



# TV UNITED NATIONS NATIONS UNIES

## U.N. IN ACTION

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Length: 4'27"

### UN SUPPORTS SPECIAL CONSTABLES DEMOBILIZATION IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS

#### VIDEO

ARRIVAL (19")

PEOPLE/ISLANDS (10")

CONFLICT (21")

INTERVENTION FORCE (18")

#### AUDIO

##### NARRATION

Local authorities, foreign diplomats and United Nations staff are welcomed to Goldridge Village in the Solomon Islands. They are here to participate in the demobilization of Special Constables or police reserves.

An archipelago of more than 900 islands and atolls, the country's half million people have suffered through years of civil war and institutional collapse.

Once known as the Happy Islands, the Solomon Islands endured an ethnic conflict fought over land and jobs. A peace deal was signed in 2000, but violence and lawlessness continued. Armed militants threatened the viability of the nation state. Corruption was rampant.

Requested by the central government, which was

unable to prevent the country's slide into anarchy, an Australian-led multinational force was deployed last July. The 2300 strong force has been disarming militia groups and arresting their leaders.

GOLDRIDGE AND MINE (21")

In Goldridge there's been much suffering as consequence of the rampant criminality. Nearby, the country's largest gold mine, closed down due to lack of security. It was the lure of gold that brought the Spanish to the Solomon's in the sixteenth century. The country was named after the mythical gold mines of King Solomon.

EXPLOSIVES (8")

Explosives can still be found at the mine. They helped to fuel the Islands' conflict.

CONSTABLES (11")

Today, 42 Special Constables are being demobilized. In fact, some of them were little more than armed bandits and terrorized Goldridge and other villages, says Pastor Patterson Gatu.

GATU:

PASTOR PATTERSON GATU ON CAMERA (8")

"They come out doing harassment, demanding people, killing people."

DEMOBILISATION (13")

In recent years the Special Constable Force grew from 400 to 1200. They demanded payment for full-time employment and drained public finances

while exploiting the defenceless population.

TRUCK WITH EXPLOSIVES (13") The demobilized men bring bags of explosives from their arms caches, as a sign of their goodwill. Clearly some of this came from the nearby mine. The police remove the dangerous materials to a safe location.

LUC SPEAKS TO CONSTABLES (17") The UN Development Programme, UNDP, and the Royal Solomon Islands Police, are working together to help them reintegrate into society. UNDP's Luc Lafreniere says the aim of the project is to re-establish the rule of law.

LAFRENIERE:

LUC LAFRENIERE ON CAMERA (17") "It is certainly also sending the message that law enforcement should be carried by professional police officers and people that are trained and engaged in protecting civil life rights and human rights."

NARRATION

APPLYING (21") Almost 900 special constables have demobilised. Each receives a six-month safety net allowance to encourage them to return to their communities. The project also provides counselling and training in running small businesses, as well as materials and modest grants to help the start-ups.

FARMER (16") Peter Leva was demobilized in early 2003. He became a farmer. A father of three, Leva's business is drying cocoa beans for export. Leva

say that UNDP's grant was the key for his success:

LEVA:

LEVA ON CAMERA (7")

"It helped me to develop my standard of living, to develop my family."

NARRATION

DEMOBILISATION (20")

Significant advances have been made in bringing law and order and ending the intimidation and rampant violence that plagued the lives of Solomon Islanders over the years. The ceremony in Goldridge is a sure sign that peace is finally coming back and the Happy Islands will once again live up to their name.

UN LOGO (20")

This report was prepared by Chaim Litewski for the United Nations.