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RAMSI Special Coordinator Visits Isabel Province

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RAMSI Special Coordinator Graeme Wilson visited Buala last week to meet with the Premier of Isabel, his executive, church and community leaders, and traditional chiefs.

Mr Wilson said the trip to Isabel was part of his program of visits to meet with Provincial Governments in the early part of his leadership of the Regional Assistance Mission.

Mr Wilson discussed with Premier Ruben Dotho and government ministers the progress of RAMSI partnership activities such as RSIPF capacity building by RAMSI's Participating Police Force, agricultural assistance to improve income generation, women in government, and financial management assistance provided by the Provincial Government Strengthening Program.

"The Provincial Government Strengthening Program, which is co-funded by UNDP, EU and RAMSI, is making a difference by providing the Isabel Government with assistance to improve the standard of financial management, and to fund government investment in locally developed projects," Mr Wilson said.

Mr Dotho said he and the people of Isabel Province warmly welcomed the visit by the Special Coordinator.

"RAMSI has helped restore law and order, provided economic stability and assisted with rebuilding the machinery of government," Mr Dotho said.

The Premier outlined the special tripartite arrangement in Isabel between the Provincial Government, the church and traditional chiefs who worked effectively together to run the affairs of the people as a whole.

"It is our intention to develop a system that best serves the interests and welfare of our people," Mr Dotho said.

Mr Wilson thanked the Premier, leaders and the people of Buala for providing the delegation, which included Australia's Minister for Home Affairs, the Hon Bob Debus MP, such a warm welcome, with music and dancing by the KUV panpipe group, singing by the Mother's Union and an impressive police parade by members of RSIPF based in Isabel.

”Travelling to the provinces enables me to see first-hand RAMSI’s contribution, and to talk with people and their leaders living in rural areas,” Mr Wilson said.

“The people of Buala work together as a proud and harmonious community and I have now seen for myself what they are doing to improve their lives. I’m glad that RAMSI – by working in partnership with the national government and provincial government - can play its part in providing a stable foundation for these improvements in government service delivery.”

“I shall fondly remember the friendliness and talents of the people of Buala, Isabel Province,” Mr Wilson said.

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