

Growing frustration, especially amongst Kanak youth, at what is seen locally as yet another French betrayal of the Kanaky people and other local communities seeking peaceful transition, has since erupted in riots and violence in Noumea and other regions. Sadly, there have been 4 confirmed fatalities – 3 Kanak youth, one a woman, and a French policeman. Our partners in Noumea confirm that pro-French militias were also involved in the armed clashes.

We are also informed that the deteriorated security situation is likely to be made worse by humanitarian challenges due to the damage to shops and other outlets for daily necessities and medicines.

Our prayers are with the families and communities who mourn the loss of loved ones as well as with all people of Kanaky-New Caledonia during this time of profound national grief.

This week, as the United Nations Decolonisation Committee (C24) regional seminar sits in Caracas, Venezuela, to hear updates on the list of non-self-governing-territories to be decolonised, France imposes a state of emergency in Kanaky-New Caledonia and sends more troops to the Pacific territory to restore order.

Ironically, its current overtures for law and order, and for peace are in stark contrast to (mis)use of institutional processes to inflict violence on the Kanaky people as clearly evidenced by recent behavior in Paris.

Whilst local customary, political, and church leaders have deplored all violence and taken responsibility in addressing growing youth frustrations at the lack of progress on the political

front, loyalist voices and French government representatives have continued to fuel narratives that serve to blame independence supporters for hostilities.

Predictably, Macron has ‘summoned’ all political leaders to Paris for immediate dialogue. As the Kanaky people have stated previously, decisions about Kanaky-New Caledonia cannot be taken in France.

Clearly, the French government, under Macron, is unable and unfit to oversee this decolonisation process. The UN must step in to restore a more just and peaceful transition.

In solidarity with the people of Kanaky-New Caledonia, We, members of the PRNGOs Alliance and solidarity partners, CALL:

1. On all political, customary, community and church leaders in Kanaky-New Caledonia to continue exercising responsibility for restoring calm and peace within their respective jurisdictions in the territory.
2. On all Pacific Islands Forum Leaders, particularly Fiji and Papua New Guinea as our regional representatives on the UNC24, to support the Kanaky-New Caledonia delegation to the regional seminar in Caracas, Venezuela, and the substantive UNC24 Session in New York in June 2024, in its efforts to highlight the failures of the French Government as a neutral administrator of the territory’s decolonisation process.
3. On the French Presidency to withdraw, immediately, its unilaterally-imposed project of removing constitutional provisions that safeguard pro-independence voters, particularly the indigenous people of Kanaky-New Caledonia from demographic changes that could make them a minority in their own land; and
4. On the United Nations and Pacific Leaders to send a neutral mission to oversee and mediate dialogue between all parties to the Noumea Accords and resulting political process.

Endorsed By:

- **Australian Association for Pacific Studies**
- **Aotearoa Human Rights Foundation**
- **Action Station**
- **Alliance for Future Generations**
- **350- Aotearoa**
- **Bismark Ramu Group**
- **Pacific Climate Action Network**
- **DIVA- Diverse Voices and Action for Equality**
- **Elsham Papua**
- **FCOSS - Fiji Council of Social Services**
- **FemLINKpacific**
- **FYSA- Fiji Youth SRHR Alliance**
- **LLCTC-Lauru Land Conference of Tribunal Communities**

- **MILDA- Melanesian Indigenous Land Defense Alliance**
- **Moruroa e Tatou.**
- **Nuclear Truth Project.**
- **PCC- Pacific Conference of Churches**
- **PIANGO- Pacific Islands Association of Non-governmental Organizations**
- **PARC- Pacific Asia Resources Center**
- **Peace Movement Aotearoa**
- **PANG- Pacific Network on Globalisation**
- **Pacific Network**
- **Te Kuaka**
- **VILDD- Vanuatu Indigenous Land Defense Desk**
- **Vanuatu Human Rights Coalition**
- **YWCA- Fiji Young Women's Christian Association**
- **Youngsolwara Pacific**