



OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER AND CABINET

GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION UNIT

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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## MOU FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SI TOURISM OFFICE IN JAPAN SIGNED

The Ministry of Culture and Tourism has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Office of the Honorary Consul of Solomon Islands in Tokyo for the establishment of a Solomon Islands Tourism Office in Tokyo.

Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism Mr. Andrew Nihopara and the Solomon Islands Honorary Consul in Tokyo Mr. Takahiro Kitano CSI CBE on April 3, 2017.

The MOU was formulated in accordance with discussions and mutual understanding between the Ministry and the Tokyo Honorary Consulate regarding the importance to establish an effective partnership that would enable a comprehensive, accessible and respectful system for tourism promotion of Solomon Islands in the Japanese market.

Through this partnership, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the Tokyo Honorary Consulate are committed to collaborate to push Solomon Islands in the Japanese market through the SI Tourism Office that is being established within the Mr. Kitano's Office in Tokyo.

The operation and management of the Tokyo Office is being resourced and supported by the Honorary Consul with the engagement of Japanese staffs to operate the Office in Tokyo.

The engaged staffs are familiar with the outbound market and have established network connections within the Japanese tourism trade market.

The Ministry in partnership with the Solomon Islands Visitors Bureau will be supporting the Tokyo Office with updated information on tourism products and services facilitate communications between the Tokyo Office and other relevant Government Ministries in areas of mutual interest.

With relevant resource the Tokyo Office will represent the destination at international tourism trade and consumer events within Japan.

Japan has been a key tourism market globally and the Pacific in particular. This latest move to establish the SI Tourism Office, Tokyo is anticipated to launch a long awaited platform for luring more Japanese visitors to the Solomon Islands.

The level of representation is crucial because of the language barrier issue so the on-the-ground representation would bridge that gap.

The key objective of this latest level of representation in tourism is to enhance the linkage between the two countries in tourism, which has immense economic potential, which has not been fully explored in the past.

Permanent Secretary Nihopara said his Ministry is optimistic that this latest initiative will no doubt boost the awareness of Solomon Islands in the lucrative Japanese tourist market and could also lead to new market opportunities and create tourism investment leads.

Mr Nihopara conveyed his appreciation to HE Kitano for this gesture of continuous goodwill and friendship on behalf of the SI Government.

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