

Factors Influencing Papua New Guinea's Foreign Policy in the Twenty-First Century

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Declaration

No material in this thesis has been previously submitted for a degree at this or any other university. Except for those sources acknowledged in the text and footnotes, this thesis is the author's original research.

The work is no longer than 100,000 words.

Acknowledgements

My journey into researching foreign policy in Papua New Guinea started in a police establishment. Before I took up studies, I was a police officer based in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea. I had access to the monthly briefs that came in from all parts of the country. Through these official records, I have noted the increasing number of transnational crimes, particularly the increased number of pirated and counterfeit goods and the increased number of illegal immigrants at the turn of the century. It made me wonder if the increase in transnational crimes was related to the government's 'look north' policy, a less articulated foreign policy that focused on China and the rest of Asia. The policy generated economic opportunities for Papua New Guinea, but simultaneously posed challenges to national security. My interest in foreign policy developed from that time. As a law enforcer, I could do little in terms of minimising the undesirable consequences of foreign policy, but I realised that I could contribute to influencing policies through research. That was how I started my journey in academia.

I started at the Australian National University (ANU) College of Arts and Social Sciences (CASS), but cross-transferred when I changed my research focus from transnational crimes to foreign policy. I thank the Department of Pacific Affairs (DPA)—formerly State, Society and Governance in Melanesia (SSGM)—program at ANU for taking me on board to complete this journey. My journey in academia would not have been possible without the assistance of several people and organisations. I would like to acknowledge several sources that provided me with the crucial financial assistance that enabled me to begin and complete this work. I thank the people and government of Australia for the opportunity of the Endeavour Postgraduate Award scholarship. I extend my thanks to the ANU for the Postgraduate Research Scholarship. ANU continued the support after the Endeavour Postgraduate Award ended. I also thank DPA for endorsing the extension of my scholarship.

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Abstract

This thesis investigates the factors that have been influential in shaping Papua New Guinea's (PNG) foreign policy in the period 2003–2015. It focuses on three case studies as the baseline for analysis: the enhanced cooperation program (ECP) between PNG and Australia in 2003, the Julian Moti affair in 2006 and the case of West Papua in 2015. The period 2003–2015 is significant because it encompasses several important developments that contributed to PNG's shifting priorities, the most notable of which being the growing economy. PNG's economic growth during this period gave the government a new sense of economic independence and confidence. The period showed a growing resistance to Australia's influence in PNG. Leaders became more nationalistic and assertive. Deference to Australia was replaced with disputes and frequent opposition. PNG also developed a stronger sense of its place in the region and increasingly saw itself as a significant regional power with a role to play in shaping regional order.

This research illuminates important areas of continuity and significant changes that have taken place in respect to PNG's foreign policy over the period 2003–2015. An important area of continuity is the centrality of the PNG–Australia relationship. PNG has long aspired to conduct foreign policy that is independent from Australia's influence, but this aspiration has been limited in part because PNG remained dependent on Australia. The period under review has not observed the emergence of a more coherent foreign policy that can minimise Australia's influence in PNG. Political elites have evoked sentiments of nationalism and have deployed nationalist rhetoric—against perceived Australian dominance—to justify PNG's independence and national sovereignty. However, the rhetoric was not translated into a coherent policy to downplay Australia's influence. This was reflected in the ECP and Moti cases. Measured against key foreign policy concepts, the study did not convey a strong sense of institutional consolidation and coherence. Pervasive indigenous cultures played a significant role in foreign

policy. The institutional context of foreign policy in PNG remains weak and more personalised in individual political leaders. The courts have acted to stabilise foreign policy engagement, but this is largely reactive.

The case of West Papua reflected a subtle change in PNG's foreign policy development. It provides an example of PNG's departure from the traditionally reactive to the more strategic approach to foreign policy. The issue of human rights in West Papua has been a concern for PNG, but successive governments have refrained from condemning the human rights abuses and have often claimed that it was Indonesia's domestic problem. In 2015, PNG departed from the non-interference policy and spoke openly against the human rights abuses in West Papua. This happened against a backdrop of regional positioning and strengthening. PNG deployed its nascent foreign policy tool—aid diplomacy—and consolidated its position in the region. It then pushed the issue of human rights through the sub-regional forum, the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG). This is a significant development in the evolution of PNG's foreign policy, as it showed a concerted foreign policy.

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List of Abbreviations

AAP	Australia Assisting Police
APEC	Asia–Pacific Economic Cooperation
ASEAN	Association of South-East Asian Nations
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
DFBI	Defence Force Board of Inquiry
DFA	Department of Foreign Affairs
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
ECP	Enhanced Cooperation Program
FLNKS	<i>Front de Libération Nationale Kanak et Socialiste</i> (Kanak and Socialist National Liberation Front)
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LNG	Liquefied Natural Gas
MSG	Melanesian Spearhead Group
NEC	National Executive Council
NSAC	National Security Advisory Committee
NSC	National Security Council
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
OPM	<i>Organisasi Papua Merdeka</i> or Free Papua Movement
OSCA	Office of Security Coordination and Assessment
PIF	Pacific Islands Forum
PNGDF	Papua New Guinea Defence Force
RAMSI	Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands
RPNGC	Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary
SGP	<i>Strongim Gavman</i> Program
ULMWP	United Liberation Movement for West Papua
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission on Refugees

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background of Study

On 29 June 1999, Papua New Guinea (PNG) Prime Minister William Skate and his Foreign Minister, Roy Yaki, flew to Taipei and made a secret diplomatic deal with Taiwan. The deal involved US\$2.3 billion of aid, soft loans and investments in the timber and fishing industries in return for diplomatic recognition (Gaglioti & Phillips, 1999; Kerr, 2000; Monden, 2003; Standish, 1999). The deal was a unilateral decision made by the prime minister (Bogari, 2010, p. 141) and was signed on 5 July (Asia Times, 1999; Van Fossen, 2007, p. 17). The deal called for the abandonment of PNG's longstanding 'one China' policy, which holds that there is only one state called China and that Taiwan is a part of China. As a policy, China demands that countries who seek diplomatic relations with China must break official relations with Taiwan and vice versa. Since 1976, the 'one China' policy has framed PNG foreign policy in the region. PNG's commitment to the 'one China' policy has been reciprocated with close diplomatic relations and increased economic exchanges between both countries. PNG has also supported the policy at multilateral levels through the United Nations (UN) and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) agreements, while maintaining economic ties with Taiwan. China has been comfortable with this trilateral relationship, particularly with PNG's economic relationship with Taiwan. China's accommodative stance placed PNG in an advantageous position. In this case, PNG still benefitted from Taiwan, without establishing diplomatic relations or giving Taiwan diplomatic recognition. Prime Minister Skate's decision to give diplomatic recognition to Taiwan was a significant shift from the status quo. His action caused a significant controversy in international relations. Both Australia and China protested vigorously against Skate's formal link to Taiwan (Adcock, 1999; Atkinson, 2013; Harrison, 1999). China viewed it as a 'serious mistake' and an 'erroneous decision' that constituted a 'serious infringement of China's sovereignty and territorial integrity' (Henderson, 2001, p. 151). The Australian Government warned PNG against the diplomatic recognition of Taiwan,

alleging that it was not in the interests of Australia or PNG, as it could undermine regional stability¹.

Prime Minister Skate's diplomatic recognition of Taiwan did not last. The National Parliament elected Sir Mekere Morauta as prime minister on 14 July 1999. A week after taking office, Morauta repudiated Skate's recognition of Taiwan. He said that the standard procedures for opening diplomatic relations with other countries, which have applied since independence, were not correctly followed. He swiftly reversed the diplomatic recognition of Taiwan and reaffirmed the country's commitment to the longstanding 'one China' policy, but also emphasised the continuing significance of trade ties with Taiwan (Hiambohn, 1999). Nonetheless, Skate's decision to renege on the 'one China' policy in exchange for loans, investments and aid speaks to the fluid nature of PNG's foreign policy. Why was Skate able to act unilaterally? What influenced his actions? The trilateral relationship between PNG, China and Taiwan had been, for the most part, cordial and it was not in PNG's best interest to create an issue with the potential to destabilise this relationship. Whose interests was Skate representing? Moreover, how was he able to shift the direction of PNG's foreign policy on such a sensitive issue so easily? These questions are essential to foreign policy analysis and highlight the distinctive nature of foreign policy in PNG, judged against Western standards. In truth, there is surprisingly little analysis of foreign policy in PNG. Although foreign policy is a significant policy area, its analysis is under-researched.

¹ China and Taiwan's competition to gain recognition in the Pacific through 'chequebook diplomacy' has raised concerns about instability in the region (Young, 2007). Both countries have used untied loans and aid packages to win recognition at the expense of good governance reforms. This practice is said to undermine attempts to improve government transparency and accountability in the Pacific region (though it became less of a problem in recent years).

The study of PNG's foreign policy has received little attention in scholarly and policy circles. Most of the early contributions to the literature on foreign policy in PNG are historical accounts of foreign affairs that are captured in the context of an emerging state (Ballard, 1981; Boyce, 1978; Griffin, 1974). There has been a slight increase in the number of scholarly articles and books on foreign policy since the 1990s, but most of the contributions lacked an analytical approach to the study of foreign policy. That is, they lacked theory development and empirical study regarding the processes and outcomes of foreign policy. Many of the contributions are focused on the core elements of foreign policy, such as security (Laki & May, 2009; May, 1991, 1993, 2012), economy (Satish Chand, 2004; Satish. Chand & Yala, 2009; Mawuli, 1997), the approaches to foreign policy (Bogari, 2010; Monden, 2003), PNG's relations with its neighbours, particularly Australia (Hayward-Jones, 2012; Hunt, 2017; Moraitis, 2010), Indonesia (Blaskett, 1989; May, 1986a, 1991; Weatherbee, 1982) or both (MacQueen, 1989a), articles that are not specifically focused on a particular issue but had relevance to immigration (Hayward-Jones, 2017; Warbrooke, 2014), national sovereignty (Hawksley, 2005; Rolfe, 2001), foreign aid (Hawksley, 2005; Hayward-Jones, 2015a) and regional diplomacy (Nelson, 2007). These contributions focus on specific elements of foreign policy.

De Gedare (1994), and Wolfers and Dihm's (2009) works on foreign policy analysis in PNG are the most significant and comprehensive contributions to the subject. De Gedare investigated PNG–Australia relations between 1980 and 1990 and assessed PNG's independence and change vis-a-vis foreign policy during the study period (De Gedare, 1994). His study did not cover the period after 1990. PNG has experienced dramatic changes in its foreign policy environment, domestically and externally, since the 1990s. The changes signified that PNG had more options in terms of foreign policy. For example, the peaceful rise of China as an economic and military power in the 1990s (Ikenberry, 2008; Kang, 2010; Kristof, 1993) created geopolitical opportunities for PNG. PNG no longer needed to identify

itself with traditional hegemons like Australia and New Zealand (NZ), as it had more choices of which external power it could engage with.

Wolfers and Dihm (2009) looked at the challenges to making and implementing foreign policies in PNG after independence. They outlined the two different policy frameworks that guided PNG's foreign policy since independence: 'universalism' (1975–1985) and 'active and selective engagement' (1985–2002). Universalism expressed PNG's determination to break away from its historical place in the Western orbit and to search elsewhere for support in the pursuit of its development and security objectives (Turner, 1990, pp. 148–151). Similarly, the active and selective engagement approach to foreign policy was aimed to diversify and seek new opportunities. It was premised on a basic approach that included the consolidation and extension of existing relations, the conduct of independent and constructive neighbourly cooperation and further diversification of PNG's relations. According to Wolfers and Dihm (2009, p. 301), the basic approach to foreign policy was not applicable in its original form circa 1997. They suggested that shifts were occurring in PNG foreign policy, but they fell short in identifying or analysing the dynamics that were driving these changes. Simply put, little is known about the factors that drive foreign policy and the approach to foreign policymaking.

There is a distinctive gap in the academic literature on contemporary foreign policy. This study reduces the gap. It focuses on foreign policy in PNG and the factors that drive it in the twenty-first century. Accordingly, there is an overarching research question guiding this research: what factors have been influential in shaping PNG's foreign policy in the twenty-first century? This question has three interrelated parts: foreign policy, foreign policymaking and the foreign policy environment. PNG's foreign policy (the policy itself, or the outcome of decisions and actions) in the twenty-first century can be determined by looking at the actors and institutions that are involved in foreign policymaking and the factors in the environment that influence foreign policy decision-making. The study is important for scholarly purposes

because it contributes to the literature of foreign policy in PNG over a period of significant change in PNG's domestic and international environment. It contributes knowledge of foreign policy and its making in the contemporary period. The study is equally important for foreign policy practitioners. PNG's future depends on how well policymakers understand and manage their connections with the rest of the region and with the rest of the world. The study is significant not only in terms of foreign policy, but it will have relevance to broader debates on the changing nature of the state, political economy, regionalism and governance. More broadly, the study contributes to the broad scholarship on foreign policy and its making in the developing world.

1.2 Methodology

1.2.1 Case study approach

In this research, I will use the case study approach propounded by Yin (1984, 1998, 2003, 2009), Stake (1995, 2000), Denzin (1989) and Merriam (1988) within a 'critical policy analysis' approach (Fischer, 2007, 2016; Jessop & Sum, 2016; Stevens, 2003; Taylor, 1997) to answer the research question. A case study is 'an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomena within its real life context' (Yin, 2003, pp. 13–14). It is a research method involving a close, in-depth and detailed examination of a subject of study and its related contextual conditions. The subject of study, or the 'case', is a phenomenon specific to time and space. The research question in this study, which begins with 'what', is more exploratory (Yin, 1984, p. 17). The case study approach is relevant because it allows investigating foreign policy in its totality. It allows looking back in history to record the details of policy actors, institutions, processes, factors influencing foreign policy and other useful information on which analysis of foreign policy can be made. Simply put, case studies allow one to investigate and retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life events in international relations. They provide some understanding of 'who does what with whom, where, when, over what and in

what immediate context' (Andriole, Hopple, McCauley & Wilkenfeld, 1978, p. 7) in foreign affairs.

I relied on a number of sources to build the cases for analysis in this study. I sourced information from conversations with academics and foreign policy practitioners, ministerial statements on public record, bilateral agreements, policy statements obtained from secondary sources, a report from a Defence Force Board of Inquiry (DFBI) in PNG and the print and online media. I triangulated information from the press and political statements with published books, journal articles, Hansard, country profiles, reports and organisational publications and reviews. I used the 'triangulation protocol' (Denzin, 1989) to ensure that the case study research was based on a disciplined approach and not simply on a matter of intuition, good intention and common sense.

1.2.2 Critical policy analysis

The critical policy analysis approach devotes special attention to interpretive, argumentative and discursive approaches to policy analysis. It is focused on evaluating actions in terms of the larger systems of meaning of which they are a part, including the context of the situation, the institutional context and the wider societal context (Fischer, 2016, p. 96). Critical policy analysis includes 'discourse analysis', or the analysis of language and its interpretation (Durnova, 2014; Fairclough, 1993; Paul, 2009), and the analysis of policy documents (Taylor, 1997) and political actions. The critical policy analysis is fitting for this study, as the analysis of foreign policy from the case studies in PNG is drawn from political statements, policy documents, events, relationships, processes and the broader social, political, economic and cultural milieu in which the decision-maker is embedded. From the critical perspective, I viewed foreign policy as an outcome of social and historical conditions. In this sense, reviewing the historical evolution of foreign policy enabled me to capture how social and economic conditions impact decisions made by policy-makers. I looked at the policy outcomes,

interrogated the policy processes, revealed policy constructions, and examined players involved in the policy development, interpretation, and implementation processes throughout the study. In addition, I looked at the underlying values of the policy to understand how those values relate to policy mechanisms such as structures, contents, and features.

1.2.3 Choice of case studies

This study will answer the research question by focusing on three case studies as the baseline for analysis: the enhanced cooperation program (ECP) between PNG and Australia in 2003–2006, the Julian Moti affair in 2006 and the case of West Papua in 2015. These three cases were chosen primarily because each of the cases—all prominent domestic issues—engage with a significant foreign policy event that elucidates critical issues and illuminates the different key aspects of foreign policy. Moreover, foreign policymaking and its outcome (foreign policy) are central to the research question. The ECP and Moti cases provide a window to foreign policymaking. That is, the cases shed light on the interaction of policymakers (politicians and bureaucrats) and institutions in deciding or making foreign policy. The West Papua case illuminates the changing nature of PNG’s foreign policy in the twenty-first century. The three case studies, together, reveal the factors shaping PNG’s contemporary foreign policy and its making in the twenty-first century.

1.2.4 Time frame

The period 2003–2015 is a significant period to study because it encompasses many important developments that contributed to PNG’s shifting priorities. The domestic environment saw considerable changes. The discovery of liquefied natural gas (LNG) in the PNG highlands at the turn of the twenty-first century improved PNG’s economy, which in turn gave a sense of independence. The improved economy instilled a growing sense of economic independence and self-confidence in the government (*Post-Courier*, 14 May 2014, p. 5).

Leaders were becoming more nationalistic and assertive in international relations (*Post-Courier*, 11 December 2014, p. 3) and deference to Australia was replaced with disputes and frequent opposition (ABC News, 2005; Associated Press, 2013; Davidson & Doherty, 2017; Kisselpar, 2016). PNG's domestic politics created pressures on foreign policy. Further, PNG developed a stronger sense of its place in the region and increasingly saw itself as a significant regional power with a role to play in shaping regional order, following Fiji's suspension from the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) in 2009. In the region, Australia has advanced its engagement to secure its strategy and enhance its security interests, as shown in the establishment of the offshore detention centres in PNG and Nauru (Bem, Field, Maclellan, Meyer & Morris, 2007; Kneebone, 2006). In addition, Australia recast its aid programs in the region to strengthen security and demanded good governance and inclusive development (AusAID, 2003, 2010). Concurrently, the Pacific region has observed the entry of more active external participants, which is reflected in the growing engagement of China and Indonesia (D'Arcy, Matbob & Crowl, 2014; Henderson & Reilly, 2003). The period was quite turbulent for PNG in terms of foreign policy, as it responded to these regional challenges. The challenges and changes signified that PNG had more options in terms of foreign policy. The exclusive focus on 2003–2015 does not mean that the immediate post-independence era will be neglected; the period following independence is relevant because it sets the foundation for understanding fundamental changes in the contemporary period. Answering the research question, with a focus on 2003–2015, will shed light on the evolving nature of foreign policy and its making in PNG in the twenty-first century.

1.3 Structure of The Thesis

This thesis is divided into three main parts, with part one presenting a conceptual framework for this study. It begins by defining what foreign policy is to introduce the fundamental concepts of foreign policy analysis in the context of a developing country. A

framework is developed from the concept of foreign policy, based on the experiences of developing countries, to help understand foreign policy and its making in PNG. It is essential to have a sense of the foundation to understand key changes in the contemporary period. Therefore, Chapter 3 provides the historical baseline for foreign policy analysis in PNG. It covers PNG's foreign policy from the pre-independence period up to 2002 and provides a basis for the first case study that begins in 2003.

Part two is composed of the three case studies, which illuminate different aspects of the changing dynamics of PNG's foreign policy. As a bilateral aid program between the PNG and Australian governments, the ECP represented an ambitious institutional strengthening program that focused on PNG's key government departments and agencies (law and justice, treasury, finance, planning, transport, civil aviation and border and immigration), as well as reflected Australia's security interests in the region. In mid-2003, Australia proposed to take a more direct role in helping PNG address some of the core challenges affecting its development. Both countries committed to improving governance and law and order in PNG, with this commitment being captured in the ECP agreement. The ECP proved controversial in PNG because it proposed a deep form of intervention, including the deployment of Australian officials into the PNG Government system. The ECP is about foreign aid and its influence on national sovereignty. It is important because it indicates the first time that PNG showed significant resistance to the Australian aid program. It sheds light on PNG's interests and provides a window to evolving foreign policy. At the same time, it shows how foreign policy is made in PNG.

The Moti affair in 2006 involved PNG's refusal to extradite Moti to Australia, where he faced criminal charges. Instead of accommodating Australia's request for extradition, the PNG Government secretly flew Moti to the Solomon Islands. Moti's arrest in PNG was controversial, but his dramatic escape was even more controversial and became a subject of a

judicial inquiry. The Moti affair touches on the issue of national sovereignty, the rule of law and bilateral relations with Australia. It emerged against the backdrop of Australia's intervention approach in PNG and the region at large, which was often resented as overbearing and neo-colonialist in nature. In defence of national sovereignty, Michael Somare and his supporters refused Australia's extradition request and gave safe passage to Moti. In the process, they violated domestic laws as well as international treaties and conventions. The Moti incident happened at a time when relations between PNG and Australia were at their lowest, following the collapse of the ECP. Further, it happened after an incident at the Brisbane airport, where Somare was unceremoniously told to remove his shoes during a routine security search. The Moti affair touches on the issue of sovereignty and it is significant to understanding the development of PNG's foreign policy. It suggests shifts in how political elites understood the national interest and further illuminates how policy actors and institutions interact to produce foreign policy outcomes.

On 5 February 2015, Prime Minister O'Neill made a statement about West Papua that indicated a departure from its non-interference policy in Indonesia; he indicated that the issue of human rights violations in West Papua was no longer a domestic matter for Indonesia. It was the first time that an incumbent PNG prime minister spoke directly about the rights of West Papuans in a public forum. O'Neill acknowledged the atrocities that were committed against the Melanesian people and vowed to lead discussions in the region to stop the human rights violations that were perpetrated against them. The case of West Papua is an outlier in the sense that it provides one of the first instances of a substantive PNG foreign policy that is supported by a degree of policy coherence. It showed a connection between domestic and regional politics and, more importantly, a concerted foreign policy. The West Papua case spoke of greater participation in regional politics.

The concluding chapter constitutes part three of this thesis. The chapter touches on PNG's foreign policy environment, from the post-independence era up to the period under review, to give a sense of the changing environment. The chapter draws heavily on the case studies to consider the salient factors that shape PNG's priorities (foreign policy) and how PNG tried to achieve its priorities during the study period (foreign policymaking). The chapter revisits the research question and identifies the factors that influenced foreign policy during the study period. In doing so, it not only reflects on the research question, but it highlights the continuities, changes and challenges of foreign policy.

Chapter 2: Conceptual Framework

2.1 Introduction

Many of the common concepts of foreign policy that are relevant to developed countries do not always fit into the developing country's settings. Western scholars treat Western ideas and institutions as universal and assume that their concepts are superior to the political concepts and institutional arrangements in other parts of the world. The experiences of developing countries can be forced into the conceptual categories of conventional Western theorising about foreign policy, but the explanations that result are at least wanting in richness, if not also in interpretive validity (Puchala, 1998, p. 149). Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to develop an analytical framework from which foreign policy in the developing country context can be analysed. This is because PNG's foreign policy is being made in a developing country context and it is necessary to understand the fundamental concepts in this context.

The chapter begins by defining foreign policy in an idealised or developed country context to identify the key concepts that are central to foreign policy, with the challenges of foreign policy covered next to illuminate the nature of the concept. The key concepts of foreign policy are used against the experiences of developed and developing countries. The aim is to introduce 'frames of references' (Bobrow & Dryzek, 1987, p. 5), or a set of entities that provide guidelines for interpretation and explanation, that will help one understand the factors shaping PNG's foreign policy and its making when applied to the case studies. Drawing on foreign policy literature, I have developed a framework that will be used to reflect on the research question at the end of the chapter.

2.2 What Is Foreign Policy?

Foreign policy is the strategy or approach chosen by the state to safeguard its national interests and achieve its goals in international relations. Hill (2003a, p. 3) succinctly defines

foreign policy as ‘the sum of official external relations conducted by an independent actor (usually a state) in international relations’. Webber and Smith (2002, p. 2) defined foreign policy in the following terms:

Foreign policy is composed of the goals sought, values set, decisions made and actions taken by states, and national governments acting on their behalf, in the context of the external relations of national societies. It constitutes an attempt to design, manage and control the foreign relations of national societies.

Clarke and White (1989, p. 5) argue that ‘foreign policy, like domestic policy, is formulated within the state, but unlike domestic policy is directed and must be implemented in the environment external to that state’. Gibson (1944, p. 9) provides a classical definition of foreign policy that has good currency in the contemporary period. He describes foreign policy as:

A well-rounded, comprehensive plan, based on knowledge and experience, for conducting the business of government with the rest of the world. It is aimed at promoting and protecting the interests of the nation. This calls for the clear understanding of what those interests are and how far we can hope to go with the means at our disposal. Anything less than this falls short of being a national foreign policy.

The descriptions of foreign policy provided by various authors do not vary widely. Several themes that emerge from their descriptions are common. First, they agree that foreign policy is a governmental activity that is designed to be implemented outside the territorial boundaries of a state. Second, foreign policy is ‘aimed at promoting and protecting the interests of the nation’ (Gibson, 1944, p. 9). The interest of the nation, or the national interest, is an

intrinsic part of foreign policy and it forms the basis for state actions in the international arena; that is, national interest drives foreign policy. Third, the state is responsible for foreign policy, as it is the main actor in international relations. This view is widely shared by realists (Dunleavy & O'Leary, 1987; Hill, 2003a; Martin, 1992; Morgenthau, 1973; Pierson, 1996; Waltz, 1979; Wohlforth, 2008) who believed that no higher authority could legitimately pursue the national interest apart from the state. This monopoly is identified with sovereignty. No authority can exercise sovereignty over a designated territory other than the state. Fourth, the notion that foreign policy is composed of goals, values, decisions and actions (Smith & Webber, 2002, p. 2), or a comprehensive plan (Gibson, 1944, p. 9), implies a rational appraisal of external risks and opportunities and states mobilising a response. Finally, 'means at our disposal' (Gibson, 1944, p. 9) indicate some form of power. These themes are central to foreign policy, but how do they fit in the context of the developing countries?

2.3 Challenges of Foreign Policy

In this section, I try to extract the challenges of foreign policy in a developing country context. I do this by first highlighting the difficulty of describing foreign policy in terms of a well-rounded and comprehensive plan (Gibson, 1944, p. 9). I then identify some of the themes central to foreign policy that do not fit well in the developing countries, particularly the concept of state and state sovereignty. Finally, I consider the concept of power, the concept of national interest and the formalised and institutionalised policy settings in the developed countries and compare them with the developing countries. The purpose of contrasting the key concepts of foreign policy between the developed and developing countries is to bring PNG into the contextual foreground.

As observed in the last section, foreign policy, in an idealised sense, is a strategy or approach chosen by the state to safeguard its national interests in the international arena. However, foreign policy is by its very nature elusive, disorderly and reactive. First, it is elusive

because a number of factors have combined to blur the distinction between domestic and foreign policies (Rosenau, 1992, 1997). For instance, the idea of foreign policy can encompass a broad range of domestic policy issues that have external dimension, including trade, security, defence, economics and aid (Aarstad, Drieskens, Jørgensen, Laatikainen & Tonra, 2015; Brown, Halle, Peña Moreno & Winkler, 2007). Second, foreign policy is what individuals representing the state do or do not do in their interactions with individuals, groups and officials in international relations (Rosenau, 1976, pp. 16–17). In essence, foreign policy is but a series of decisions taken by official decision-makers (Brecher, Steinberg & Stein, 1969; Bruck & Snyder, 1962). It can involve little more than expressing a view in international forums such as the UN (Wolfers & Dihm, 2009, p. 301). Foreign policy does not need to be a predetermined course of action or strategy; it can be an impromptu statement or expression of a particular view, reflecting the reactive nature of foreign policy. Finally, foreign policy is a slippery concept (Hill, 2003b). To some extent, decision-makers decide what foreign policy is by choosing what they do. The discretion of the decision-makers reflects the disorderly nature of foreign policy. All in all, the strategy inferred by foreign policy is often obscured. In essence, foreign policy does not necessarily follow a strategy.

The concept of statehood—which in the literature has been equated with Western, democratic and constitutional political institutions, an effective government, inviolate geographical boundaries and a monopoly over the use of force within those boundaries (Jackson & Rosberg, 1982, pp. 2–4; Weber, 1978, pp. 54–56)—does not fit easily into most non-Western settings. The modern state of the liberal West, which took centuries to develop into its current form, was difficult to achieve for many societies around the world. Many states that were created in the decolonisation process struggled to qualify for statehood by the criterion of international law in use by the 1930s: ‘the existence of effective government, with centralised administrative and legislative organs’ (Brownlie & Crawford, 2012, p. 129). Many states were rushed to independence on a timetable dictated by the administrators, without

properly designed institutions for government. As a result, many post-independence states could not create legitimate and effective political and administrative institutions, or participatory processes to ensure the active and open participation of civil society in the formulation of the state's government and policies. Many institutions could not deliver political goods, namely security, health, education, economic opportunity, good governance, law and order and fundamental infrastructure requirements (Ballard, 1981; Boyce, 1978; Migdal, 1988; Potter, 2004).

The idea of statehood is closely associated with sovereignty, a concept that is defined in many ways by different analysts. Sovereignty is most commonly identified with the Westphalian concept, understood as the recognised right of domestic political authorities to be the only arbiters of legitimate behaviour within the territorial boundaries of their state, free from external interference (Krasner, 1999, p. 4). The Westphalian concept stresses the exclusion of external authority in a state's domestic affairs. The authority of the state, however, has never worked perfectly and its principles have frequently been violated for several reasons that vary from one state to another. For example, following the end of the Cold War, a number of states stretching from the Balkans through the Caucasus, Middle East, Central Asia and South Asia were unable or unwilling to fulfil their sovereign responsibility of providing security and the appropriate standard of political goods and services for their citizens, which forced the international community to intervene in some of these crises (Ayoob, 2002; Etzioni, 2007). This intervention has eroded the state's sovereignty, as the state's political authority is shifted from state to non-state actors or institutions (Thomson, 1995, p. 214). In practice, the state's capacity to exercise independent choices, implied by sovereignty, can be curtailed.

The traditional notion of the state as being the fundamental unit of international society is flawed, as new actors have become involved. The increased linkages between a variety of state, sub-state and non-state actors have eroded the primacy of the state in foreign policy.

Never have so many different non-state actors competed for the authority and influence that once belonged to states alone. Non-government organisations (NGOs), intergovernmental organisations, social movements, civil society in its many combinations (and definitions), policy networks, issue networks and communities of experts of every calling and credential have now populated the world of foreign policy. They align (and realign) in fluid alliances of interest and opportunity through the mass and electronic media and affect governments in endlessly new and startling ways (Naím & Smith, 2000). Moreover, as the world economy is transformed by new modes of production and trade (and as transnational corporations and institutions come to exercise more influence and power), the capacity of national policymakers to frame their agendas diminishes (Lewis & McGrew, 1992). Fundamentally, the integration of the global economy has undermined traditional state sovereignty. For developing states, this means that it is even harder to exercise sovereignty, as more non-state actors compete for authority.

Power is a fundamental feature of politics and international relations. It is central to the pursuance of national interest. Power has multiple connotations in the way it is used (Clarke, 1979; Dahl, 1957; Lukes, 2005; MacDonald, 1976; McLachlan, 1981), but it connotes influence in international relations. It works through behavioural relations or interactions (Barnett & Duvall, 2005) and social relations, and through dependence and interdependence (Baldwin, 1980; Barkin, 2013; Keohane & Nye, 1987). Power is conceived as an attribute that is possessed by the state and it is something that can be used intentionally as a resource to either shape the actions of others, or condition their behaviour and actions (Barnett & Duvall, 2005, p. 45). A state's power is often characterised by tangible (military strength, economic strength, size of population and territory) and intangible (culture, ideology and competence in diplomacy) resources (Keohane & Nye, 1998; Nye, 1990; Waltz, 1979). Waltz (1979, p. 131) asserted that a state's power status depends on how it scored on all the following items: size of population and territory, resource endowment, economic capability, military strength, political

stability and competence in diplomacy. Measured against some of these elements, a realist analysis, for example, would reveal that developing countries are deficient in power and are, therefore, inconsequential in world politics (Puchala, 1998, p. 149). Nonetheless, in contemporary international relations, power is more complex because it is interrelated (Barkin, 2013; Keohane & Nye, 1987) and often achieved through shared institutions. Developed countries, including those regarded as powerful, often find themselves dependent on developing countries for resources, or in situations that warrant cooperation from developing countries. For example, the post-Cold War era has witnessed a proliferation of terrorist activities around the world. Terrorism has militated against the state's power to act alone, thereby forcing states—even those considered powerful—to cooperate to address the issue.

The idea of state interest in foreign policy has been most clearly enunciated through the concept of the national interest (Gibson, 1944, p. 9). The concepts of national interest enable policymakers to understand the goals and objectives that are to be pursued by a state's foreign policy. Otherwise phrased, a state's national interest is pursued through foreign policies using self-interested strategies that are oriented towards some goals or objectives. These strategies are designed by the government through high-level decision-making processes (DeRouen & Mintz, 2010; Hudson, 2007; Jensen, 1982). The concept of national interest, however, is contentious, shrouded with ambiguity and often defying any adequate or globally accepted definition. Several scholars have written on national interest (Beard & Smith, 1934; Frankel, 1970; Morgenthau, 1952; Nuechterlein, 1976, 1991; Weldes, 1996), but there is no consensus on an accepted definition of the subject. In its most basic form, national interest often includes four aspects: defence interests, which protect the nation-state and its citizens against the threat of physical violence directed from another state; economic interests, which enhance the nation-state's economy; world order interests, which attempt to maintain the international, political and economic system in which nation-states may feel secure; and ideological interests, which involve the protection and furtherance of a set of values that a nation-state's people share and

believe to be universally good (Nuechterlein, 1976, p. 248). These basic features show that national interest does not include only material interests, but ideological interests as well. However, in practice, the idea of national interest is subjective. Formulation of national interest by the government can be the outcome of a contested and subjective process (Alden & Aran, 2012) in which multiple sources of influences—such as interest groups (distinguished by their sources of support and the nature of their interest) and public opinion (a broad term that encompasses the mass and attentive public, various interest and lobby groups)—seek to define national interest in favourable terms. National interest objectives can also be the object of intense external lobbying, as stakeholders external to government, such as the private sector, organised migrant communities, international government organisations and other NGOs, intervene to secure their interests.

2.4 Foreign Policymaking: Developed and Developing Countries

Developed and developing countries vary widely in their ‘structure’, which is defined as:

- the formal institutions of rule—laws, rules and regulations—that govern economic, political or social life
- the informal institutions that shape behaviour, loosely understood as culture, and might include prevailing ideologies, religious beliefs or discourses at the ideational level of culture
- the formal and informal institutional arrangements and distributions of power that constitute them
- the socio-economic and social structure prevailing in the domestic environment
- the geographical features, such as whether a country is primarily tropical or temperate, landlocked or insular, mountainous or desert and large or small
- the resources endowments (Leftwich, 2010, p. 96).

These structures strongly influence both the strategic policy choices and the institutional arrangements that a leadership may make. The structural configurations vary from one country to another and they always represent both constraints and opportunities for ‘agents’, which are described as individuals, groups, organisations and coalitions that pursue particular interests (Leftwich, 2007, p. 7; 2010, p. 96). Foreign policy is shaped by the dynamic interplay—causal relations running in both directions—between structural factors, institutions and agents. Figure 2.1 is a diagram representing the three factors that shape foreign policy.

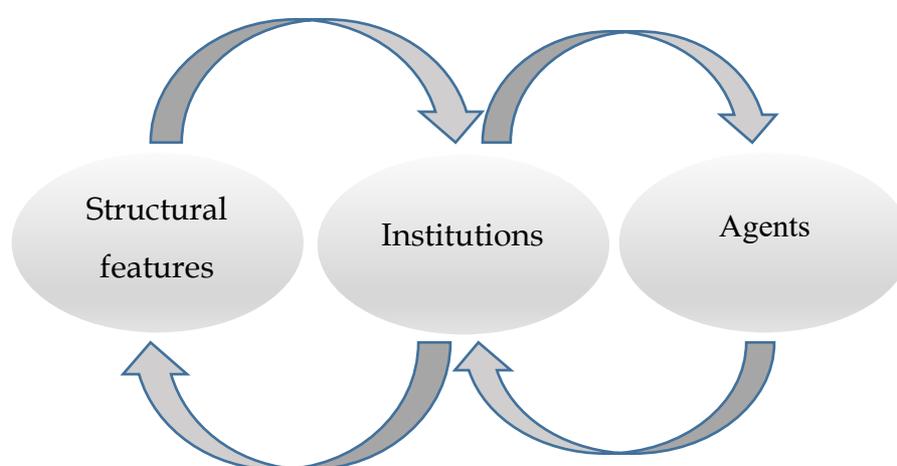


Figure 2.1. Framework for understanding factors shaping foreign policy.

Source: (Leftwich, 2007).

In developed states, foreign policy is usually institutionalised in the form of formalised and prescriptive state institutions (Allison & Zelikow, 1999; Gaskarth, 2013; Gyngell & Wesley, 2003), although still with a high degree of discretion. Responsibility for foreign policymaking is usually shared by distinct governmental agencies, with foreign affairs (the department or ministry) having a dominating but not necessarily dominant role. The cabinet plays a significant role in foreign policy. However, I use parliamentary committees as an example for illustrating the formalised and institutionalised settings that are found in many developed states. The government frequently uses committees to deliberate on issues that are vital to its interests and the use of committees enhances transparency within the policy process.

Committees provide a robust ‘check and balance’ system: they separate politics from the administration, they prevent or minimise vested interests and they limit political interference in specific areas of interests that are under committee review (Firth, 2011; Gaskarth, 2013; Gyngell & Wesley, 2003). Each core interest area of foreign policy is separated and managed by a separate committee, though it is coordinated at the centre. For example, this can be found in Australia: the National Security Committee of Cabinet concentrates on the security aspect of foreign policy (Australian Government, 2013); the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade considers and reports matters relating to foreign affairs, defence, trade and human rights; the Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade deals with legislation and matters referred to it for inquiry; and the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties reviews and reports all treaty actions proposed by the government before any action that binds Australia to the terms of the treaty is taken (Firth, 2011, pp. 88–92). As mentioned, the cabinet plays a more significant role in foreign policy than parliamentary committees, but the example illustrates the shared responsibility for foreign policymaking. The arrangement allows the state’s policy actors to identify interests and goals, recognise the courses of action to attain the goals, pool resources, consider the costs associated with each action and select the course of action that will result in the highest expected utility (Oppenheim, 2002; Snidal, 2012). The underlying assumption is that the state is unified, rational and seeking to both determine the national interest in a systematic way and then implement a credible foreign policy. The critical point is that foreign policy is driven in a rational sense and is completed by consolidated bureaucratic institutions.

In an ideal policy environment, foreign policy often occurs across different interrelated levels. According to Gyngell and Westley (2003), foreign policy occurs across strategic, contextual, organisational and operational levels (see Figure 2.2). Foreign policymaking at the strategic level speaks both to the regional and global politics and to the specific policy outcomes required by the interplay of events and societal values. Strategic foreign policy

involves specific choices, interpretations and definitions of national interests, national values, national roles and the international context. It is authoritative, generalised and abstract.

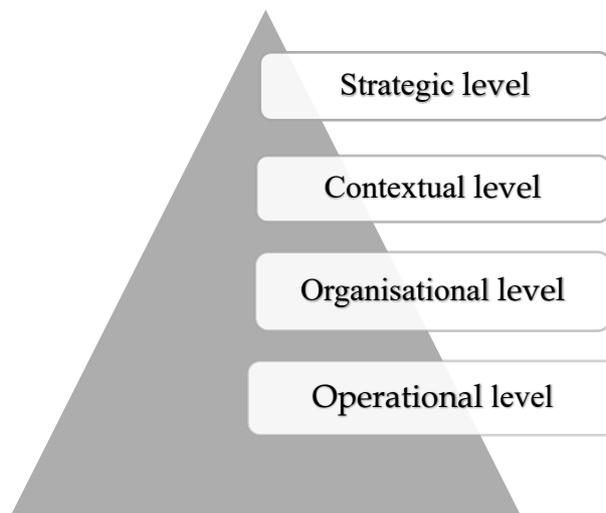


Figure 2.2. The different levels of foreign policymaking.

Source: Gyngell and Wesley (2003).

The context or circumstances that internationally and domestically form the setting for foreign policy profoundly influence foreign policy choices. Contextual calculations determine what is at risk for the state and its social values, as well as the type of actions that can be taken. At this level of policymaking, the costs, benefits, opportunities and constraints of the policy, its relationship to other policy issues and its relevance to the wider strategic policy goals are analysed. Three sets of criteria are used to make foreign policy judgements: the social values and the areas of responsibility that are affected (governmental); how they resonate with the political philosophy or ideology of the political party or the government in power (political); and the relative power of the states that are involved in an issue (international). Each of the criteria is important to foreign policy decisions and sometimes difficult choices and trade-offs are made at this level (Gyngell & Wesley, 2003, p. 29).

Policymaking at the organisational level involves both the process of guiding a policy response through existing institutional or governmental structures and the process of

marshalling and apportioning resources to policy issues. The extent to which an issue is managed at the organisational level depends largely on the seriousness of the issue at hand; an issue of the highest priority will attract substantial resources. Policymaking at the operational level refers to the implementation of foreign policy through diplomatic, bureaucratic, media or other channels. The operational level is divided into geographical and functional specialisations that directly monitor the policy space. Although operational policies are enacted by leaders and ministers, the bulk of the operational policies at this level is carried out by bureaucrats and diplomats.

Each level (strategic, contextual, organisational and operational) plays a connected and crucial role in producing the actual foreign policy initiative or response. Further, each level features different sets of activities and is separated by different levels of authority and responsibility. The differing authority and responsibility at each level is determined by the separation of powers between the different actors (political executives and the civil servants) and the hierarchical structure of the policymaking institution (Gyngell & Wesley, 2003, pp. 17–57). When combined, the different levels, with each set of activities, provide the dynamic nature of the foreign policy process. In this foreign policy environment, there is less scope for discretion. Leaders must navigate their way through a web of institutional roadblocks and political opposition that generates constraints and incentives in the conduct of foreign policymaking.

The discussion on foreign policy thus far has largely been focused on an idealised state. I now relate the themes that are discussed above to the context of developing countries. I start by looking at the concept of state. As mentioned, many postcolonial states were not properly built to accommodate the demands of a modern state. Many states were rushed to independence without properly designed institutions for government. As a result, the formal institutions of government are generally weak (Alence, 2004; Boyce, 1978; Clapham, 1977), in the sense that

the rules and regulations guiding the operations and administration of the political institutions are widely circumvented or ignored in practice (Helmke & Levitsky, 2004; O'Donnell, 1994). In Melanesia, most analyses of the state suggest that pre-existing social forms pervade the state at almost every level (Dinnen, 2001; Gordon & Meggitt, 1985; Morgan, 2005). Culture plays an influential role in people's social, political and economic lives. For example, politics at all levels is organised along traditional structural lines (Ketan, 2007). Intensely local forms of social control are stronger than the order—or disorder—imposed by the state. The introduced state did not alter the fundamentally established political practice or the 'Melanesian political culture' (Morgan, 2005, p. 3; Standish, 2013, p. 8). Political culture may be loosely defined as the sets of actions and values that define and guide political behaviour (Chilton, 1988), or more pointedly, as a distinctive predisposition that drives political behaviour (Diamond, 1994; Formisano, 2001). The patterns of these predispositions vary from society to society. In Melanesia, the political culture has been influenced by the combination of modern state and traditional cultural institutions that are primarily associated with leadership and loyalty to the clan (Ketan, 2000, 2007; May, 1997; Standish, 2013). The influence of the 'Melanesian political culture' on the introduced system of government has, in turn, weakened the formal institutions of government and has posed significant challenges for policymaking and implementation in a myriad of ways.

Culture has also influenced the foreign policies of the Pacific Island states. The 'Pacific way', which denoted a collective political identity for virtually all the island states of the Pacific region in the postcolonial period, has set the benchmark for regional cooperation. The Pacific way claimed unique Pacific characteristics based on broadly shared social and political values that revolve around notions of tolerance and consensus (Lawson, 2013, p. 19), solidarity and reciprocity, the fostering and maintenance of kinship networks and relationships, attachment to land and sea, respect and care for others, the upholding of human dignity, respect for kinship and consultation and shared leadership (Huffer, 2006, p. 50). These values became the guiding

principles for Pacific regionalism and set the foundation for the PIF. The Melanesian countries complemented the Pacific way with a ‘Melanesian way’ (Narokobi, 1983) to represent the Melanesian culture and way of doing things. The Melanesian way is vaguely defined, but it had connotations of *kastom* (custom) and *wantok* (Lawson, 2013; Lindstrom, 2008) and was firmly grounded in culture (Huffer, 2006; Keesing, 1989; Moore, 2008). They have contributed to an ideology of ‘Melanesian-ism’ that has, in turn, underpinned the assertion of a specific regional identity. The Melanesian identity emerged largely as a Melanesian enterprise; it has been mediated by certain anti-colonial dynamics in which the ‘Melanesian self’ has been asserted in opposition to a ‘European other’ (Lawson, 2013, p. 18). Melanesians identified themselves differently from non-Melanesians. The construction of the Melanesian identity paved the way for the formation of the sub-regional group, the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG).

In many developing countries, the distribution of power and authority within the government is often personalised and concentrated in the hands of a few leaders. Foreign policy is a monopolised or highly exclusive affair (Lampreia & Seabra da Cruz Jnr, 2005) and political leaders often insulate foreign policy from domestic influences. Prime ministers and presidents often take a personalised approach to foreign policymaking, in that they exclude opposition, prevent civil society participation, are less accountable to Parliament and the people, circumvent the bureaucracy’s involvement and subsequently exclude senior public officials from the policymaking process (Alemazung, 2010; Barker & Sandbrook, 1986; Clapham, 1977; East & Robertson, 2005; Singh, 2000). To differing degrees, the formal institutions that are responsible for foreign policy are nominal in developing states; they exist, but they are not actively involved in the decision-making process. The role of foreign affairs ministries in many developing countries is subordinated to policy implementation and foreign relations management (Crouch, 1996; Singh, 2000, 2005). Parliaments have insignificant influence. In some countries, the role of Parliament is reduced to nothing but a rubberstamp for the

executive's policies (Boyce, 1978; Clapham, 1977; Singh, 2000, 2005). Indeed, Melanesian parliaments often rubberstamped the executive's programs (Morgan, 2005, p. 6). At its core, the formal state institutions responsible for foreign affairs do not participate in foreign policy development. Subsequently, the political process described by Gyngell and Westley (2003) in developed countries is almost non-existent in developing countries.

Under this foreign policy environment, it is difficult to identify a coherent or shared idea of national interest. In developing countries that have authoritarian regimes, the national interest is becoming personalised—but nevertheless, there can be competing perspectives among the ruling elite who contend for translation into what might be called 'national interests' (De Gedare, 1994, p. 44). The national interest is more often aligned with leaders' interests. In developing countries that have democratic regimes, the idea of national interest is often ambiguous and loosely defined by the governments in power. They often manipulate foreign policy in the direction that corresponds to their particular interest, which may not coincide with the 'national interest' (Alden & Aran, 2012, p. 33). Therefore, it is not difficult for the government or political elites to pursue personal and parochial interests rather than what may be deemed as the interest of the state. In Melanesian societies, clans or tribe loyalties are generally stronger than loyalty to the state (Reilly, 2004). As such, what may be deemed as the national interest is subordinated to tribal and clan interests.

There is a disconnect between policy and practice in many developing countries. The government's ability to systemically determine the national interest, and subsequently foreign policy, at the organisational and operational levels is often challenged by capacity and governance issues. The foreign affairs mechanism usually contains a small political elite who are based on personalised leadership, a small bureaucracy that is particularly weak at the lower levels and inadequate specialisation in both geographical and functional divisions of foreign affairs administration (Boyce, 1978, p. 5). The foreign affairs mechanism is sometimes

incapacitated by inadequate resources. In the Pacific and Melanesian states, many representatives have limited formal education (John Henderson, 2003; Morgan, 2005). Disarmed by their inability to tackle government legislation on technical matters, members of parliaments have often allowed much of government legislation to pass as tabled (Morgan, 2005, p. 8). In the context of foreign policy, limited formal education signifies that Melanesian members of parliament possess limited skills and knowledge in mastering the art of diplomacy and in articulating foreign policy objectives. Under these circumstances, it is difficult for the state to drive foreign policy in a rational sense. Further, the politics in many developing countries is characterised by extreme fluidity and uncertainty (Levitsky, 2003). For example, governments in Melanesia are replaced frequently by way of no-confidence, or by shifting alliance with political parties without serving their full term (Fraenkel, 2014; Henderson, 2003; May, 2003c). The frequent and unexpected changes in government and foreign ministries generates an environment of uncertainty. Under such conditions of uncertainty, foreign policy formulation becomes a daunting task. The interest of the state and the latitude of actions deemed appropriate in specific issue areas of foreign policy are often limited to managing risks and installing short-term measures to reduce risk and uncertainty. For the most part, foreign policy tends to be more reactive. Foreign policy pronounced at the strategic level is often reactive to external pressures, threats and opportunities—albeit erratically and unsystematically.

Many developing countries lack power in international relations (Puchala, 1998) and, as such, they are unable to independently carry out their foreign policy objectives. They cannot effectively make and enforce policy on their own; they can do so only in cooperation with other countries. They may have the material resources, but they often do not have the skills and capital to translate these material resources into desired outcomes. As such, many postcolonial states depend on benevolent powers for economic development (Amarshi, Good & Mortimer, 1979; Cardoso & Faletto, 1979; Denham & Lombardi, 1996). The dependent relationship is

vital in developing countries. In some cases, independence was made possible by continuing dependence on external sources for financial aid, technical skills and military support (Ballard, 1981; Boyce, 1978; Clapham, 1977; Pardesi, 1976). In turn, many states are unable to exert substantial influence over the fundamental decisions that affect their national economy, as international structures and processes shape them directly or indirectly. The growing spread and depth of international cooperation, increasing domestic acceptance and application of international law, aid dependency and the conditions attached to loans from international financial institutions often impinge on decision-making. This phenomenon subsequently erodes the sovereignty of the state.

Many governments did not sever the relationship with their former colonial administrations after independence. They maintained strong economic links with their former colonisers because of the trade partnership that had developed through the colonial period (Ballard, 1981; Clapham, 1977). The historical connections between the colonial administration and the emerging state often strengthened dependent relationships and, moreover, generated 'patron-client relationships' (Carney, 1989; Eisenstadt & Roniger, 1980) that are usually characterised by the exchange of economic and political resources (support, loyalty, votes and protection), as well as a certain degree of reciprocity. The most important aspect of patron-client relationships is compliance. The patron expects compliance from the client in matters that are crucial to patronal interests (Kassimeris, 2009). As mentioned, dependent relationships were important for many developing countries. With little influence in world politics and international relations, most developing countries are compelled to use diplomacy as a primary bilateral activity for building coalitions and partnerships with individual states to expand economic opportunities and security interests. Further, they form coalitions and regional groupings to compensate for the power deficiency.

2.5 Conclusion

The key lessons from the literature are that foreign policy in developing countries is challenged by weak formal institutions and that there is a limited capacity of the political and bureaucratic elites to articulate foreign policy objectives. In this weak foreign policy environment, foreign policy is unstable and non-strategic. Developing countries lack the power to independently pursue foreign policy objectives. As such, they depend on benevolent powers for development support and, further, form coalitions to pursue their interests in the international arena. Foreign policy in developing countries is more personalised. In the absence of strong formal institutions, the interest that drives foreign policy is loosely defined by the government in power. These key points are significant when considering PNG's foreign policy in the postcolonial period, which will be considered in more detail in Chapter 3.

The key points raised in this chapter are also significant when considering the factors that have been influential in shaping PNG's foreign policy in the twenty-first century, which are raised as the primary research question in Chapter 1. In subsequent chapters, I will use the points raised in this chapter and reflect on the research question. I will consider: the environment in which foreign policy is made, or the environment in which policy actors are embedded; the agents or the actors involved in foreign policymaking, including state (politicians and bureaucrats), sub-state and non-state actors and their influence on the policy process; the institutions (formal and informal) that shape the actions of the agents; and PNG's relationship with Australia, as well as the wider Asia-Pacific region. I will also consider foreign policies in the period 2003–2015 to determine the evolving nature of PNG's foreign policy.

Chapter 3: Foreign Policy and Its Making: Pre-Independence, 2002

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a historical view of PNG's foreign policy and its making from the pre-independence era and from independence in 1975 up to 2002. This period is important because it offers the historical appreciation of foreign policy prior to the first case study, which starts in 2003. Further, the pre-independence period is critical to this study because it sets the foundation for the evolution of postcolonial foreign policy. It illuminates the key principles and factors that shape it and provides the baseline for foreign policy analysis in PNG. I focus on the key themes raised in Chapter 2 as a baseline from which to gauge the development of foreign policy in the subsequent chapters, particularly how foreign policy is changing after 2002.

The chapter is divided into six main parts. The first part looks at the concept of state in the PNG context and the second part covers the period from the pre-independence era up to 1975; it touches on the foundation of PNG's foreign policy. The Australian legacy was central to almost all aspects of PNG's international relations. In the years leading up to independence, PNG sought to move away from the Australian orbit. The third part looks at the period between 1975 and 1981, with a specific focus on PNG's first foreign policy doctrine—universalism. Universalism suggested a departure from the Australian orbit, but it had limitations. PNG did not implement foreign policy independently, partly because it heavily relied on Australia for aid and other developmental support. The second foreign policy doctrine—active and selective engagement—is covered next and looks at the period between 1981 and 2002. The evolving nature of active and selective engagement constitutes the fifth part. This part focuses on the factors that influence PNG's foreign policy, including changes in the external environment, PNG's relations with its neighbours—particularly Australia, Indonesia and the Pacific Island countries—and PNG's domestic environment. The final part focuses on the foreign affairs

mechanism and foreign policymaking. This part aims to highlight the challenges that foreign policymaking faces in the post-independence era up to 2002 and the chapter ends with a short conclusion.

3.2 PNG: The State

The colonisation and occupation of PNG has been well documented by many writers (Gash, Hookey, Lacey & Whittaker, 1975; Joyce, 1971; Legge, 1956). The island of New Guinea was colonised by different empires at different times in its colonial past. The Dutch initially laid claim to the western part of the island in 1660, as Dutch New Guinea, and the Germans took possession of the north-eastern quarter in 1884 and named it German New Guinea.

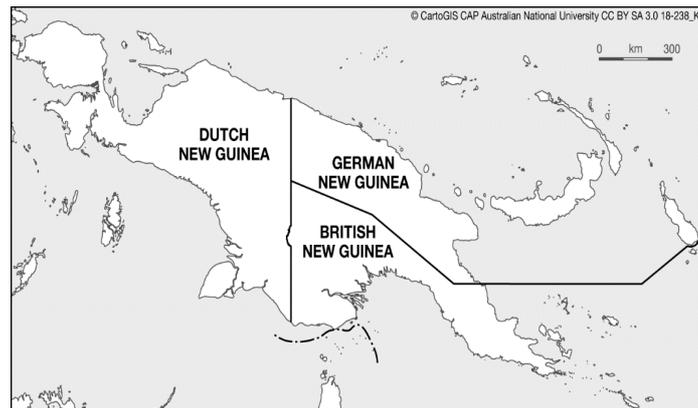


Figure 3.1. Map of New Guinea in the colonial era

Source: CartoGIS, the Australian National University.

The south-east quarter of the island of New Guinea, known as the Territory of Papua, became a British protectorate in 1884 and it was formally annexed as British New Guinea in 1888. It was devolved to Australian jurisdiction (exercised jointly by Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria) in 1902 as British interest in the island waned. From 1902 to 1905, the newly formed Government of the Commonwealth of Australia relieved the three states of joint control and assumed responsibility until 1906, when the Commonwealth took over full control

of the territory and changed its name to Papua. In 1949, the two territories of Territory of Papua and Trust Territory of New Guinea (formerly German New Guinea) were amalgamated to form the Australian-administered Territory of Papua and New Guinea, under the terms of the *United Nations Trusteeship Agreement* of 1946 (Griffin, 1974; Legge, 1956). The combined territories were given self-governing authority on 1 December 1973 and Australia granted them full independence under the name of Papua New Guinea on 16 September 1975.

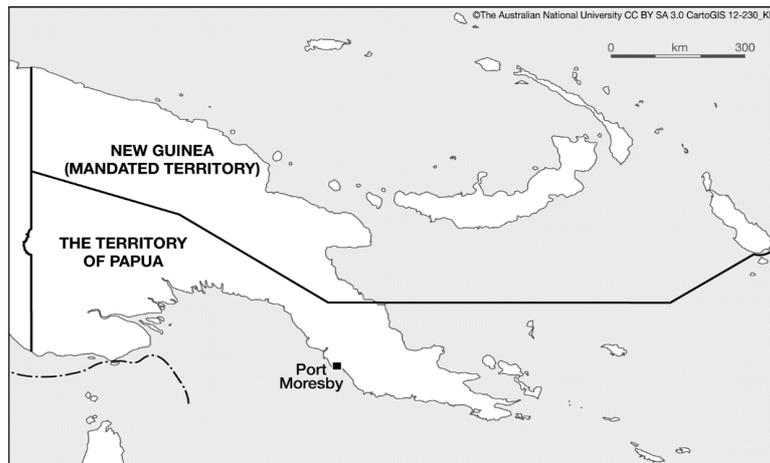


Figure 3.2. Map of the Territory of Papua and New Guinea

Source: CartoGIS, the Australian National University.

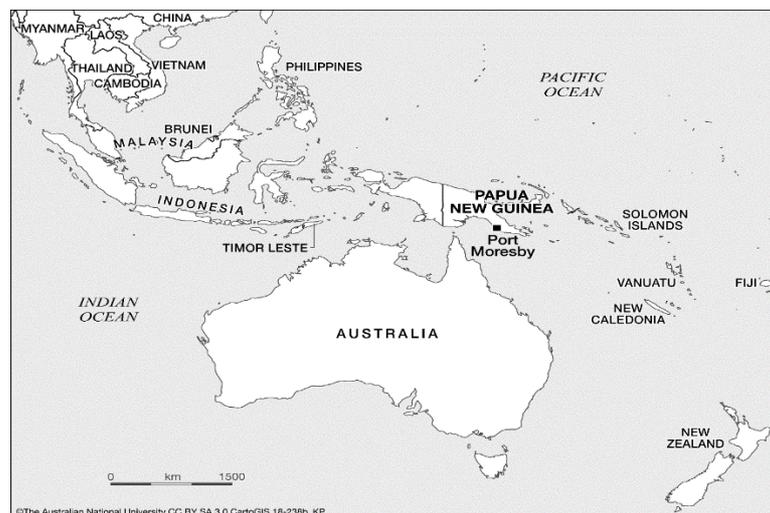


Figure 3.3. Political map of Papua New Guinea

Source: CartoGIS, the Australian National University.

Prior to colonisation, people were organised into many thousands of independent political groupings, with some created by individual ‘big men’ and others led by powerful chiefs (Berndt & Lawrence, 1971; Sahlins, 1963; Strathern, 1971). Village societies were, and still are to a large extent, self-contained communal authorities that coexisted in alternating patterns of war and peace with their neighbours. The traditional political organisation did not exist beyond the level of a tribal community. In 1884, the concept of state, which identified with democratic and constitutional political institutions, was imposed on the traditional PNG societies with disregard for their cultures, structures and boundaries. The imposition of the colonial state superimposed an overarching institutional framework that was foreign to the local communities. The introduced state did not transform the indigenous culture; it gradually developed with traditional Melanesian forms of government to produce syncretic political modes that exhibit elements of both Western and indigenous forms (Allen & Hasnain, 2010; Ketan, 2000; May, 1982, 2004; McLeod, 2008; Morgan, 2005). Many people found it difficult to distinguish between the state and their respective traditional styles. Political elites have often combined traditional and modern values and organisational forms of government to suit their own development (May, 1997, pp. 24–25). But in setting the ‘rules of the game’ (Helmke & Levitsky, 2006; Leftwich, 2010) and applying them, political elites often undermine the power of the political institutions. They often used the ‘Melanesian way’ (Jacobsen, 1995; Narokobi, 1980), to justify the use of traditional values in governance. The term ‘Melanesian way’ is vaguely defined, but it has connotations of *kastom* (custom) and *wantok* (Lawson, 2013; Lindstrom, 2008) and its use provides ‘a capacity for compromise’ (May, 2004, p. 47) in politics and governance.

Culture plays an influential role in PNG’s social, political and economic life. PNG’s political history has been shaped by its traditional culture of competition and reciprocity. Terms like ‘big man’ and *wantok* are used to describe the patronage and informal networks that are often more influential than formal institutions and rules (Scott, 2005, p. 51). The cultural

obligation to reciprocate under the *wantok* system creates tension between the pressure for the institutionalisation that would consolidate and strengthen the power and position of formal institutions and the pressure for the maintenance of a personalised basis of politics, which is largely played by ‘big men’ who derive their power and authority from their closest supporters. This power, regarded as ‘personal power’ (Sahlins, 1963, p. 289), is often more influential than legal and rational authority.

PNG was still a ‘collection of stateless societies’ (Wainwright & White, 2004, p. 22) at their independence in 1975, comprised of hundreds of semi-autonomous tribal and linguistic groups. It has more than 7000 different cultural groups and approximately 852 different languages, which makes it one of the most culturally diverse countries in the world. By ethnolinguistic standards, it is the most fragmented society in the modern era (Reilly, 2008, pp. 12–13). The cultural diversity posed significant problems for national unity and has been a great concern for the early government. The threat to national unity was exacerbated by the separatist movements that were proliferating in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Some of these movements were established from a background of cult activity, others were established to oppose particular government policies and few pressed for more regional autonomy. Many leaders in the separatist movements were ambivalent about national unity (Denoon, 2005, p. 86; May, 2004, pp. 48–106). Since the 1970s, political elites and the local intellectuals have undertaken efforts to produce images and ideals of nationhood in the hope of consolidating national unity (Ballard, 1981; Foster, 1995; Griffin, 1974; May, 2004). The newly established government of Sir Michael Somare pushed for national unity through its ‘political education’ programs to infuse the idea of unity in the minds of people (Ballard, 1981, p. 64; May, 2004, pp. 118–121). The effectiveness of this program, however, was difficult to assess. Despite a variety of attempts to cultivate or invoke a sense of shared national culture and identity, the highly localised loyalties to *wantok* and ethnolinguistic groups prevailed. The weak sense of

nationhood complicated the process of state building and made it difficult to articulate the national interest.

At their independence, the new state faced an enormous task of creating a sense of shared nationhood. Sentiments of nationalism were limited to a few people (Ballard, 1981, p. 10). The weak sense of nationalism made it difficult to cohere a strong or unitary national state, which complicated the prospects for pursuing strategic foreign policies. It suggested that foreign policy was not driven by nationalistic tendencies as seen in many parts of the developing world, particularly Africa (Duara, 2003; Hodgkin, 1956; Pardesi, 1976). In PNG, nationalism was generated by an elite group who were educated in the Western education system and who were introduced during the colonial period. They were able to mobilise the support for nationalist movements that led to independence. The path to independence lacked what Geertz (1973) described as the ‘consciousness of massive, univocal, irresistible movement, the stirring to action of an entire people, that the attack upon colonialism almost everywhere induced’ (Geertz, 1975, p. 236). Simply put, independence was not triggered by united and mass movements against colonialism. Pokawin (1982, p. 57) argued that:

Independence for PNG on 16 September 1975 was not a result of national consensus. The majority of Papua New Guineans were either not concerned, against, or not committed. It was the doing of a small group of people led by the Pangu Party and its sympathisers in the House of Assembly. Many people were not sure of what independence would bring for them and the country.

The Western-educated elites that experienced the brunt of the colonial policies engineered the self-determination process in PNG. They optimistically borrowed Western ideas and ideals and presented them as ‘national goals’ in the preamble of the PNG constitution (Kari, 2005). These goals were said to have captured the ‘common interest’ of society, which

subsequently formed the overarching ideological interests that drove domestic and foreign policy.

PNG exhibits many signs of a weak state, including the limited capacity of the public sector to deliver services, the weak law enforcement capacity and a poorly developed sense of national identity. Its political institutions seem to be growing increasingly vulnerable to undemocratic pressures that range from long adjournments of parliaments to increasingly trouble-prone national elections (May, 2003c, pp. 154–155). The country's development is challenged by dysfunctional service delivery mechanisms, deteriorating infrastructure, poorly functioning systems of government, law and order challenges and corruption. The state's weakness in providing adequate government services is, in part, a function of economic decline that could be corrected through sustained growth. However, periods of high economic growth have not been associated with good governance (Chand, 2002; Levantis & Gupta, 1999; Mawuli, 1997). Clans increasingly play the role of interests groups (Reilly, 2004, p. 51). The effect of small ethnic groups acting to secure their own interests undermines the broader interests of society. During his survey of policymaking in 1981, Ballard wrote that 'state penetration of society was limited' in most new states (Ballard, 1981, p. 3). More than four decades after their independence, this is still true of many parts of PNG. State institutions and agencies are left vulnerable to manipulation by 'big men' and other personal and local interests.

3.3 Pre-Independence, 1975

The decolonisation of PNG contrasted in many respects to other parts of the former imperial world (Carter & O'Meara, 1985; Fischer & Morris-Jones, 2012) because PNG was given self-government before its independence. This gave decolonisation in the Pacific a 'special character' (MacDonald, 1986, p. 115). Decolonisation in PNG was peaceful, smooth and progressive and Canberra relied on a variety of committees to facilitate the decolonisation process. The first, the Gunther Select Committee, recommended a House of Assembly in its

interim report in 1962. The first House of Assembly in 1964 had 38 Papua New Guineans and 26 expatriates. Most of the indigenous Papua New Guineans were illiterate and few members had any idea of the structure of government, or how an assembly might affect it. The second House of Assembly was elected in 1968 and was full of Papua New Guineans, but it was still an Australian legislature. The second committee, the Guise Select Committee, focused more on further constitutional progress, but within strict limits that were dictated by Canberra. The final committee, the Arek Select Committee, embraced precedents from previous committees and the Australian connection. They synthesised the views of Papua New Guineans, reconciled them with Australian policy for the devolution and subsequent delegation of powers and subsequently proposed a program of development towards self-government. The committee's report, presented to the Assembly in March 1971, recommended preparations for self-determination in 1972–1976. Its proposal concerning the structure of parliament and the electorates formed the blueprint for self-government in 1973 and subsequent independence in 1975 (Denoon, 2005, pp. 35–69).

Australian colonial rule was paternalistic (Hegarty, 1979, p. 188). In contrast to some African countries where colonialism did little to develop indigenously rooted institutions that could tackle the development demands of modern states (Bräutigam & Knack, 2004, p. 255), the Australian colonial administration prepared PNG to handle its government institutions, albeit hastily, before handing over the power and responsibility for policymaking. Australia helped PNG build its political institutions and administrative and public service structures, and helped educate and train its human resources before transferring powers and relinquishing control of its former colony (Ballard, 1981; Boyce, 1978). It provided technical and advisory support before and after independence. In the years leading up to its independence, expatriates largely serviced PNG's foreign offices. As Downs (1980, p. 552) noted:

Until the transfer of power, Australia represented Papua New Guinea not only at the United Nations, but also in all other places. Australia entered into all international agreements and trade arrangements on behalf of both Papua and New Guinea. For example, Australia became a signatory to the International Coffee Agreement of 1962 as an exporter of coffee although no coffee was produced by Australia for overseas markets. During the period of Australian trusteeship, over two hundred treaties to which Australia had become a party were applied to Papua New Guinea. The most important were those associated with the United Nations Organisations such as World Health (WHO), UNESCO, International Telecommunications Union (ITU), ECAFE, the Colombo Plan, the South Pacific Commission and South Pacific Forum.

More specifically, Australia determined the direction of PNG's foreign policy during the pre-independence era. During the self-governing era (1971–1975), Australia became increasingly less of an administrator. It invested and maintained close educational, communications and cultural links, as well as personal and political ties, with PNG. The Australian legacy was, therefore, central to almost every aspect of PNG's foreign relations. That legacy also affected how PNG saw and interacted with other communities and countries in the region and around the world (Kooyman & Moore, 1998, p. 208; Wolfers & Dihm, 2009, p. 304). For example, PNG followed the same alliance and distanced itself from communist countries as part of Australia's anti-communism efforts. Further, PNG maintained the bilateral and multilateral agreements it entered and adopted the foreign policy precedents set by the colonial administration. At its independence, PNG had little influence to plot a course different to that pursued by Australia. Independent PNG did not depart significantly from the trade and

security links that were established by the colonial administration. Instead, it maintained and strengthened its relations with Australia.

PNG began the post-independence era with a small and mostly agriculture-based economy. Its domestic revenues were sourced from the personal income taxes of the large expatriate population, a few larger companies and trade duties (Fallon, 1992, p. 10). Even more so, PNG had a limited domestic production base, a poor revenue-raising ability and relied on Australia for economic development, particularly in aid, trade and investment. PNG's relationship with Australia was generally 'dependent' (Amarshi et al., 1979; Fitzpatrick, 1980; Sawyerr, 1982) in many aspects. It also relied on Australia for technical advice, as the newly independent nation lacked experienced national staff in almost all departments, including foreign affairs. The limited knowledge of national politicians on how to conduct bilateral and multi-relations in foreign affairs made the dependent relationship much deeper than it appeared. The nature of this dependent relationship subsequently strengthened Australia's influence in PNG, even after independence. PNG's unusually high dependence on Australia adds to sensitivities about independence and sovereignty, which has been a source of frustration, particularly among PNG's elite. Australia has never been sure about how its aid to PNG should be spent most effectively and has deliberated between allowing PNG control and exerting control over it (AusAID, 2003). This has not prevented disagreements and frustrations, usually over the content of the aid program. There are many reasons for this, such as how the aid allocated to PNG has often been mismanaged by PNG's small elite, genuine pride and nationalism and real disagreement about how aid could be most effective (which is further discussed in Chapter 4). As a dominant partner, Australia has played a leading role in improving the effectiveness of its aid in PNG, which often leads to charges of neo-colonialism.

Australia's interest in New Guinea developed in the middle of the nineteenth century. The motives underlying Australia's interest in New Guinea varied. Some authors argue that

New Guinea offered opportunities for profitable investment (Joyce, 1971, p. 8; Legge, 1956, p. 13), while others contend that Papua provided a potential source of cheap labour that could support the Queensland sugar plantations (Irvine, 2004; Moore, 1974). Australia's prominent interest in New Guinea, however, related more to its security. PNG featured prominently in all assessments of Australia's defence needs (Downs, 1980; Gash et al., 1975; Hunt, 2017; Joyce, 1971; Legge, 1956). Historically, Australia has long been concerned with the prospect that New Guinea may fall under the control of another foreign power. Australians were aware of the fact they inhabit a sparsely populated continent that is situated near to the thickly populated countries of eastern and south-eastern Asia and very far from Britain, on whose naval strength they relied for their defence. Vague fears of an attack were aroused by the European expansion in the Pacific. New Guinea was essential to Australia for strategic reasons, as it would provide a bulwark against any attack. Therefore, Australia felt that it was imperative that the islands to the north should be in British or Australian hands (Hunt, 2017; Legge, 1956). For this reason, Australia created the Pacific Island Regiment (PIR), currently the Papua New Guinea Defence Force (PNGDF), during the Second World War as part of the Australian Army Northern Command (Hunt, 2017; Laki & May, 2009). It was constructed to defend Australia's northern borders. The fears of military invasion against Australia subsided in the aftermath of the Second World War. Nonetheless, Australia's defence and strategic interest have remained an integral component of the PNG–Australia relationship in the postcolonial era. Besides the fear of a military invasion, Australia did not want communism on its doorstep. Since the 1960s, Australia and its ally, the United States (US), supported Indonesian rule over West Papua to appease the Indonesian Government and to stop it from sliding towards communism (Bohane, Elmslie & Thompson, 2003; May, 1979; Ondawame, 2010; Penders, 2002). The residue of Australian fears of possible Indonesian expansionism during the Sukarno era (Wolfers & Dihm, 2009, p. 305) prompted Australia to expand the PIR into the PNGDF. This expansion in the 1960s was in direct response to the perceived expansionist threats from Indonesia (Laki & May,

2009, p. 262). Australia's security and strategic concerns has also influenced PNG's relations with Asian countries. Under the terms of the *United Nations Trusteeship Agreement* of 1946, Australia was responsible for PNG's external relations. Australia restricted the early PNG Government from pursuing relations with other countries that posed threats to Australia's strategic interest. For instance, Japan's formal relations with PNG were sanctioned by Australia (Griffin, 1974, p. 152). The influence of this minimalist policy affected the postcolonial state's relations with the outside world, notably with Japan and communist China. Indeed, heavy dependence on Australia limited postcolonial PNG's options to develop independent foreign policies.

The limitation vis-a-vis foreign investments from Southeast Asian countries became one of the determining factors in PNG's first foreign policy. It wanted to befriend many countries and organisations, including those sanctioned by Australia. PNG felt that it was necessary to open its relations to any country and region that could influence its economic interests, without subscribing to the ideological and geopolitical alliances that were prevalent at that time (Foreign Affairs Review, 1981, p. 23). It is worth noting that PNG emerged as a nation in the Cold War era, which was a time when there was great political and military tension between powers in the Western Bloc (the United States, its NATO allies and others) and the Eastern Bloc (the Soviet Union and its allies in the Warsaw Pact). There were growing concerns by policymakers in PNG about the country's foreign policy, with key issues including PNG's relations with Australia and Indonesia. Concerns about the establishment of independent trading links and an independent identity for PNG after Australia departed were also raised by the early policymakers. These concerns formed the basis of universalism—PNG's first foreign policy.

3.4 Universalism (1975–1981)

During the self-governing era (1971–1975), seminars, discussions and debates were held between politicians, scholars and advisers about the future of PNG's foreign policy (Griffin, 1974; Kooyman & Moore, 1998). In 1974, the first minister to assume full responsibility for PNG's trade and foreign relations, Sir Maori Kiki, outlined the principles of the policy that subsequently became the government's post-independence foreign policy, which came to be known as universalism, or 'friends to all and enemies to none' (Bogari, 2010; Firth, Griffin & Hank, 1979; King, 1985; Wolfers & Dihm, 2009). Successive statements of that policy highlighted three main issues: that the PNG Government should establish friendly relations with as many countries as possible and be hostile to none, that PNG should be identified as a South Pacific nation and that it should be regarded as a bridge or link between Southeast Asia and the South Pacific (Foreign Affairs Review, 1982c; Griffin, 1974; Wolfers & Dihm, 2009). From this perspective, the approach was presented as a logical approach to establishing relations with the world and concurrently mitigating dependence on Australia. Simply put, it was a self-interest foreign policy that was aimed to weaken Australia's influence by building a broad range of relations.

The doctrine of universalism is common in new and emerging states, the main reason for which being that many of the newly independent states lack the resources for development. Therefore, they rely on the developed economies for expertise, trade and capital for economic development. This requisite for economic development signifies extending relations to any countries and organisations that can support their economic interests, without considering their political ideologies, alliances and geographical location. For instance, Brazil's early postcolonial foreign policy was deeply rooted in autonomy and universalism (Correia, Favaron, Ramanzini Júnior & Vigevani, 2008; Saraiva, 2010), where universalism was meant to express the idea of receptiveness towards all countries regardless of their geographical location and economic policy (Saraiva, 2010, p. 152). In PNG, universalism was anchored in a spirit of

neutrality and aimed to extend its external relations beyond those prescribed by the colonial administration (Bogari, 2010; Wolfers & Dihm, 2009). Nevertheless, universalism did not deny the special place of Australia because of the prominence of aid, trade and commerce, security, history, cultural affinity, education and skilled and technical workforce recruitment factors. Although PNG has formed its world views and forged relations independent of Australia's influence, it still relied on Australia for economic and developmental support. Therefore, universalism was, in many respects, an aspirational foreign policy doctrine with limited practical consequences.

Universalism extended PNG's relations beyond Oceania. The *realpolitik* of universalism emphasised economic development and, to a lesser extent, security. PNG prioritised trade, aid and investment. These priorities also determined where diplomatic missions should be located. Foreign missions were opened and cordial relationships were forged with new states, with this friendly reception extended to foreign investors and prospective aid donors (Boyce, 1978, pp. 41–54). PNG continued to form coalitions and alliances with countries and international organisations that could support its interests. Its political independence in 1975 represented a dilution of relations with Australia— not necessarily in the absolute, but certainly in relative terms, as PNG extended its relations beyond Oceania (Wolfers & Dihm, 2009, p. 304). Independence signified that PNG had formally recast its political and administrative ties with Australia and had assumed sole responsibility for its domestic and external affairs.

Despite its independence, PNG depended on Australia for aid and developmental support to progress its nascent economy. Although PNG expanded to the wider world, Australia remained the dominant external partner in its foreign relations. At independence, there was a wide gap between development and the resources that were available for development, particularly financial and human resources. Australia assisted PNG in this regard and its aid to

PNG was critical for development. It represented 41.4 per cent of PNG's budget at independence (Commonwealth of Australia, 1975, p. 4) and it was given in the form of lump sum budgetary support. The budget support alleviated the resource constraints that the early government faced and was used as an incentive to accelerate economic development. In addition, Australian officials supported PNG to arrange the budget and monitor expenditures. It was not practical for an inexperienced bureaucracy to expend large amounts of aid, let alone the institutional capacity to handle budget expenditure and monitoring in the early years after independence. Some of the guidance was provided by Australian advisers who constituted the vestigial portion of the colonial administration that serviced the Department of Foreign Relations and Trade (DFAT) (Ballard, 1981). Along these lines, Australia cemented its influence in the newly independent state.

Universalism was useful for PNG in the formative years of its independent period. PNG did not discriminate against the Eastern and Western Blocs, but it allied with members of both blocs who respected its independence. In the Asian region, PNG expanded their relations to any country, including communist regimes that could support its economic interests. For example, PNG extended relations to the communist government of the People's Republic of China and subscribed to the 'one China' policy—and was given observer status to the Association of the Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) a year after independence (Bogari, 2010; Wolfers & Dihm, 2009). In the Pacific region, PNG concentrated its limited diplomatic resources on regional links and made commitments to regional cooperation as a priority concern (Kiki, 1976; Somare, 1974). It became a member of the PIF, formerly South Pacific Forum, at independence. A common sense of identity and purpose in the region was important for PNG and the small island states. It was a newly independent state with limited resources, a weak economy, a lack of proper infrastructures and a weak power base. Therefore, collective diplomacy was important for the island countries, including PNG. The PIF consolidated PNG's network and identity.

Despite widening its network and establishing new relationships, universalism did not provide a clear direction for how PNG could develop its national interests, particularly in setting priorities or making choices. The lack of ability to independently set priorities was, in part, limited by its dependence on Australia. For instance, ASEAN was important to PNG's economic and social interests (Byrnes, 1981), but the political and security issues that have occupied ASEAN nations (e.g., the role of China and USSR in Southeast Asia, Vietnam, Kampuchea and the Indochinese refugees) demanded, in Canberra's view, a strong assertion of the Australian presence in the region (MacQueen, 1989a, p. 540; Weatherbee, 1982, p. 338). Accordingly, PNG's freedom to pursue a more independent position in the ASEAN was tied by its need to accommodate Australia's strategic concerns. As Mortimer (1979, p. 227) noted:

Having a guaranteed budget support [from Australia], Papua New Guinea does not have to go begging to investors and importers of raw materials, but can hold out for the best available terms. In this respect she is in a decidedly more advantageous position than most Third World countries, and hence it is not in her interest to promote political relations with them [ASEAN and other countries] which might harm her special relationship with Australia.

PNG benefitted in its relationship with Australia in terms of aid, but the relationship was constraining in terms of PNG's wider engagement in ASEAN. It was seeking special membership status within ASEAN and Indonesia had agreed to argue for PNG's position to change from observer status to a position from which a PNG delegation could receive briefings on ASEAN policy decisions (*Canberra Times*, 17 December 1980; Rodgers, 1980). However, PNG's ASEAN link and economic interests would harm Australia's strategic interest. Therefore, it was not in PNG's interest to promote political relations with countries and

regional organisations that pose threats to Australia's strategic interest (Mortimer, 1979, p. 227). The subtle pressure to respect Australia's strategic interest is implied by the patron–client relationships discussed in Chapter 2. Maintaining the Australian connection was critical for PNG's development, but subscribing to Australia's security and strategic concerns were untenable. It meant that PNG would sacrifice some of its self-interests. This predicament, in part, propelled policymakers to reconsider universalism.

PNG's security concerns were also an issue with the government. Since PNG's independence, Australia carefully avoided entering into any binding defence commitments to PNG. In February 1977, a statement of understanding was issued by the then prime ministers, Malcolm Fraser and Michael Somare, who accepted the need for continuing consultations on matters of mutual concern to the two defence forces:

The two Prime Ministers affirmed that both their governments attached high importance to continuing the close co-cooperation between their two countries in defence matters. They acknowledged their Governments' desire to contribute to the strengthening of peace and stability in their common region. They declared that it was their Government's intention to consult, at the request of either, about matters affecting their common security interests and about other aspects of their defence relationship (Australian Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, 1977).

The joint statement, however, did not include any suggestion of the commitment of Australia's security assets in the event of a crisis (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 1977, pp. 90–91). However, there was an implicit guarantee of support, as there was a strong link between the Australian military and the PNGDF. A crisis, if there was going to be one, could involve Indonesia. The militant group *Organisasi Papua Merdeka* (OPM), or Free Papua

Movement, has been using the PNG side of the border as a sanctuary and base for attacks against the Indonesian army since Indonesia acquired control of the western half of the island of New Guinea from the Dutch in 1962 (which is further discussed in Chapter 6). On this basis, it was often perceived that a military conflict between PNG and Indonesia could develop along their shared border (Henningham, 1995; MacQueen, 1989a; May, 1986a; Nyamekye & Premdas, 1979a, 1979b). Successive PNG governments were unable to secure a greater degree of commitment on security matters from Australia, a concern that was sharpest in periods of tension on the border. The border problem was a potentially dangerous threat to regional stability (MacQueen, 1989a), but Canberra's ambivalence towards the issue has often led to feelings of discontent among PNG policymakers.

PNG wanted a peaceful and lasting relationship with Indonesia. Its policymakers desired relations with Indonesia to go beyond the border concerns (Weatherbee, 1982, p. 342). Somare viewed the 'importance of business-like relations with Jakarta' (MacQueen, 1989a, p. 534) and, throughout 1978 and 1979, his government stiffened its own internal policing of the border, exiled OPM leaders, repatriated some illegal border crossers and maintained tighter control over the political activities of permissive residents (May, 1986a; Weatherbee, 1982). The Somare government recognised the importance of maintaining a stable relationship with Jakarta (MacQueen, 1989a, p. 541; Weatherbee, 1982, p. 342) not only as a basis for the speedy resolution of any future border problems, but also as a 'bridge' to Southeast Asia (Byrnes, 1981). However, the bridge between Southeast Asia and the South Pacific has often been weakened by the sporadic hostile exchanges between Jakarta and Port Moresby over the activities of the OPM and Indonesia's military responses. In June 1979, PNG was invited to the twelfth ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting. The PNG delegation, led by the deputy prime minister and minister for foreign affairs and trade, were guests of the Indonesian Government. Attendance at the meeting by invitation of the Indonesia government was special for PNG; it was a gesture of support for PNG's ambition for special membership status in ASEAN.

In the Pacific region, universalism posed two basic challenges for PNG. First, it strengthened PNG's relations in the region, though PNG's involvement in Pacific affairs often raised suspicions about acquiring leadership of the islands from Fiji (Fry, 1982; MacQueen, 1991; Weatherbee, 1982). In 1980, PNG intervened in Vanuatu to quell a rebellion against the newly elected government (which is discussed in detail in the later part of this chapter). Fiji, a supporter and participant in UN peacekeeping, viewed PNG's unilateral intervention with suspicion. It suspected PNG of seeking a distinct leadership role in the region and of taking over its historical leadership of the islands (Weatherbee, 1982, p. 337). PNG has not contested the leadership status because it was already a leader, given its abundant natural resources, landmass and population when compared to other Pacific Island countries. PNG was more concerned about helping the Melanesian government and maintaining regional stability than vying for regional leadership, but its intervention in Vanuatu elicited mixed reactions (MacQueen, 1988, p. 235). It was apparent that there were differences of opinion and interest within the Pacific community. Second, universalism strengthened PNG's identification and solidarity with other Pacific Island countries, though it did little to strengthen PNG's economic position and broader foreign policy influence. The Pacific region was less powerful, as far as economic influence is concerned. Stronger relations would not improve PNG's economic interest. PNG assumed the status of 'major power' among the Pacific Island countries right from independence, given its size and resources (MacQueen, 1991, p. 168). As such, it can push its economic interests independently from other Pacific Island states. Beyond its size and resources, PNG is centrally located between two regions: Asia and the South Pacific. This geographical location gives it more advantage than the island nation-states. PNG can push its economic interests in Asia alone.

Given the above concerns—freedom to make more independent choices, Australia's defence commitments to PNG, friendly relations with Indonesia and PNG's economic interests

in the Pacific—PNG realised that it cannot be ‘friends to all’ in foreign relations. Sometimes, PNG needed to be selective to attain its economic and diplomatic interests and, for the first time, its foreign policy was brought into the domestic debate. In 1979, the Somare government commissioned a review of universalism (Foreign Affairs Review, 1980). Universalism underwent a comprehensive review that involved consultants, a committee of departmental heads, heads of PNG’s diplomatic missions and consular posts around the world (who flew into Port Moresby for the purpose) and a variety of senior officials from other government agencies. The review was undertaken in response to challenges in the environment. The Somare government felt that PNG needed a more pragmatic foreign policy that could be used to pursue its national interest, given the challenges, threats and opportunities in the external environment. The ‘friends to all and enemies to none’ approach was untenable. In March 1980, the Somare government fell during a no-confidence motion and was replaced by a coalition government led by Prime Minister Sir Julius Chan. Chan embraced the review, which culminated in the drafting of a white paper that was tabled in Parliament in 1981.

Between the time universalism was approved for review and the time the white paper was produced, a significant event in the Pacific took place. The event that came to be known as the ‘coconut war’ (Shears, 1980) gave potency to the review. The coconut war was a brief and unconventional clash between PNG soldiers and rebels in Espiritu Santo, Vanuatu in August 1980. Shears (1980) covered the incident in his book, *The Coconut War: The Crisis on Espiritu Santo*, in detail. On 30 July 1980, the Anglo-French condominium of the New Hebrides gained independence as Vanuatu. However, on 28 May 1980, two months before independence, a brief insurrection created widespread panic among the island people. The secessionist movement was led by Jimmy Stevens, a Ni-Vanuatu nationalist and politician who took over government properties and referred to himself as the prime minister. The insurrection was supported by French officials and colonists, as well as by an American libertarian organisation known as the Phoenix Foundation. Their objective was to frustrate the

independence process, in part to discourage the prospect of independence in New Hebrides. French and British authorities were notified of the uprising. On 8 June 1980, Father Walter Lini, the prime minister-elect of New Hebrides, called on the British and French Governments, who had been running the New Hebrides for decades, to take military action and quell the rebellion. Both governments deployed troops: the British Government deployed 120 men from the 42 Royal Marine Commando and the French deployed 55 combat police from the *Garde mobile* from Noumea to Port Vila. The Marines, however, took no action to stop militant activities and the combat police withdrew within 24 hours after it arrived. It became apparent that neither the British nor French would take effective action against the secessionists. Father Lini had to look elsewhere. He turned to the PNG Government of Sir Julius Chan for help. On 7 August 1980, PNG deployed 300 troops, two patrol boats and four aircraft to Vanuatu and codenamed the military operation Kumul Force. The rebellion abruptly ended when the PNGDF troops shot and killed Jimmy Stevens's son. The troops disarmed and arrested Jimmy Stevens and his followers, recovered government properties, including vehicles that were seized during the coup, and restored normalcy on the island. The PNG effort was all the more praiseworthy in light of the ineffectual British and French attitude to the rebellion (Australian Government, 1980; Foreign Affairs Review, 1982e; Shears, 1980). PNG's successful intervention in the coconut war became a turning point in PNG's regional politics and international relations.

The experience had a considerable effect on the subsequent relationship between PNG and Vanuatu, one that was based on ethnic solidarity. This solidarity was given greater potency by the fact that PNG acted at the behest of the Vanuatu government, given the South Pacific Forum's disagreement with the use of PNG troops. The Solomon Islands lacked resources to materially contribute to the undertaking, but strongly supported PNG's initiative. The coconut war became a pivotal point in regional politics and PNG's evolving foreign policy. It sharpened the idea of a sub-regional group within the regional group. Therefore, the seeds of the sub-

regional bloc, the MSG, were sown (MacQueen, 1989b, p. 34). The coconut war also shaped how PNG viewed the colonial powers and their responses to problems in the region, particularly Australia's commitment to regional security. PNG was disappointed with the lack of response from those Forum members who had the capacity and capability to assist, particularly Fiji, Australia and NZ. Although Australia indirectly approved and supported with their approval of using seconded military personnel in the PNGDF and their Royal Australian Air Force aircraft, the indecision and delay in Canberra before final decisions were made did not impress Port Moresby (Foreign Affairs Review, 1982e, p. 51). For example, when PNG sent its army to Vanuatu, it discovered that reliance on Australian resources (such as equipment and Australian personnel attached to PNGDF) was controlled in Canberra. The coconut war challenged Australia's defence commitments to PNG and underscored the differing perspectives in the region. Fiji, a supporter and participant in UN peacekeeping, viewed PNG's action in Vanuatu as an attempt to assume leadership of the islands (Weatherbee, 1982, p. 337). The experiences of the coconut war, particularly Australia's defence commitments and the South Pacific Forum's dissent from PNG's efforts, gave fresh impetus to the review.

3.5 Active and Selective Engagement (1981–2002)

On 9 November 1981, the foreign policy white paper was tabled in parliament (May, 1986a, p. 105). It was the first review of PNG's foreign policy since its independence. The foreign policy white paper recommended that PNG should adopt a basic approach to its foreign policy. This involved a three-pronged diplomatic strategy, which emphasised consolidation and extension of existing relations, independent and constructive cooperation with neighbouring countries and further diversification and development of relations with other countries (Bogari, 2010; Foreign Affairs Review, 1982a; Wolfers & Dihm, 2009). Based on the basic approach, it was suggested that PNG adopt an active and selective engagement foreign policy. This policy involved: identifying issues, opportunities and problems that are central to PNG's national

interests; selecting those issues and actors, including governments, international organisations, multinational corporations and others, who can support the country's national interests; analysing the relative advantages and disadvantages and taking the appropriate action or inaction; and engaging actively with the issues and selected actors to secure and enhance the country's national interests (Department of Foreign Affairs, 1980, pp. 6–7). Active and selective engagement focused on consolidating existing relations. It was concurrently open to exploring new opportunities and other arrangements with prospects for further socio-economic and security benefits.

In articulating the concept of active and selective engagement, the authors placed PNG's relations with Australia, Indonesia and the Solomon Islands in a framework of wider common interests to be promoted in an independent, constructive and neighbourly cooperation. These three countries share a common border with PNG. The white paper acknowledged their importance and simultaneously urged that the conduct of relations between each country should differ because of the differences between the three countries themselves, as well as the differences in the ways in which PNG's relations with their governments have previously developed (Department of Foreign Affairs, 1980, pp. 39–41). The overall objective was to conduct independent and constructive neighbourly cooperation with the governments of each country, appropriately and by different means.

Policymakers in PNG perceived in the white paper that its relations with Australia have 'become relatively, but not absolutely, less important to Papua New Guinea' (Foreign Affairs Review, 1982d, p. 39). The relative but modest decline in the importance of relations with Australia occurred because PNG diversified almost every aspect of its foreign relations—not only the formal aspects of diplomacy, but also the economic and other aspects. PNG diversified its trading partners towards Southeast Asia and Northeast Asia, including Japan and Germany. Japan became an important export destination, although Australia retained its status as the

major origin of PNG's imports. These developments led to the diversification of PNG's relations with Australia, the main exceptions of which including, by mutual agreement, aid and development support (Foreign Affairs Review, 1982d). PNG still depended on Australia for aid, trade, investments in merchandise and mining sectors and for trained public servants. The foreign policy white paper did not stress much the security aspect of PNG–Australia relations. As discussed earlier, Australia avoided entering into any binding defence commitments with PNG and, moreover, it was perceived that Australia would come to PNG's assistance, should there be an external aggressor (Laki & May, 2009, pp. 261–262; May, 1993, p. 35). However, the white paper raised security issues vis-a-vis PNG–Indonesia relations.

The white paper stressed the importance of PNG–Indonesia relations (Department of Foreign Affairs, 1980, pp. 42–48). Cooperation between PNG and Indonesia in the fields of education, defence, police and cultural exchanges based on mutual understanding and trust has been captured under a Technical Cooperation Agreement between the two countries, which was signed on 5 June 1979 (and expired in 1984). One of the more arresting of these premises in the white paper related to security. It was asserted that 'no foreign government threatens military aggression towards Papua New Guinea now or in the readily foreseeable future' (Foreign Affairs Review, 1982a, p. 46). This clause underscored the unlikelihood of a military conflict with Indonesia. It was further asserted that 'there is no foreign armed force on whose assistance we can rely' and, even more pointedly, 'no foreign government has offered to guarantee the independence and security of Papua New Guinea. Nor, despite expressions of concern by senior Australian officials, is one likely to do so' (Foreign Affairs Review, 1982b, pp. 46–47). This assertion was a direct response to the residual Australian defence commitment along the PNG–Indonesia border and the Vanuatu experience that questioned Australia's military assistance to PNG.

PNG appreciated the asymmetries of power in its relations with Indonesia and it acknowledged that the PNGDF's capacity to defend against an armed attack was comparatively modest (Foreign Affairs Review, 1982a, p. 46). This acknowledgement led the PNG Government to an accommodative posture, which was described as 'increasing commitment to co-operation' (Foreign Affairs Review, 1982a, p. 41) and 'consistent with both countries' national interest' (Foreign Affairs Review, 1982a, p. 43). The guidelines for this policy proposal were slightly defensive. Regarding the threats from Indonesia, the white paper stated that 'there is no evidence to suggest that a substantial or influential body of opinion in Indonesia has aggressive intentions towards Papua New Guinea' (Foreign Affairs Review, 1982a, p. 41). The events and conditions in Irian Jaya (specifically referring to the oppression of the Melanesian people living in West Papua) were matters of Indonesia's internal affairs, but they pointed out that domestic critics of policy 'have failed to distinguish between ethnic sentiment and national interest' (Foreign Affairs Review, 1982a, p. 42). The overtures of friendship demonstrated PNG's intention to resolve the border problems and its intention to mend the broken link to the wider ASEAN community.

The foreign policy white paper not only emphasised PNG's economic and security interests, but it also stressed the importance of international cooperation in addressing issues that had a substantial capacity to affect PNG's wider and shared interests. The issues included arms control, human rights, refugees, racism and national self-determination (Department of Foreign Affairs, 1980, pp. 108–116). The white paper was tabled in parliament on 21 November 1981 and the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Noel Levi, delivered an interim statement that detailed the changing emphasis of PNG's foreign policy. In support of the white paper, Mr Levi said:

Relations have, in fact, developed in a rather selective way—
sometimes because the Papua New Guinea government has wanted

them to do so, but often because the government of other countries or other circumstances have caused them to do so. We recognise that national interests—ours as well as those of other countries—and not friendship, have often been the reasons (Foreign Affairs Review, 1980, p. 10).

The main argument put forward was the differences in how relations with various countries have developed. The supporting statement introduced PNG's active and selective engagement foreign policy. It denotes picking one's friends more carefully. This policy stance reflected PNG's intention to rebalance its reliance on the postcolonial relationship with Canberra and replace it with one that formed a part of wider regional and global foreign policy. The conviction that drove the policy was that PNG's foreign policy should promote self-defined real interest (Weatherbee, 1982, p. 335). Active and selective engagement laid the foundations for the diversification of socio-economic, military and aid relations in many ways. It demonstrated PNG's ambitions to replace its Australian relations with ones with the rest of the world.

3.6 The Evolving Nature of Foreign Policy

The active and selective engagement approach to foreign policy was formally endorsed, accepted and followed by successive governments—but it also proved flexible. Since 1985, different prime ministers and their foreign affairs ministers adopted their own foreign policy initiatives under the rubric of active and selective engagement. Prime Minister Pias Wingti (1985–1988) pursued a more proactive approach to foreign policy when he moved away from what he perceived was a reactive posture to international developments (Bogari, 2010, p. 39). He aimed for a fundamental reorientation of PNG's foreign policy. Shortly after coming to power in late 1985, the Wingti government announced its intentions to establish a more stable and formal relationship with Indonesia. In October 1986, the foreign ministers of the two

countries signed the *Treaty of Mutual Respect, Friendship and Cooperation* as a commitment to avoid, reduce and contain disputes or conflicts between the two countries, as well as to settle any differences that might arise between their borders by peaceful means (*Treaty of Mutual Respect, Friendship and Cooperation*, 1986). The treaty was regarded by President Suharto as ‘another milestone in the history of both countries’, while PNG’s prime minister and the foreign secretary said it would give direction for the future and inspire confidence in PNG and its regional neighbours (May, 1991, p. 165). The move towards the pact was initiated by PNG as a ‘sweetener’ (MacQueen, 1989a, p. 535), or a gesture of goodwill, to ease the tensions along the border during 1984–1985 when a series of border violations (which are discussed further in Chapter 6) generated protests in PNG (May, 2004, pp. 300–301). Nonetheless, the pact was significant, as it provided an example of a foreign policy that was initiated by PNG and, moreover, it showed PNG’s determination to maintain its friendly relations with Indonesia.

In 1986, PNG helped form the MSG at an informal level and the group represented an important practical manifestation of ‘Melanesian-ism’ in regional politics (Lawson, 2013, p. 19). PNG considers MSG as an important sub-regional organisation through which it could advance its interests. During the MSG’s inaugural meeting in 1986, Sir Michael Somare said:

The establishment of the MSG sets the legal foundation for the governance of our Melanesian people, which will be the basis for our existence. This shows that our Melanesian spirit, brotherhood and solidarity is united and we ask for the non-interference in our affairs by regional powers as we face the challenges ahead (Somare cited in Pacific Institute of Public Policy, 2008, p. 2).

MSG is the strongest sub-regional political and economic alliance in the Pacific and was founded to harness a spirit of solidarity between the independent nations. The group was established to advance free trade and economic goals between member countries, which

included PNG, the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, New Caledonia and Fiji (though Fiji did not join the MSG until 1996). Over time, the interests of the organisation evolved to include political goals and it served as a ‘voice for the liberty of all Melanesians against the tentacles of Western colonisation’ (Koanapo, 2008). Beneath the smooth surface of economic diplomacy, one can still sense undercurrents of what Gregory Fry describes as ‘regional nationalism’, or the promotion of a regional cultural identity that often opposes neo-colonialism (Fry, 1981, p. 468). Sentiments of regional nationalism have often been directed towards Canberra, as Australia’s activism in the region has often been resented as neo-colonial and overbearing.

Apart from making overtures of friendship to Indonesia, Prime Minister Wingti also moved to consolidate its relations with Australia. On 9 December 1987, Prime Minister Wingti signed the *Joint Declaration of Principles Guiding Relations between Australia and Papua New Guinea* (JDP) with his Australian counterpart, Robert Hawke. The JDP was significant for three basic reasons. First, it sought to shift the focus of the PNG–Australia relationship from aid to trade. The declaration was a turning point in the bilateral relationship, as it shifted it from the postcolonial phase of giving aid and advice to a more mature phase in which the relationship is based on reciprocity and recognition of mutual benefits between independent states. The most prominent feature of JDP was the mutual aim to move aid away from the centre of the bilateral relationship (AusAID, 2003). The promotion of trade rather than aid was inherent in the joint declaration. Following the JDP, other trade agreements, including the *Agreement between the Governments of Australia and Papua New Guinea for the Promotion and Protection of Investments (1990)* and the *Agreement on Trade and Commercial Relations between the Governments of Australia and the Government of Papua New Guinea (1991)*, were signed between the two countries. These agreements focused on enhancing trade and commercial relations. Second, the declaration formalised Australia’s commitment to PNG’s security needs. In contrast to the joint statement between PNG and Australia in 1977, in which the two countries affirmed that their governments ‘attached high importance to continuing the

close cooperation between their two countries in defence matters' (Australian Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet 1977), the JDP was reworded:

In the event of external armed attack threatening the national sovereignty of either country, such consultation would be conducted for the purpose of each Government deciding what measures should be taken, jointly or separately, in relation to that attack (DFAT, 1992).

The changed wording was superficial, in that PNG lacked the capacity to contain external military attacks. However, Prime Minister Wingti said it was an improvement on the 1977 undertaking and PNG's defence secretary considered the undertakings that were reflected in the JDP as an effective guarantee of Australian commitment (May, 1993, p. 36). The underlying factor was that PNG faced no real external threat. The perceived threat that it faced from Indonesia had subsided since the signing of the *Treaty of Mutual Respect, Friendship and Cooperation* between the two countries. Nevertheless, PNG wanted a formal security guarantee from Australia in the event of uncertainty and threats. Finally, the pact was significant because it was initiated by PNG. The significance of this is the emergence of a new crop of political leaders in PNG's foreign policy environment. Unlike its predecessors in the 1970s, who lacked basic understanding of politics and international relations, the new crop of political leaders is versed in the subject and has sought to plot PNG's directions in foreign affairs. In his welcome speech in Canberra, Hawke complimented Wingti for initiating the wide-ranging document between PNG and Australia. Hawke approved the members of Wingti's generation, who sought to redefine PNG's place in the world and its key foreign relationships (Australian Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, 1987). PNG's ambitions to shift the basis of its relations with Australia from aid to trade, however, faced significant challenges: the lack of a coherent trade policy (UNCTAD, 2006, p. 2); a deteriorating infrastructure, including transport and communications (Gibson & Rozelle, 2002); and an insufficient private sector capability,

including poor access to finance and supply chains (DFAT, 2014b). As a result, PNG's ambition to reduce aid was futile. For example, three years after the JDP in 1990, the net bilateral aid flow from Australia stood at US\$262 million and averaged US\$221 million by 2002 (World Bank, 2017b), which is shown in Figure 4.1. Almost a decade after the JDP, PNG still received aid and continued to rely on Australian aid at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

Prime Minister Rabbie Namaliu (1988–1992) focused more on the 'economic aspects of active and selective engagement' and opened new diplomatic missions and honorary consulates in the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, France, Germany, the US (Houston and Los Angeles) and Canada (Bogari, 2010, p. 140). PNG signed economic agreements, such as the *Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement* and the *Investment Promotion and Protection Agreements*, with the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Germany and Israel. When Wingti returned as prime minister in 1992, he 'looked north'. In 1994, Wingti announced the look north policy, a strategic policy proposal that was aimed to reduce national dependence on Australia. Wingti said:

That is where our future is in terms of trade, in terms of investment. So when I decided to take that position, I took it on a bigger scale, looking at the future of this country in the region. We belong to this region, and we have to live with Indonesia, we have to live with China, we have to live with the Asian countries—and Australia and New Zealand are now doing the same—so we made the right decision (Wingti, cited in Vatsikopoulos, 1995, p. 29).

Wingti's ambitions to diversify PNG's foreign relations and to find alternative outlets for its economic opportunities corresponded with the growing influence of Asia in the Pacific. China was emerging as a great political, economic and military power. Similarly, India was

emerging as a potential superpower. Other countries in Asia, including the Four Asian Tigers (South Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan) and the high performing economies (Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand) (World Bank, 1993), were also developing economically quickly and were reaching the level of other great powers around the globe. These changes generated new opportunities for PNG.

The government's look north policy renewed and consolidated PNG's existing relationship with China. However, the policy was not adequately communicated to the bureaucracy at the 'organisational level' (Gyngell & Wesley, 2003, pp. 25–28). Otherwise said, the policy was suggested at the political level, but was not developed by the bureaucratic mechanism. As a result, the essence of this policy proposal was not adequately translated into practical policy. For example, the policy focused on Asia, but it was difficult to determine who was authorised to make decisions with whom, for what purposes, on what issues, how these decisions would translate into tangible outcomes and whether these decisions were aligned with the country's interests. In effect, there was never a clearly enunciated statement for what the look north policy was. Since its pronouncement in 1994, the look north policy has been communicated in different ways, for different reasons and at different times. This is partly because the policy was not documented. Subsequently, successive governments and ministers have engaged with both traditional and non-traditional partners and individuals from Asia. The foreign policy implication was that PNG lost its opportunities in the 'Asian century', a term associated with the dominant role that Asia could play in the twenty-first century because of its growing economic clout (Mahbubani, 2008; White, 2011). The idea of Asian century gained influence among PNG leaders, following the rapid growth of China and India since the 1980s that has propelled them to the top ranks of the world's biggest economies. PNG did not maximise its opportunities in the Asian century. For example, a paper presented by the PNG foreign affairs ministry at the UN trade and development conference in 2006 highlighted this issue:

The lack of a vision and coherent trade policy has resulted in the development of ad hoc and often conflicting rules, regulations and practices affecting trade, and in an even greater disconnect between trade policy framework and other key economic (tariff, investment, industrial), sectoral (manufacturing, agriculture, forestry, fisheries, minerals) and social policy issues (UNCTAD, 2006, p. 2).

The paper made specific reference to the look north policy. PNG was positioning itself to build on Asian interest in its resources, but a lack of a coherent trade policy has contributed to what has been described as the ‘lost decade of the 1990s’ (Prasad & Snell, 2004, p. 269; Ritchie, 2014, p. 300)—a period that was characterised by severe economic crisis and the failure to achieve sustainable economic development (Faal, 2006; Mawuli, 1997; UNCTAD, 2006). As mentioned, the government’s ambition to improve its economic relations at the strategic level was not translated into clear policy objectives that could guide government actions. As a result, PNG did not take full advantage of the Asian century. However, it does not mean that PNG did not benefit from the policy. The look north policy strengthened PNG’s existing relations with the wider Asian countries, in that it gave greater leeway to Asian businesses and state-owned enterprises to exploit PNG’s resources. In turn, it generated economic opportunities for PNG, most notably the increased aid and investment from China. However, these benefits did not emerge because of articulate or planned policy. Nonetheless, ‘look north’ nestled in the broader active and selective engagement approach to foreign policy.

The professed reason for the look north policy in 1994 was to diversify international relations for trade and investment opportunities, but Wingti’s real reason was his frustration with the aid relationship between PNG and Australia (Crocombe, 2007, p. 211). Australia has consistently been PNG’s largest development partner. Since independence, the PNG–Australia relationship has largely been one between an aid donor and an aid recipient. The most important

element of the aid relationship was the direct support for the PNG Government budget. From 1975 to the mid-late 1980s, Australian aid to PNG was given largely in the form of lump sum budgetary support because PNG had a limited domestic production base and a poor revenue-raising ability. Australian aid to PNG inadvertently strengthened PNG's dependence on Australia. In terms of domestic politics, the continued dependence on Australia has been both an increasing affront to national pride and a source of considerable economic vulnerability, as witnessed in the aftermath of a significant cut in aid in 1986. Australia suddenly announced that it would reduce aid to PNG without prior consultation. May (2004, p.25) succinctly described this incident:

In July 1985 the two countries negotiated a new five-year agreement to cover the period to 1991. Under this agreement Papua New Guinea was to receive a total of \$A1400 million with annual grants declining by 3 per cent per annum and a further 2 per cent per annum being shifted from general budgetary assistance to programme aid. In August 1986, however, in presenting the 1986/1987 budget the Australian government announced that aid to Papua New Guinea would be cut by some \$A10 million in the current financial year. Less than four weeks later, foreign minister Hayden, while visiting Port Moresby, gave notice that Australian aid to Papua New Guinea may be further cut; a figure of \$A45 million per annum was mentioned.

Australia's short notice to drastically reduce aid placed PNG in a vulnerable position and the decision was not received well in the government of Pias Wingti. In what historical

institutionalists call ‘critical juncture’², the sudden decision to reduce aid to PNG would redefine its bilateral relations with Australia. Indeed, Australia’s sudden decision to renege on its aid commitment to PNG created bilateral tensions. Wingti had to look elsewhere. He realised that the country could not rely entirely on Australia for continued aid and economic support. Subsequently, he adopted two approaches to handle Australia: look to Asia to diversify PNG’s economic relationship and change the basis of the PNG–Australia economic relationship from aid to trade.

Prime Minister Wingti’s decision to ‘look north’ was partly influenced by a populist reaction to Australia’s influence in PNG. The programmed aid managed by Australia, ‘in which the donor retains considerable control over where and how aid money is spent’ (Corbett, 2017, p. 71), was perceived as a form of neo-colonialism. It was often criticised as enhancing the patron–client relationship (Connell, 1997, p. 308) discussed in Chapter 2. Many Papua New Guineans viewed Australia’s substantial development assistance as ‘boomerang aid’ that benefitted Australians more than it did PNG (Dinnen & McLeod, 2008; May, 2012; Shek, 2005). Australia’s decision to reduce aid in 1986 was the breaking point in the aid relationship between the two countries. It triggered the shift in the direction of foreign policy by compelling PNG to ‘look north’ and putting Australia on notice. At its core, the look north policy was primarily a reactive foreign policy posture; it was more aspirational and rhetorical than determinative.

² A critical juncture constitutes a situation that is different from the normal historical development of the institutional setting of interest (Capoccia & Kelemen, 2007, p. 348). It is how particular elements of political order that were established at earlier moments in time set or frame future choices and interests. Paul Pierson argues that ‘junctures are “critical” because they place institutional arrangements on paths or trajectories, which are then very difficult to alter’ (Pierson, 2004, p. 135). Otherwise said, antecedent conditions set a specific trajectory of institutional development and consolidation that is difficult to reverse. The choice an agent makes during the critical juncture triggers a path-dependent process that constrains future choices.

The announcement of the look north policy aimed to entertain populist nationalism and populist reaction to Australia's 'overbearing and neo-colonialist' attitude (MacQueen, 1989a, p. 536). Pushing back on Australia played well to the domestic audience. The policy was an ambitious, yet assertive foreign policy aimed more at opening the country to its imposing northern Asian neighbours than at endeavouring to emulate their success. PNG was not the first or only country in the Pacific to 'look north'. Fiji and the Solomon Islands had also done so when their relations with Australia became strained. Fiji looked to Asian countries to boost diplomatic ties and promote trade and investment soon after it was admonished for the 1987 coup. Soon afterwards, the Solomon Islands announced their plans to relate more to Asia after an Australian official document alleged corruption in the government (Crocombe, 2007, p. 211). The idea of 'look north' was not foreign to PNG's international relations. PNG has been engaging with Asia since its independence in 1975, when it was accorded observer status in ASEAN in 1976. Trade relations and foreign exchanges existed with China, Japan and the ASEAN countries well before the pronouncement of the look north policy. PNG strongly affirmed its commitment to 'look north' because its relations with Australia were strained over the budget cut issue.

Prime Minister Julius Chan (1994–1997) focused on the Pacific region. His 'work the Pacific' foreign policy aimed to strengthen regional cooperation and integration (May, 2012, p. 48). The policy provided a framework for effective and enhanced engagement with the Pacific Island countries. Under this policy framework, PNG undertook a public relations and confidence-building exercise to gain the confidence of the PIF's member countries and the MSG. Part of this strategy involved annually offering additional spaces and scholarships to Pacific Island students in PNG's tertiary institutions (Bogari, 2010, p. 140). It was the first time that PNG offered to assist the Pacific Island states, apart from the coconut war that occurred at the behest of the Vanuatu government in 1980. PNG's approach in the region fostered ambivalent feelings among its traditional and core diplomatic partners. 'Work the Pacific' and

‘look north’ sent mixed signals in the region. As a result, the foreign minister in the Chan government, Kilroy Genia, adopted a strategy of ‘reinforcing our core relationships’ in 1996 (Bogari, 2010, p. 141). This strategy was an assurance to the traditional partners that, no matter what new policy fad, PNG would always maintain its relations with its traditional partners. The policy had no significance, as PNG’s relations with its traditional partner, Australia, was consolidated in the JDP. Nonetheless, the government wanted to leave behind a policy imprint that could be remembered after it vacated office.

PNG’s domestic environment was changing in ways that impacted foreign policy. The country’s economic performance improved in the second half of the 1980s. The primary impetus for growth during this period was provided by the production of the country’s second major gold and copper mine at Ok Tedi, with the first mine being the Bougainville mine that was officially halted in May 1989, following an armed conflict. Growth in the non-mining economy increased modestly (World Bank, 1990a). In the 1990s, the PNG economy entered a new era of significant mineral-driven growth, with new mining and petroleum projects coming on stream. Between 1991 and 1994, PNG experienced its best with gross domestic product (GDP) growth averaging around 11.9 per cent and the highest growth rate recording 18.2 per cent in 1993 (see Figure 3.4). The growth was attributed to the mineral boom and increased activity in the agriculture, forestry and fishery sectors (Bank of Papua New Guinea, 1998; World Bank, 2017b). The gross national income (GNI) per capita showed a corresponding increase³ from US\$790 in 1991 to US\$1090 in 1994 (see Figure 3.5), which grew at an average annual rate of 8.05 per cent.

³ GNI per capita is the gross national income, which is converted to US dollars (using the World Bank Atlas method) and is divided by the mid-year population. GNI, calculated in national currency, is usually converted to US dollars at official exchange rates for comparisons across economies. To smooth fluctuations in prices and exchange rates, a special Atlas method of conversion is used by the World Bank. This applies a conversion factor that averages the exchange rate for a given year and the two preceding years, which is adjusted for differences in

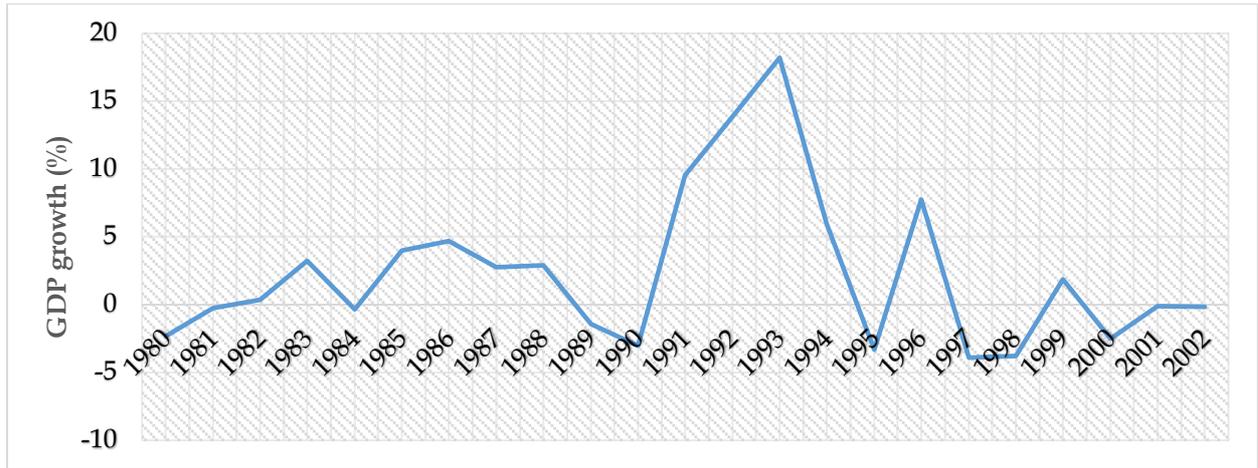


Figure 3.4. Papua New Guinea's GDP growth (annual percent), 1975–2002.

Source: World Bank (2017b).

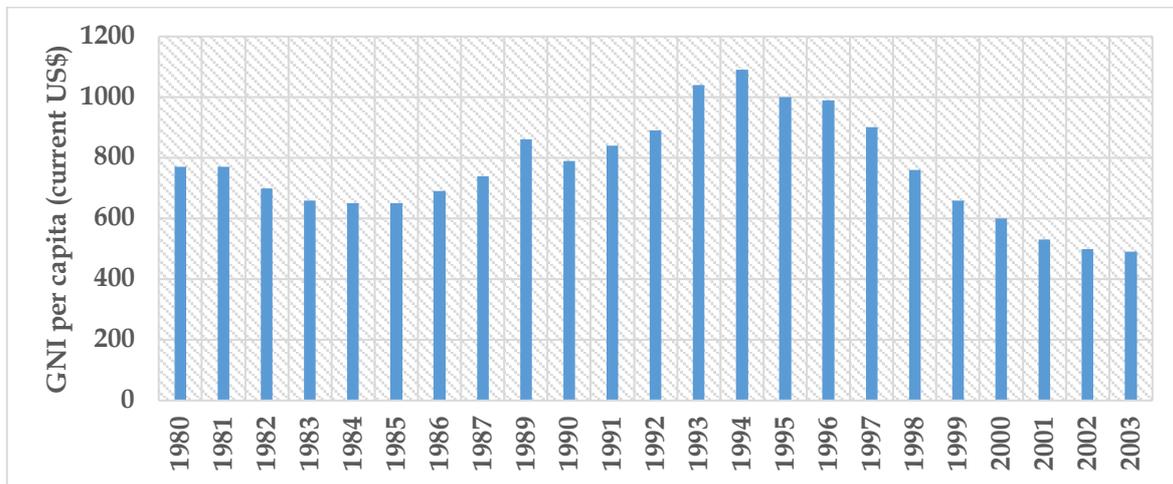


Figure 3.5. Papua New Guinea's GNI per capita, atlas method (current US\$), 1980–2002.

Source: World Bank (2017b).

PNG's mineral resources, oil deposits, timber and abundant tuna stocks make it an attractive investment opportunity for Japan, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and China. With the increased exploitation of mineral and forestry resources, issues relating to the sustainability of development and climate change have acquired greater importance in PNG. PNG signed the

rates of inflation between PNG and the advanced economies (France, Germany, Japan, the United Kingdom and the US) (World Bank, 2017b).

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in June 1992, as part of its commitment to international cooperation in combating climate change, and the *Agreement Establishing the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme* in June 1993, as part of its commitment to regional support for sustainable development.

The exploitation of natural resources strengthened the economy. However, despite the strong economic growth in the early 1990s, the revenues from this commodity-based economy have not translated into strong economic development and improvements to living standards. Poverty—persistent and nationwide—was not reduced. For example, a household survey conducted in 1996 and 2009 in PNG revealed that poverty did not decline between these years. It found that ‘poverty increased between each survey, but of a different nature each time’ and noted the ‘increase in the prevalence of poverty’ over the study period (Gibson, 2013, p. 35). Essentially, the economic growth has not reduced poverty levels. The country was blighted by endemic corruption and the government’s poor economic management.

In the mid-1990s, the economy performed poorly as a result of a ravaging drought (1997–1998), the East Asian financial crisis and the consequent slump in international prices for mineral exports and commodity prices, the falling value of the kina, the prolonged closure of the vast Bougainville mine, endemic corruption and the irresponsible macro-economic management (Gaglioti & Phillips, 1999; Theodore, Levantis & Yala, 1998; Mawuli, 1997). The structural shifts tested PNG’s behaviour in international relations. The government of William Skate that came into power on 22 July 1997 emerged when the economy was experiencing a negative growth of 3.9 per cent (see Figure 3.3). Skate was compelled to seek financial aid offshore. He announced a ‘constructive partnership in Asia/Pacific’ at the 53rd session of the UN General Assembly prior to its announcement in PNG (Bogari, 2010, p. 141). Behind this cosmetic strategy, he made a unilateral decision to give diplomatic recognition to Taiwan in return for US\$2.3 billion of aid, soft loans and investment in the timber and fishing

industries (which was discussed in Chapter 1). Skate essentially sacrificed a significant foreign policy commitment, the ‘one China’ policy, to gain a short-term financial benefit.

The shifts impacted other areas as well, particularly national unity and civil society’s influence on foreign policy decision-making. Following the economic crisis in the mid-1990s, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) seized the opportunity to impose structural adjustment programs (SAPs) in PNG. The government of William Skate (1997–1999) displayed strong opposition to almost every condition that the IMF and World Bank imposed on PNG for releasing financial assistance. Skate sought to avert stringent austerity programs that were suggested by the IMF and World Bank. However, his successor, Sir Mekere Morauta, was more accommodating to the demands of international financiers. The release of World Bank loans was premised on the privatisation of the state bank—the Papua New Guinea Banking Corporation—and other state-owned enterprises, including the Electricity Commission, Telikom PNG, Air Niugini and Post PNG. The Morauta government (1999–2002) succeeded in divesting the country of some of the portfolio of wholly or partly publicly-owned enterprises. However, the trade union opposition and anti-land mobilisation movement that was comprised of university students and NGOs opposed the privatisation of the Papua New Guinea Banking Corporation. Frustrations against the IMF and World Bank in PNG erupted in June 2001. A large demonstration was staged against a land mobilisation plan of the Morauta government, which was suspected to have been driven by the IMF and World Bank. The demonstration ended with three students dead and a demonstrator shot by members of the Special Services Division police. In 2002, the new government of Sir Michael Somare suspended the controversial privatisation policy (Curtin, 2009; Kavanamur, 2002; May, 2003a). Somare believed that the privatisation was conducted too hastily. He said there was no reason for privatisation to continue if it was not in the economic and social interests of PNG. However, for the international community—including Australia, which had backed Somare’s predecessor—the decision was the first indicator of a focus change under the new

administration (McLeod, 2002). Somare's decision to stop the privatisation policy was significant in PNG's evolving foreign policy, in that it was primarily influenced by populist and nationalist sensibilities that were built on resistance to the external actors that interfere or attempt to interfere in PNG's domestic affairs. It posited national unity—which has not been prominent after independence—against external influence.

3.7 The Foreign Affairs Mechanism and Foreign Policymaking

In the last sections, I examined PNG's foreign policy in the post-independence era up to 2002 and the factors that have been influential in shaping it. In this section, I focus on the PNG foreign affairs mechanism and foreign policymaking. This is important because it sets the foundation for the analysis of foreign policymaking in the twenty-first century. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the Australian colonial administration prepared PNG's foreign affairs mechanism well before self-government and independence. Boyce (1978) has described PNG's early foreign policymaking apparatus in detail. In 1971, the colonial administration established a PNG foreign office within the Department of the Administrator whose task, among others, was to assist in organising diplomatic training and to help establish an adequate foreign service. As early as 1972, several indigenous Papua New Guineans were recruited and trained to become diplomats and, at independence, a total of 30 Papua New Guineans were prepared for diplomatic duties. The institutions created by the colonial administration before independence were reasonably modest, but effective. The institution that took charge of foreign affairs was the DFAT. This institution was a small department with two divisions, but it combined many functions. One division was political and the other was created to oversee foreign affairs matters that related to trade policy, trade operations, international economic affairs, political and social affairs (e.g., diplomatic relations, international organisations and migrations) and customs. The Minister for Foreign Relations and Trade confined his or her responsibilities to matters of trade and industry and the Chief Minister (Prime Minister) took charge of all foreign

affairs. The Chief Minister retained a direct interest in foreign policy matters and issues (Boyce, 1978, pp. 41–54). The period after independence did not observe drastic changes in the institutional arrangement. Although the institutional structures that were constructed during the early years were consistent with PNG's development, centralisation and coordination of policy were the early government's strengths.

There was a scarcity of experienced local diplomats and foreign affairs officials who were readily available to occupy foreign offices or attend important meetings. In this bureaucratic vacuum, Australian expatriates continued to service the DFAT. They participated in international conferences that required technical or professional specialisation. A small number of nationals who were educated up to university levels were pushed into high offices with minimal experiences in government systems and world issues. The rest of the locals who were attached to the offices were relegated to subordinate roles. Treaty drafting and international legal matters were done by expatriates, either on secondment or informally through the University of Papua New Guinea. This arrangement indicated that Australians attached to the various divisions in the DFAT still influenced foreign policy choices. The foreign affairs department's composition gradually changed to include many nationals in the early 1980s. With a few exceptions, most of the senior administrative positions were occupied by people who were often intelligent and devoted, but who never had the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and experience needed to properly fill the positions (Boyce, 1978, pp. 41–54). Essentially, the foreign affairs area was inevitably an area in which PNG officials and political leaders had little experience of responsibility.

PNG's traditional, social and political structures were of limited value for administrative purposes in the transition period (1964–1975) As such, policymaking was vested with the decision-makers in Canberra, who encouraged the adoption of Australian precedents and style of administration. Canberra framed the legislation on significant issues,

including transfer of power, public service control and localisation, lands policy and economic policy. Most of these government functions were transferred to the government during the self-governing era (1973–1975), except foreign affairs and defence. Australia retained control over foreign affairs and defence and only relinquished control to the PNG Government at independence (Ballard, 1981; Boyce, 1978; Wolfers & Dihm, 2009). That is, foreign policy was one of the last areas of policy transfer. Dependence on Australian bureaucratic leadership and support was particularly significant for PNG's nascent foreign policy, as it had a bureaucracy that lacked skills and experience in foreign relations.

PNG's capacity to implement foreign policy in the 1980s has been complicated by its limited administrative capacity. From the mid-1980s, the dynamics that created weak governance took a much stronger hold (Pieper, 2004). The political scene has been characterised by frequent changes of government, shifts in alliances, cabinet reshuffles, votes of no-confidence and a general sense of instability—a situation that is mirrored in the public service, where departmental heads and government officials are frequently changed (Laki & May, 2009; Standish, 1999, 2013). The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFA) did not experience as many Secretary changes as some other government agencies. Nonetheless, it saw frequent changes of ministers, repeated organisational restructuring and significant cutbacks in staffing. These changes, together with political appointments at the level of diplomatic mission or consular post, combined to weaken institutional capacity (Wolfers & Dihm, 2009, p. 306). The politicisation of appointments was a departure from the early years of the post-independence period, where foreign affairs officials were trained for diplomatic roles and were elevated to the post (Boyce, 1978). The public service's ability to support the National Executive Council (NEC) has eroded over time, mainly due to the erosion of the independence, professionalism and capacity of the wider public service and to the politics usurping and devaluing the fundamental role of public administration. In the context of foreign

policy, institutional decline inferred that sound policy advice was not fed into the foreign policy decision-making process.

In practice, during 1975–2002, foreign policymaking and implementation in PNG has not been neatly tied to any institution. While foreign policy ‘making’ has been entrusted to the NEC, its management and administration has been devolved to the Department of National Planning and Monitoring, the DFA, immigration and customs, the Attorney General and other line departments and agencies whose functional responsibilities encroached on foreign affairs. Foreign policy coordination between institutions of government has been weak. Certain institutions and relationships at the critical centre of foreign relations, including significant elements of defence cooperation, have been conducted with little or no provision for the foreign office’s participation. There has been a growing number of international meetings in which senior public servants or government agency representatives gather to exchange information or to develop cooperative arrangements with counterparts from other countries and the officials of the organisations to which they belong (Wolfers & Dihm, 2009, p. 300). These gatherings have been conducted with minimal consultation with the foreign affairs ministry. It signified that foreign policy has often been conducted in a fragmented manner.

Foreign policy development depended on the consultation and coordination of foreign policy issues between the political leaders and the bureaucrats, as well as between the institutions of government responsible for managing foreign policy (Gyngell & Wesley, 2003). However, in PNG, state ministers often made statements and commitments on issues with foreign policy implications without consulting the foreign affairs ministry (Bogari, 2010, p. 144). The lack of coordination between institutions whose functional responsibilities encroach on foreign policy and the lack of consultation between political leaders has been a formidable challenge to foreign policy development. Moreover, there has been a disconnect between foreign policy statements and foreign policy development, which is best reflected in the case

of the look north policy that was discussed earlier. The look north policy was suggested at the political level, but it was not developed by the bureaucratic mechanism. This points to the foreign policy mechanism's weakness, particularly the bureaucracy to support the government's foreign policy priorities.

Foreign policymaking in PNG has been influenced by personalities, personal views and strengths of its leaders. The viewpoints of key political actors often featured prominently in foreign policy. For instance, Michael Somare's political image is associated with the broader idea of Pacific unity. He opposed PNG's intervention in Vanuatu in 1980 (MacQueen, 1989b; Standish, 1985) and mounted a fierce attack on the idea of the MSG at the end of 1987, claiming that it was anti-Australian and anti-NZ⁴ (MacQueen, 1989b, p. 36). Julius Chan is politically and economically conservative and has been a vocal supporter of greater regional cooperation. He explored new relationships, particularly with Asia and the Pacific (Bogari, 2010, p. 140; MacQueen, 1989b, p. 36). Paias Wingti, one of PNG's new generation of leaders who served their political apprenticeship wholly in the post-independence period, displayed a greater commitment to reorienting PNG's foreign policy than the ostensibly more conservative Somare when he replaced him in November 1985 (MacQueen, 1989a, p. 533; 1989b, p. 37). Influenced by a new crop of advisers and academics, elites such as Wingti began to accept new challenges in foreign policy as a sign of national maturity and, therefore, departed from the status quo. He brought some distinct changes to PNG's foreign policy. Wingti redefined the PNG–Australia economic relationship from aid to trade and reoriented the direction of PNG's foreign policy to the 'north' when he was prime minister from 1985 to 1988 and from 1992 to 1994. Skate called his predecessors 'gutless' and moved to give diplomatic recognition to Taiwan (Pacific

⁴ This was a superficial position on MSG that stemmed from differences with the Wingti government (MacQueen, 1989b). Somare has always been an ardent supporter of regionalism (Pacific Institute of Public Policy, 2008).

Islands Report, 1999) under his ‘constructive partnership in Asia and the Pacific’ approach. His approach to international relations was often associated with populist resistance to external influence, which often insinuated that he was the ‘people’s choice’ against neo-colonialism (Pacific Islands Report, 1999; Standish, 1999). The foreign policy implication is that these leaders drive foreign policy with minimal influence from the NEC. This aspect of foreign policymaking underlines the personalised nature of foreign policy and points to a weak foreign policy mechanism. That is, in the absence of strong political institutions to guide the actions and behaviours of key policy actors, the prime ministers heavily influenced foreign policy.

3.8 Conclusion

PNG was a traditional society at its independence. Many local people have found it difficult to understand the new institutions of modern government that were introduced by the colonial administrators. Many people were strongly affiliated to their *wantok* and their ethnic and regional groupings than to the nation–state. Allegiance to ethnic and regional groupings has often challenged the political system of government. Moreover, it undermines the principles of bureaucracy, which in turn contribute to state weakness. In the context of foreign policy, this phenomenon posed significant challenges for national unity and subsequently made it difficult to articulate a compelling understanding of the national interest and the strategic sense of foreign policy.

In many respects, PNG’s foreign policy over the period 1975 to 2002 is largely a historical account of the relationship between PNG and Australia. During the self-governing era, the governing authority sought to move away from Australia’s orbit. At their independence, PNG adopted universalism, a foreign policy doctrine that points to a tentative attempt to articulate independent foreign policies. This suggested a departure from the Australian orbit. However, PNG’s capacity to implement independent foreign policies was constrained by inadequate resources, including an inexperienced bureaucracy and political

leadership. As a developing state, it largely depended on foreign aid and investment to develop its nascent economy—with much of the aid and development assistance coming from Australia, its former colonial administrator. Australia helped PNG by providing aid, development support, a skilled workforce and technical assistance. Subsequently, Australia cemented its influence in the newly independent state. It helped PNG develop its economy and inadvertently strengthened PNG's dependent culture.

From the 1980s, PNG began to slowly challenge its reliance on Australia. In 1981, it adopted a doctrine of active and selective engagement as its foreign policy framework in response to changes in the external environment. This foreign policy doctrine did not depart significantly from universalism. It still maintained ties with its traditional partners and concurrently provided the foundation for the diversification of PNG's socio-economic, military and aid relations. Under this foreign policy doctrine, PNG lifted the level of its diplomacy in the Pacific Islands. PNG also formalised its relations with its two closest neighbours, Indonesia and Australia. It signed the *Treaty of Mutual Respect, Friendship and Cooperation* with Indonesia in 1986 and the *Joint Declaration of Principles Guiding Relations* with Australia in 1987. The JDP redefined PNG's relationship with Australia, committed Australia more to PNG's security needs and emphasised more on trade than aid. However, PNG did not depart significantly vis-a-vis its aid relations with Australia. It still had the same need for development assistance that it had during the early years of independence.

PNG's postcolonial foreign policy has evolved, as reflected in the shifting foreign policy doctrine. Minimising its primary dependence on Australia has been the primary driver of PNG's evolving foreign policy. PNG sought to broaden its options and limit Australia's constraints. Indeed, it widened its foreign relations, but its successive governments have not minimised Australia's influence. PNG still depended on Australian aid at the beginning of the twenty-first to support its programs and policies. To put it differently, PNG's foreign policy

underwent a gradual change, but it did not depart significantly from the early days of the Somare government's accession. PNG still depended on Australia, which has often been an affront to national pride. Various governments have adopted foreign policy initiatives in support of active and selective engagement, but the capacity to implement foreign policy has often been hampered by poor administration and governance issues. Such issues include weak foreign policy coordination and a lack of consultation between the formal institutions of government whose functional responsibilities encroached on foreign affairs, which implied that foreign policy had been conducted in a fragmented manner. Overall, PNG's foreign policy development has been constrained by a weak foreign policy mechanism.

The environment to which foreign policy must respond has been changing. Since the 2000s, the foreign policy environment has become more fluid. The Pacific region has observed the entry of more active external participants, including China and Indonesia. These new changes signified that PNG has more options in terms of foreign policy. Concurrently, the domestic environment has been changing. PNG's economic development, driven largely by the extractive industries, gave it a new sense of economic independence and confidence. PNG has also developed a stronger sense of its place in the region and has increasingly considered itself an important regional power with a role to play in shaping regional order. These factors have been interacting to unsettle the postcolonial status quo. However, does it result in the emergence of a more coherent foreign policy? Using three case studies—the *Enhanced Cooperation Program* (EXP) between PNG and Australia in 2003, the Julian Moti affair in 2006 and the case of West Papua in 2015—as the baseline for analysis, this study examines in greater detail the changing nature of foreign policy and whether trends in this period have continued in the period under review (2003–2015).

Chapter 4: The Enhanced Cooperation Program

4.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the ECP and focuses on the period between 2003 and 2009. The ECP was a bilateral aid program between the PNG and Australian governments. It represented an ambitious institutional strengthening program that reflected Australia's interests in security and good governance in PNG. In mid-2003, Australia proposed to take a more robust role in helping PNG address some of the core challenges affecting its development, which reflects frustration at the waste and ineffectiveness of its aid to the country. Both countries committed to managing the problems of governance and law and order in PNG. The commitment was captured in the *Joint Agreement on Enhanced Cooperation between Papua New Guinea and Australia*, or the ECP, in 2004. The ECP proved controversial in PNG, as it proposed a deep form of intervention that included the deployment of Australian police and officials into the PNG Government system as in-line workers rather than as advisers. The ECP case is compelling as a case study for many reasons in terms of the changing nature of foreign policy in PNG. It centres on PNG's most important bilateral relationship—that of Australia. The politics of ECP suggest shifts of PNG's approach to the relationship, which has been characterised as one of dependency for most of the post-independence period. Analysis of ECP, therefore, has the potential to illuminate new dynamics that impact PNG's foreign policy. A fundamental question arising from the ECP case is whether it marked a critical juncture in the relationship between PNG and Australia, which sheds light on PNG's changing interests and provides a window to evolving foreign policy in PNG.

This chapter is composed of three main parts. The first looks at the historical context of the aid relationship between PNG and Australia to provide context behind the ECP. The aim is to highlight the dominance of Australia's overseas development assistance (ODA) to PNG. The ECP was a direct government-to-government initiative that evolved from existing bilateral

programs. The program is covered in more detail in the second part, which outlines the rationale behind the program and its approach. It covers the challenges and politics of the program and the salient factors that shape it. More importantly, it provides an appreciation for why the Australian Government conceptualised the ECP and intervened in PNG. The last part is an analysis of the ECP's foreign policy implications. It summarises the key implications of the program vis-a-vis foreign policy and relates the case to the changing nature of foreign policy.

4.2 The PNG–Australia Relationship

As noted in Chapter 3, PNG and Australia have a particularly close and special relationship that stems from colonial and historical ties. Both countries maintained close levels of contact and friendship that are befitting of close neighbours who are bound together by geographical proximity and historical and security ties. Based on the historical relationship with PNG and its responsibilities under the *Charter of the United Nations*, Australia assured PNG in 1975 that it would have first call on Australia's aid program after independence. During his address at the PNG independence celebrations in Port Moresby on 16 September 1975, the then Australian Prime Minister, Gough Whitlam, said:

The Australian Government has stressed that a united and independent Papua New Guinea will continue to have first call on Australia's expanding aid program. I reaffirm that pledge in the strongest possible terms; reaffirm it with the full support of the Australian Government, the full support of the Australian political parties, the full support of the Australian people. I give a categorical and unequivocal assurance to the Government and people of Papua New Guinea that this nation will continue to have first call on our expanding aid program (Whitlam, 1975).

The bilateral relationship with Australia has been the most important relationship for PNG. The aid program is a central and practical part of Australia’s engagement with PNG and forms a critical part of the bilateral relationship. Australian aid has played a significant role in PNG’s development; historically, it has supported both the stability and the legitimacy of national government. Since self-government in 1972 and subsequent independence in 1975, Australia worked closely with PNG to develop the newly established nation–state and provided advice and skilled bureaucrats to support the new state. It heavily supported PNG’s budget; at independence, Australian aid provided 41.4 per cent of PNG’s budget (Commonwealth of Australia, 1975, p. 4). Of the net ODA that was received in PNG from 1975 to 2003, Australia remains by far the largest contributor, as shown in Figure 4.1. The graphs only show figures from 1975 to 2003. Recent figures are not shown in this and other graphs in this chapter because the ECP was introduced in 2003. Nevertheless, Australia’s ODA to PNG surpassed that of any other foreign donors, both bilateral and multilateral.

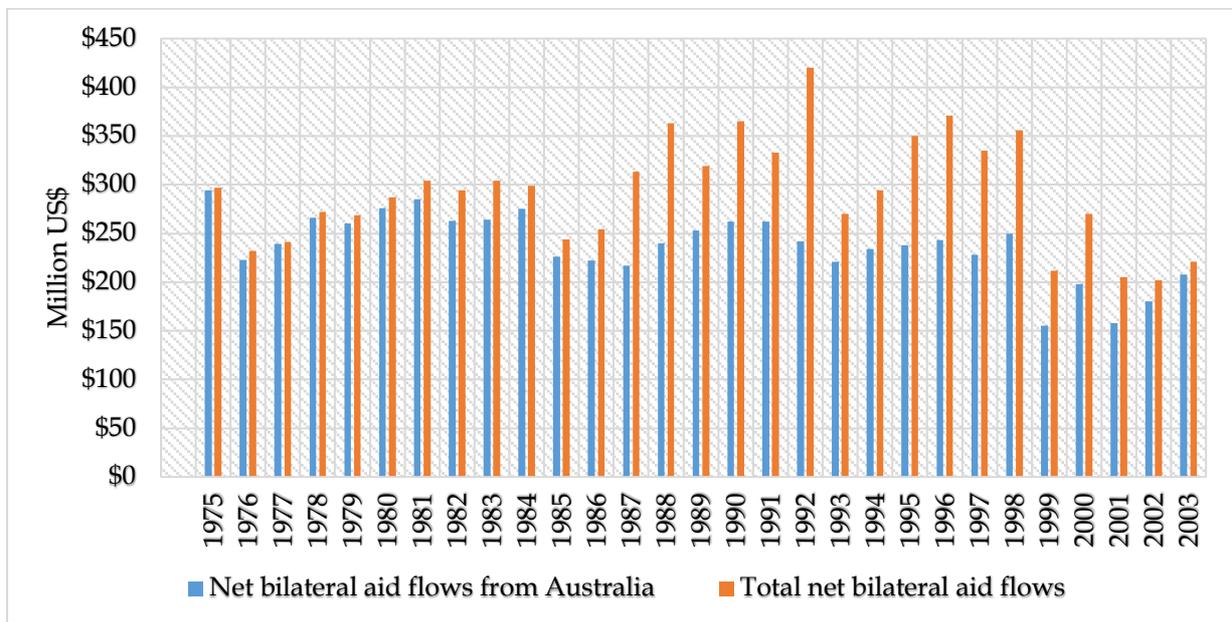


Figure 4.1. Bilateral aid to PNG (current US\$), 1975–2003.

Source: World Bank (2017b).

Australia’s bilateral aid program to PNG has consistently been Australia’s largest bilateral aid program, with an estimated annual average of over A\$300 million. In 2002–2003, the estimated total aid flow to PNG rested at A\$351.4 million (Commonwealth of Australia, 2002, p. 13). This figure represented 15 per cent of Australian foreign aid in the 2003 budget appropriation (Chand, 2004, p. 9). The average annual allocation is by far the most significant allocation to a single country in the region. It dwarfs aid to Indonesia, which is the second largest recipient of Australian aid, and the Pacific Islands as a region (see Figure 4.2).

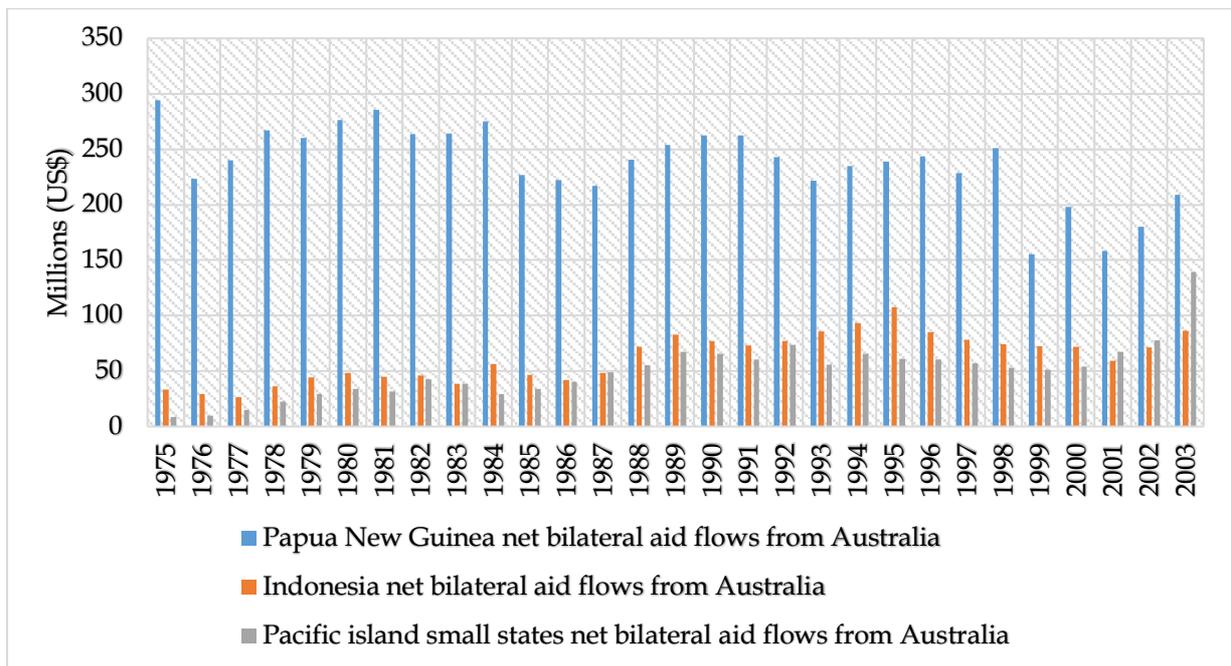


Figure 4.2. Australian ODA in the region (current US\$), 1975–2003.

Source: World Bank (2017b).

The degree of PNG’s dependence on foreign aid peaked in 1975, but it has declined since independence. In 2003, the share of aid to PNG’s GNI was about one-third the size it was at independence, as shown in Figure 4.3 (World Bank, 2017b). The decline in aid, however, was not an indication of economic independence, as PNG remained aid-dependent in the early 2000s. The government has been dependent on foreign aid for the delivery of its core policies, including health, education and infrastructure development. In 2003, per capita aid to PNG was US\$36.8 (World Bank, 2017c), which ranked PNG as the 68th most aid-dependent country

(Dollery, Fleming & Heinecke, 2008, p. 54) and implied that PNG faces similar dependency challenges with a significant number of other developing countries.

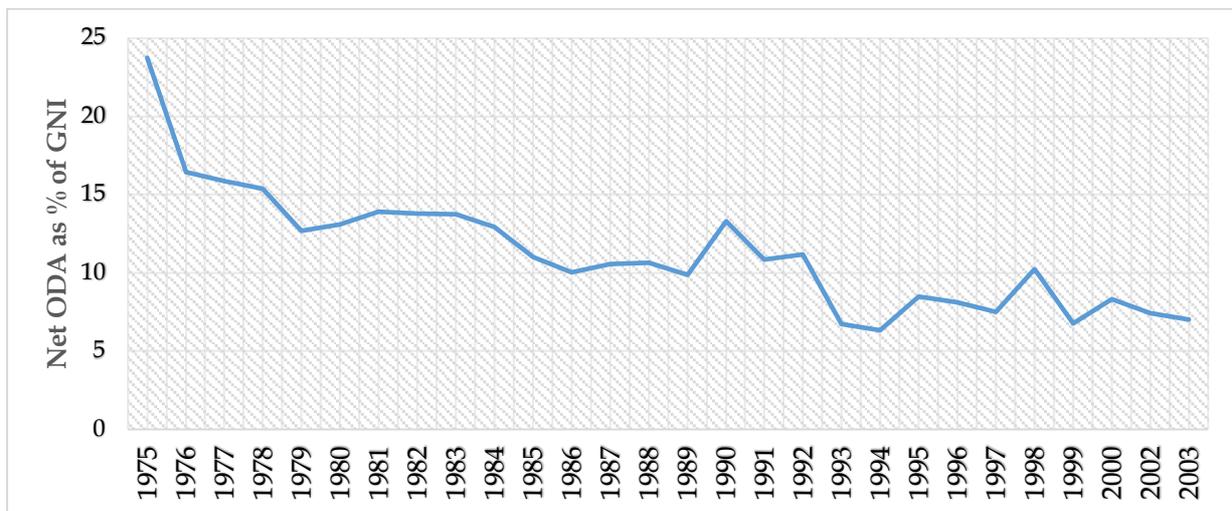


Figure 4.3. PNG's net ODA received (as percent of GNI), 1975–2003.

Source: World Bank (2017b).

From 1975 to the early 1990s, Australian aid to PNG came predominantly in the form of budget support (Howes, Kwa & Lin, 2010, p. 14). Australia supported PNG's budget by channelling aid to the PNG Government using the country's allocation, procurement and accounting system. This support was not linked to specific project activities. As such, the PNG Government was free to expend aid on its policies and priorities. Successive PNG governments, however, have spent an insufficient amount of aid in improving people's lives. The aid was transformed into a pure revenue or income, which augmented resources and was spent whichever way the PNG Government chose. For example, the government would spend less on policies (e.g., health, education, justice and other important services) and spend more on dubious projects, which raised concerns about mismanagement and corruption (Simons, 1997, pp. 14–15). The main cause of corruption has been the diversion of funds from public to private use by unscrupulous political and bureaucratic elites. Therefore, the aid allocated to PNG has not reached the majority of its citizenry.

Since the 1980s, the aid's effectiveness became an increasing concern for Australian policymakers. Subsequently, several reviews of the Australian aid program have been undertaken, including the Jackson Review (Jackson, 1984) and Simons Review (Simons, 1997). In 1984, the Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs commissioned the Jackson Review, which led to a stronger focus on partnerships with recipient countries through a country program approach. Initially, Australia's aid program was administered by several government departments, which reflected the ad hoc nature of the program. The program approach was different. Instead of selecting individual projects, country programs considered the development priorities of recipient governments as well as Australia's interests, which included humanitarian assistance, support for Australia's strategic interest and the promotion of Australia's commercial position (Jackson, 1984). Otherwise said, in the country program approach, Australian aid was programmed on the basis of country and regional strategies in consultation with partner governments. Both the Australian and recipient governments were involved in the planning and implementation of the recipient country's programs. On 24 May 1989, the Australian and PNG governments signed the *Treaty on Development Cooperation*. Under this treaty, both governments agreed that 'budget support assistance shall be provided by the Government of Australia to the Government of Papua New Guinea at a progressively diminishing rate' in support of 'a progressive increase in jointly programmed aid, supplementary aid and other forms of assistance' (*Treaty on Development Co-Operation between the Government of Australia and the Government of Papua New Guinea*, 1989). In support of PNG's budget, untied aid would be reduced with a subsequent increase in program aid. This adjustment was the first time both countries agreed that Australia would provide a jointly programmed aid to PNG that was consistent with both governments' policies, priorities and practices. The adjustment to the mode of aid delivery, which PNG accepted, was an Australian initiative that was aimed to improve the effectiveness of aid. The process commenced in 1992–1993 and was completed by around 2000.

In 1996, the Australian minister of foreign affairs commissioned the Simons Review (Simons, 1997). The Review, under the new Howard government, argued that the basic arrangement of the aid program was sound, but that it had suffered from the lack of a clear objective that left it open to being pulled in different directions. Its major findings were that the three-pronged approach of the Jackson Review—to allow poverty reduction, foreign policy and commercial interests to inform all aid decisions—had been a misstep. The review recommended a substantial change in the approach and direction of aid. It further stated that, at times, the effectiveness of aid suffered as a result of the commercial orientation of the types of activities that were undertaken (Simons, 1997, pp. 1, 3). This rationale led to the adoption of a single and clear objective for the aid program: to advance Australia’s national interest by assisting developing countries to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development (Tomar, 1997). The Simons Review strengthened the partnership approach that was emphasised in the Jackson Review, in which Australia worked together with recipient countries and supported projects and programs that were mutually beneficial. Cooperative relationships and effective partnerships with developing countries formed the core of Australia’s aid program.

On 7 October 1999, the Australian and PNG governments signed the revised *Treaty on Development Cooperation* (1999). The revised treaty was partly influenced by the Simons Report, which raised concerns about the corruption and mismanagement of Australian aid (Simons, 1997, pp. 14–15). Article 4(2) of the Treaty reads:

In order to improve the impact and effectiveness of the development co-operation program the Parties agree that aid should promote: priority development outcomes as detailed in the MTDS [Medium Term Development Strategy] and any other priorities determined by the Government of Papua New Guinea from time to time; high levels of accountability and transparency; the commitment and participation

of both Governments and the Papua New Guinea community; and innovative and efficient aid delivery.

The revised treaty demanded greater accountability and transparency, while maintaining that aid would be jointly programmed (Article 4). In addition, Article 8(1) of the revised treaty stated that:

The Governments of Australia and Papua New Guinea recognise the importance of performance benchmarks for the development co-operation program. The Parties agree that performance against agreed targets, including benchmarks, shall influence the level and allocation of funding of the development co-operation program.

An essential element of the revised Treaty was the introduction of generic and sector-specific performance targets and benchmarks. The sectors included health, education, rural development and governance, which prompted two issues that cut across the development process: the promotion of gender equality and the maximisation of environmental sustainability. Performance in each of the sectors against the determined benchmarks would be reviewed and assessed annually, with the outcome of the analysis being used to determine the type and volume of future Australian aid. It was the first time for such an approach in the Australian aid program. It demonstrated Australia's gradual approach to maximise the benefits of its aid disbursement. Essentially, Australia found a way to exercise greater control, given the worrying trends in PNG.

Australian aid has been important in supporting key social sectors in PNG, such as education, health and infrastructure development. Over the period 1975–2002, between 10 and 30 per cent of Australian aid went to core government sectors, including health, education, governance and infrastructure (see Figure 4.4). Governance, however, remains the biggest

challenge: corruption is endemic among the political elite and the bureaucracy; elections are held in a timely manner, but they are neither free, nor fair; the political participation of women is low; the parliamentary opposition is weak; and the country suffers from an inefficient civil service, serious law and order problems, and poor discipline in the army and police (Reilly, 2002; Rynkiewich & Seib, 2000; Standish, 1999; Sullivan, 2004). As a result, Australia focused more on improving governance in PNG. The formal targeting of governance as a key sector for Australian assistance in PNG commenced in 1997. Since then, Australian efforts have intensified to support public sector administration and economic management, to help develop an effective judicial and law enforcement system and to strengthen systems for the protection of individual rights and freedoms (AusAID, 2003).

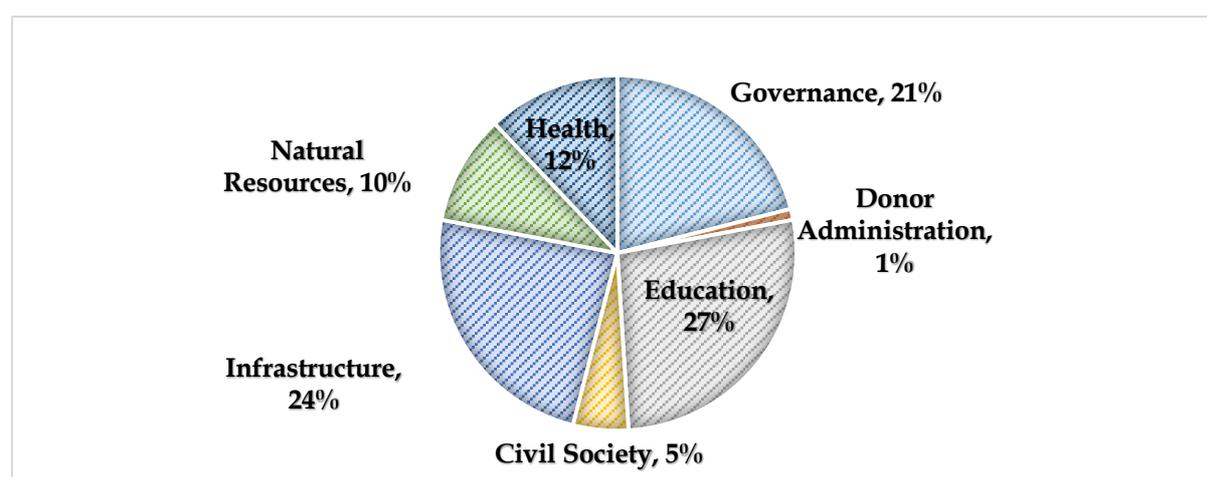


Figure 4.4. Sectoral composition of Australian-programmed assistance to PNG, 1975–2002.

Source: AusAID, 2003.

In the 2001–2002 financial year, the estimated total aid flows to PNG rested at A\$342.9 million (Commonwealth of Australia, 2001, p. 14). The most significant portion, totalling A\$96 million or 28 per cent of the total aid, was used to strengthen governance (see Table 4.1) (Commonwealth of Australia, 2001, p. 14). In the 2002–2003 budget estimates, a total of A\$351.4 million was earmarked for PNG (Commonwealth of Australia, 2002, p. 13). Again, governance topped the allocation by receiving 31 per cent of the total aid. Funding for improving governance was streamlined to support public sector management (7 per cent), to

strengthen law and justice institutions (9 per cent) and other governances (15 per cent) (see Table 4.1) that included supporting effective economic management, an environment that encourages the private sector, building the capacity of PNG agencies to deliver essential services, and strengthening civil participation and representation (Commonwealth of Australia, 2002, p. 14).

Table 4.1 *Breakdown of Bilateral Aid to PNG by Sector*

2001–2002			2002–2003		
Sector	A\$ (million)	Allocation (%)	Sector	A\$ (million)	Allocation (%)
Governance	96	28	Other	52.71	15
			Governance		
Education	82.3	24	Education	70.28	20
Transport and Infrastructure	82.3	24	Transport and Infrastructure	77.31	22
Health	54.86	16	Health	66.77	19
Renewable Resources	13.72	4	Renewable Resources	10.54	3
Other	13.72	4	Other	17.57	5
			Justice	31.63	9
			Public Sector Management	24.60	7

Source: Commonwealth of Australia (2001, 2002).

Since 1997, there has been an increasing focus on good governance because it was considered important for strengthening PNG's ability to effectively use aid resources to improve development outcomes. Australia's increased focus on good governance was

consistent with the global interest in good governance. Prompted by concerns over the effectiveness of aid, the World Bank and donor countries have endorsed good governance as a core element of their development strategy (Kaufmann, 2009; B. MacDonald, 1998; Santiso, 2001). The framework that guides principles of aid effectiveness is captured under the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, which looks at the responsibility of developed and developing countries for delivering and managing aid in terms of ownership, alignment, harmonisation, managing for results and mutual accountability (Development Assistance Committee, 2008). Australia has signed undertakings so that its aid program will be aligned with the Paris Declaration principles in many regions and countries, including PNG, and has continuously focused on improving the effectiveness of its aid programs in the country.

At the turn of the twenty-first century, Australian aid has been targeting the quality of governance in PNG, particularly with respect to the management of public expenditure, encouragement of broad-based sustainability growth and the addressing of the underlying causes of conflict and instability. Efforts to improve the impact of Australian aid were reflected in Australia's push to develop the *Joint Agreement on Enhanced Cooperation between Australia and Papua New Guinea* in 2004. It was an Australian initiative to develop an engagement architecture that frames dialogue with PNG on development and security issues and it provided a base for program efforts to strengthen the governance and capacity of state institutions. The agreement flagged a strong collective effort to strengthen public service agencies in the PNG Government. The signing of the Joint Agreement was accompanied by a range of new programs that represented a concerted effort on Australia's part to address fundamental development problems in PNG. The Joint Agreement was heavily influenced by the 'new interventionism' paradigm of the time that prevailed in Australia's near neighbourhood (Dinnen, 2004; Doyle, 2001; Glennon, 1999), which proposed a robust form of state building and using interventionist modalities such as embedded technical support. A key program that was developed under the Joint Agreement was the ECP, which was best

understood as a form of transnational ‘forward defence’ in which the neighbouring country becomes a ‘frontline’ for protecting Australia’s security and strategic interests (Chan, Goodman & O’Connor, 2006, p. 83). It was the largest single aid program to PNG since independence. At the time the ECP was first accepted in 2003, the Australian Government agreed to fund PNG with approximately \$1.1 billion over five years until 30 June 2008 (Parliament of Australia, 2005). This package included \$805 million of new funding to the existing annual aid of \$330 million under the bilateral aid program to PNG.

4.3 The Enhanced Cooperation Program

The ECP was driven by Australia’s strategic and security concerns, specifically the idea that state fragility posed significant security risks by reducing the ability of states to manage and contain possible risks that might emanate from their domestic territory (Barbara, 2008; Chan et al., 2006). The program’s idea emerged against a backdrop of three broad and overlapping influences: state fragility and concerns about the security implications of fragile states, which were made more significant, given the war on terror; an increasing focus on good governance; and growing frustration at the limited impact of significant aid spending, which resulted in a focus on cooperative intervention. It subsequently gave rise to a more robust Australian engagement approach. Cooperation intervention involved a robust intervention, with the consent of the host country, to try to strengthen the fragile institutions and the state (Greg. Fry & Kabutaulaka, 2008, p. 10). The doctrine of cooperative intervention was initiated after Australian Prime Minister, John Howard, returned from a meeting with US President, George Bush, and his war on terror efforts that followed the terrorist attacks on the US on 11 September 2001. Howard announced that Australia had a special responsibility to reverse the failed states in the region, which he referred to as ‘our patch’ (Howard, 2003), so they would not ‘become safe havens for transnational criminals and terrorists’ (Parliament of Australia, 2003; Sydney Morning Herald, 2003). The fear that fragile states in the region would provide

a foothold for transnational crime syndicates, and a haven or transit point for terrorist groups like the Indonesian-based Jemaah Islamiah, was a concern for Australia; its close alliance with the US raised concerns regarding terrorist reprisals for the war on terror (Dupont, 2001; O'Keefe, 2009; Van Fossen, 2003). These emerging fears were further aroused by the weak law enforcement capacity of the Pacific Island countries (McCusker, 2006; Windybank, 2008). The idea of cooperative intervention became powerful in the Pacific because of the number of fragile states and their proximity to Australia. As a foreign policy doctrine, cooperative intervention was given added impetus and legitimacy because of the broader war on terror.

Australia's fears in the region were hardened by the events that transpired in the 'arc of instability' (Ayson, 2007; Evans, 2012; Wallis, 2015), a term used to describe the string of weak, fragile and artificial states and sub-states in the region, ranging from the separatist Indonesian province of Aceh in the west to the coup-stricken Fiji islands in the east (Ayson, 2007, p. 220), that posed security challenges to Australia. The instabilities were manifested in the 2002 Bali bombings in Indonesia, the bombing of the Australian Embassy in Jakarta, the ongoing Bougainville crisis in PNG and the civil conflict that beset the Solomon Islands from 1998 to 2003 (Fry, 2004). The Solomon Islands experienced a difficult period between 1998 and 2003. A civil conflict evolved into a lengthened period of violence and, subsequently, engendered lawlessness. The conflict devastated the economy, crippled the government mechanism and brought the country to the brink of collapse (Kabutaulaka, 2005; Moore, 2005; Nanau, 2008). The Solomon Islands were heading towards a failed state. The country was in dire need of help, which essentially could not come from within. It required foreign intervention. In 2003, the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) was formed in response to a request for international aid by the Solomon Islands Government. Australia spearheaded RAMSI and took a leading role marshalling support for the regional mission and providing the bulk of funding and personnel. The rationale for the intervention was that a failing state would not only endanger the lives of Solomon Islanders, but it could

also pose significant threats to the whole region (Hameiri, 2007, pp. 410–411). Howard made no secret of his government’s rationale for intervention in the Solomon Islands. He said:

We know that a failed state in our region, on our doorstep will jeopardise our own security. The best thing we can do is to take remedial action and to take it now (Howard, 2005b).

The remedial action was to directly intervene and take a more active role in arresting the threat. The fear that fragile states in the region posed significant security threats was particularly concerning. RAMSI was involved in rebuilding the failed state (Barbara, 2008, p. 123), which included restoring law and order, rebuilding national institutions, stabilising the economy and improving service delivery. The ECP in PNG was structured in a similar context of institutional strengthening and capacity building in a potentially ‘fragile state’ (O’Keefe, 2009, p. 2). Australia was conscious of PNG’s potential for becoming a ‘failing state’ (Chan et al., 2006, p. 79). The pervasive and systemic weaknesses in the state’s capacity to provide effective government, as well as chronic lawlessness, make the country more vulnerable. This gives overseas commentators, academics and scholars the opportunity to stigmatise PNG as a ‘weak state’ (Wainwright & White, 2004, p. 4), a state ‘on the brink’ (Manning & Windybank, 2003, p. 1), a ‘basket case’ (Radio Australia, 2003; Walton, 2013), a ‘ruined state’ (Patience, 2011), a ‘dysfunctional state’ (Hughes, 2002), a ‘fragile state’ (O’Keefe, 2009, p. 2), a ‘failing state’ (Chan et al., 2006, p. 79) and, in the extreme form, a ‘failed state’ (Windybank, 2003). There are conceptual and contextual variations between the various descriptions. However, the often repeated cliché of ‘failing state’ became increasingly associated with PNG (Dinnen, 2004, p. 4; Patience, 2005, p. 3). The perception of PNG as a failing state gave impetus to the ECP. Australia positioned PNG as a potential security threat that it must stabilise from the top-down.

Governance in PNG, as mentioned, has been one of the most difficult of PNG's development challenges. Apart from weak institutions and lack of capacity to deliver essential services, other issues that posed significant development challenges included corruption, political instability, ineffective leadership and a thin civil society that was unable to hold the government to account (Laki & May, 2009; Rynkiewich & Seib, 2000; Sullivan, 2004). Various PNG governments have made attempts to address some of the governance problems, but they have rarely succeeded. For example, between 1999 and 2002, Sir Mekere Morauta's government adopted the World Bank's structural reform programs, which included broad goals: promote good governance and strengthen the institutions of state; build macro-economic, financial and budget stability; introduce public sector reform for improved public sector performance; remove obstacles to economic growth (Kavanamur & Turner, 2009, p. 18); and create political stability and integrity (Okole, 2012). Despite the government's efforts, governance indicators have shown that governance has been declining. For example, in 2003, the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators showed all six categories of governance (control of corruption, government effectiveness, political stability, regulatory quality, the rule of law, and voice and accountability) in PNG were worse than they were in 1996 (World Bank, 2017d). Poor governance has been a growing concern for the Australian authorities because poor governance together with widespread corruption limited the effectiveness of development assistance (DFAT, 2000). From 1975 to 2003, Australia provided more than US\$6.896 billion (in current US dollars) ODA to PNG (World Bank, 2017b). Despite a long history of aid, PNG continued to face substantial development challenges that included dysfunctional service delivery mechanisms, the public sector's limited capacity to deliver services, weak law enforcement capacity, deteriorating infrastructure, poorly functioning systems of government, law and order challenges and corruption. The domestic challenges impeded PNG's ability to meet international development goals and national targets. The growing problems in PNG was an increasing source of frustration for Australia as PNG's principal development partner.

Australia considered poor development outcomes a sign of both corruption and malfeasance on the part of PNG and its ability to be a constructive partner in pursuit of shared aid objectives. Frustration with poor development outcomes in PNG became an increasing preoccupation of policymakers in Canberra. Senior officials in the Australian Treasury, in the Prime Minister and Cabinet and in Foreign Affairs and Trade concluded that efforts to strengthen PNG institutions had largely failed, partly due to the ‘general lack of accountability in Papua New Guinea for Australian aid’ (Dollery et al., 2008, p. 60). A significant source of concern in Australia was the issue of corruption and the degree to which Australian aid resources were inappropriately used or wasted by the PNG Government. For example, aid intended for a particular sector has often been diverted to another and subsequently siphoned off from the system by a few political elites. Similarly, for every dollar Australia spent on health, the PNG Government would spend less on health, spend more on dubious projects (Callick, Hughes, Vincent & Weisman, 1990) and thus raise concerns about corruption and mismanagement (Simons, 1997, pp. 14–15). Part of the problem identified in the critique of Australian aid was the way in which aid was managed. The Howard government became impatient with how Australia’s aid programs were administered by the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) and related agencies (Patience, 2005). For instance, for almost 16 years (1989–2005), Australia committed more than A\$240 million to strengthen PNG’s law and the justice sector. The substantial aid targeted for the policing component of the law and justice sector produced little sign of sustained improvement in the organisational and operational performance of the Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary (RPNGC) (Dinnen, 2009, pp. 252–254; Dinnen & McLeod, 2008, p. 26). The efficacy of the development projects was widely criticised (Aid Watch, 2005; Shek, 2005) and many of the criticisms and concerns were related to the mode of aid delivery (Wainwright & White, 2004; White, 2005; Windybank, 2003). Professor Hugh White, a former ministerial adviser, think-tanker, academic and the principal author of Australia’s 2000 Defence White Paper, argued that helping PNG ‘cannot

be done through the conventional forms of development aid' (White, 2005) and together with Elaina Wainwright, Strategic and International Program Director at the Australian Strategic Policy Institute, proposed that Australia could help by taking 'over key responsibilities for government in PNG' (Wainwright & White, 2004, p. 40). It was perceived that the existing aid program, delivered through AusAID, had failed. Their proposal effectively called for direct intervention and formed part of the broader pressure for change in the approach to aid disbursement.

In his statement to the Australian Parliament on Australia's development cooperation in the region on 24 September 2002, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Alexander Downer, argued that Australia cannot walk away from the 'poor performing states' that are identified 'mostly in Melanesia'. He added that Australia's 'continued priority will be to strengthen the institutional capacity of legal and policy systems' and 'will continue to engage governments on good governance' (Downer, 2002). Consistent with this policy statement, the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee alluded on 28 March 2003 to 'direct intervention' as an 'absolutely essential' (Commonwealth of Australia, 2003, p. 414) approach for helping PNG address its significant and challenging development issues. In mid-2003, the Australian Government decided to take a more direct role in helping PNG address its core challenges (Parliament of Australia, 2005). This marked the beginning of the ECP.

In Canberra, the National Security Committee of Cabinet resolved that Australia would take a more active and even interventionist approach in PNG. On 20 August 2003, Downer suggested that Australia increase its involvement. On 29 August 2003, the National Security Committee of Cabinet dispatched a special team led by senior diplomat, Bob Cotton, from Canberra to Port Moresby to deliver a letter to the PNG Government (ABC News, 2003). The contents of the letter were not disclosed, but it contained a thinly veiled threat—if PNG did not improve its governance and take control of the corruption that has plagued the country's

institutions, Australia's aid would be reassessed (Allard, 2003; Chan et al., 2006; Marshall, 2005). That letter marked the beginning of ECP negotiations. Several ministerial meetings were subsequently held between the foreign ministers of the two countries, Honourable Alexander Downer and his PNG counterpart, Sir Rabbie Namaliu.

On 18 September 2003, Downer and Namaliu met in Port Moresby to set the framework through which the key elements that underpin the PNG–Australia relationship could be further advanced with existing arrangements to assist PNG in addressing the social and economic challenges that affect its development. The two ministers agreed that a functioning public service and a committed law and order and justice sector were fundamental for development. They acknowledged that progress had been made in strengthening these sectors, but that more needed to be done in advancing this progress, with further support and involvement of Australia. In this regard, the ministers agreed on a framework that included:

A firm commitment to work as close partners in addressing core challenges in Papua New Guinea in the areas of governance, law and order and justice, financial management, economic and social progress as well as capacity in the public service ... An agreement in principle to examine the placement of Australian officials in positions in departments and agencies (DFAT, 2003b).

The news of the ECP attracted widespread public support in PNG (Sydney Morning Herald, 2004). There was a growing nostalgia for the colonial era, particularly in the rural areas and among the older generation, when government services were efficient and reliable. The extent to which state services had withdrawn was apparent in the country (Patience, 2005). For instance, in 1996, only 39 per cent of health facilities were in a satisfactory condition and less than 70 per cent of rural aid posts were operating (World Bank, 1999, pp. 87–89). Therefore, improving the government's capacity was considered one way for vital services like health to

be restored. Many young people—disillusioned (in growing numbers and with increasing bitterness) with their politicians, constantly struggling against inadequate facilities for training and higher education and struggling to find secured employment—felt defeated in the face of the enormous challenges the country faced. The disillusioned generation saw little future for themselves, or for the next generation, and looked to the ECP as a panacea for their problems (Patience, 2005). There were widespread beliefs and expectations among the community that the ECP would ameliorate the law and order and governance problems that contributed to socio-economic problems. The idea of intervention indicated that Australia would play a more active role in improving service delivery in the areas where the PNG Government had failed.

The general public's reactions were not the same at the political level. The ECP brought mixed reactions. Some ministers and members of parliament welcomed the proposed program, while others had ambivalent feelings. The Prime Minister, Sir Michael Somare, resisted the ECP partly because Australia labelled the Pacific Island countries as 'failed states' and saw the region as its 'patch' (Fry, 2008, p. 76; Howard, 2003). The prime minister, angry and defensive, said:

I would like to tell you, my friend, we are not a failed state. We can make it work. We've made it work for 30 years now. When we gained independence, and I want to emphasise that, when we gained independence, there was no military coup in this country, there was no sabotage. Yes, there were change of governments. We had seven prime ministers. But we have no military coups like they have in African countries, like they have in other parts of the world. Never (Somare, 2005b).

According to the elites, the factors that impede progress in PNG are no different than those of troubled areas throughout the postcolonial world. The rush to independence on a

timetable dictated by the administrators without properly designed institutions for government, the weak post-independence governments operating on inadequate revenue bases, the poor economic performance and high population growth that fuels tensions over land, the tribal and ethnic clashes that challenge the capacity and authority of the state and the collapse of the rule of law that descends into corruption, criminality and maladministration are universal patterns in many post-independence developing countries (Wainright, 2003, pp. 18–19). These factors often contribute to state failure. PNG has experienced some of these problems, but the state has not failed. A failed state is often used to describe cases of complete state collapse, either into civil war or anarchy (Migdal, 1988, pp. 4–5). Classifying PNG as a failing state, in terms of the lack of good governance and law and order problems, underestimates the dynamic forces that generate conditions that prompt the symptoms of its fragility. In PNG, state institutions continued to perform to varying degrees and success. Many state institutions are overwhelmed with capacity issues, but some have managed well despite the limited resources and impediments. For example, funding the government’s school fee subsidy policy for all primary and high school children under the National Education Plan (1995–2004) declined in 1999, but schools throughout the country continued to provide education to all primary and high schools students (Guy, 2009). This suggest that some state institutions are functioning as expected, while others are not. Somare opposed the ECP because Australia labelled PNG a failed state.

The mindset that PNG was a ‘failing state’ (Patience, 2005, p. 3) or ‘failed state’ (Fry, 2008, p. 76) insulted the government, particularly when PNG governments have worked to carry out reforms for improving governance and reducing law and order problems. Successive governments that have attempted to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the public sector by restructuring organisational structures (Laki & May, 2009; Wolfers & Dihm, 2009) have started addressing law and order problems (INA, 2004) and have implemented reforms that were declared essential by outside agencies, including the World Bank’s SAPs (Weise, 2002; World Bank, 1990b). Essentially, successive governments have struggled to improve

governance by carrying out reforms, but the implementation of reforms has remained weak (Kavanamur & Turner, 2009). In addition, the government has commissioned inquiries and investigations into allegations of corruption and malpractice, including inquiries in the forestry industry (Barnett, 1989, 1990), an inquiry into the engagement of Sandline International in 1997 (Andrew, 1997), an investigation into transparency, government dealings and accountability of public office holders (1997–1998) and an inquiry into the National Provident Fund in 2000. The government also commissioned an inquiry into the general conduct of the Privatisation Commission, the matters relating to the privatisation of Finance Pacific Limited and the sale of the Papua New Guinea Banking Corporation (2000–2003). These inquiries were well intentioned, but the recommendations were never implemented.

As for reforms in governance, the government's endeavour to strengthen political parties, promote more broadly supported candidates and increase political stability is worth noting. These three goals found their institutional expression in several pieces of legislation that were introduced in 2001 and 2002, most notably the *Organic Law on National and Local-Level Government Elections* and the *Organic Law on the Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates* (Baker, 2005; Okole, 2012; Sepoe, 2005). Since the reforms, there were 'clear improvements in political stability, party system cohesion and electoral processes' (Reilly, 2006, p. 193). Although measurable improvements have occurred since the implementation of these reforms, they have not altered fundamentally established political practice or 'political culture' (Morgan, 2005, p. 3; Standish, 2013, p. 8). Overall, constructing the inquiries and taking steps to improve governance indicated that PNG was concerned about addressing issues of corruption and, more generally, governance in the country. For this reason, labelling PNG as a failed state irked the government.

The PNG Government largely welcomed Australia's efforts to help PNG address its development problems. However, labelling PNG a failed state as a rationale for intervention

irked the PNG intellectuals and political elites. The former commander of the PNGDF, Jerry Singirok, denied that PNG was a failed state and contended that neglect and poor funding of the government institutions by successive governments over the years have contributed to weak institutions (Singirok, 2004, p. 106). The mindset that PNG was a failed state and that Australia could help through direct intervention has evoked sentiments of nationalism, particularly among the new generation of PNG elites and leaders who saw Australia's intervention as infringing upon Papua New Guinea's sovereignty (May, 2006, pp. 167–168). Somare, in particular, took it personally. The notion that PNG was a failed state, with allusions to governance and corruption, was an affront to Somare's leadership. He saw governance—the act of governing—as his sphere and the notion of promoting governance through direct intervention undermined his leadership, as the program proposed a deep form of intervention that included the deployment of Australian officials into the PNG Government system.

Somare believed that the extent of Australia's planned involvement in PNG underscored their neo-colonial and paternalistic attitude. Similar sentiments were shared by some members of the opposition, including influential actors such as the Governor of Morobe and former National Court judge, Luther Wenge. Namaliu also had similar views. Wenge was cautious when news soon leaked about the appointment of an Australian as solicitor-general in PNG. He claimed that the two countries were conspiring to break the law:

I am saying that whoever they appoint must comply with the laws of this land. To date, we know that they are trying to appoint an Australian to be the Solicitor-General. This contravenes the law relating to the appointment because one of the criteria is that you must work in Papua New Guinea, in the legal practice for five years (Wenge, 2003).

Wenge detected breaches in the PNG constitution and vowed to challenge the program in court. He would eventually challenge the legality of the program not because of the appointment of the solicitor-general, but because of the issue of granting immunity to the Australian police officers that were part of the program (Supreme Court of Papua New Guinea, 2004). Namaliu was one of the few senior ministers in the Somare government 'who viewed the package as an unwarranted intervention in PNG affairs' (Chan et al., 2006, p. 84). During the breakfast meeting of the Business Council of PNG on 4 June 2004, he said 'the issue of immunity was the sticking point that needed to be resolved before ECP could be implemented' (Namaliu, 2004). Namaliu was concerned about the insertion of foreign police in an independent country, but he mellowed after a series of meetings with his Australian counterpart. Somare was perhaps one of the few senior politicians in government who openly and more frequently expressed his opposition to the program. During an interview with the ABC's AM program on 5 September 2003, Somare said:

They have not identified the areas where we've gone wrong. They have not come and sat with us. They may have sat with the Planning Office, they may have gone out and interviewed people outside and not talking to the Executive of the Government, people who are planning the process, people who are ensuring that the money is channelled into the right channels. And that perception is an absolute rubbish (Somare, 2003a).

Somare accused Australia of failing to consult with his government and maintained that there was no reason for Australia's intervention. He viewed Australia's intervention as disrespect for his government and his accusation stemmed from the approach to the program delivery. The proposed program was a direct government-to-government initiative that eschewed the traditional approach in which aid programs involved joint steering committees

and a clear definition of objectives (Dixon, Gene & Walter, 2008, p. 17). Somare viewed the new approach as bypassing his government on important issues such as financial management and governance (DFAT, 2003b), as disrespecting authority and as insulting his administration. Somare insisted that PNG was a developing but sovereign country. Therefore, it could not be forced to accept the ideology of what he called ‘good governance’, which he argued the ECP was seeking to impose. These sentiments were expressed during the official visit to PNG by the Malaysian Prime Minister, Dr Mahathir Mohamed, in October 2003. Somare did not miss the opportunity to express his opinions on dealing with the question of Australian aid. In his welcoming speech, Prime Minister Somare said:

We are led to accept someone’s acceptance of good governance, even when that someone refuses to accept that it took him over 100, or 200 years, what he now enjoys, while he requires us to achieve it in one or two years or three years (Somare, 2003b).

Somare’s speech was an indirect statement to look beyond Australia, should Australia insist on imposing its ideals of good governance on PNG. Malaysia had a similar experience and moved away from Australia. In 1993, Dr Mahathir refused to participate in the inaugural APEC summit and pushed for the exclusion of Australia, claiming that Australia did not belong in Asia. This prompted then prime minister, Paul Keating, to label him ‘recalcitrant’ (Shenon, 1993; Stewart, 1993). In response, Dr Mahatir told reporters, ‘I can’t understand these Australians’, adding that Australia ‘talks down to Asia—it tells the Asians how to behave themselves, even when the Australians themselves are not very well behaved’ (Shenon, 1993). To a large extent, Somare’s veiled remark supported the look north policy that was discussed in Chapter 3. The look north policy is more a sentiment than a policy and it is normally expressed as a desire to move away from Australia. It had its roots in the thoughts of leading PNG politicians and bureaucrats who thought that their country was still in the shackles of

colonialism. The policy was specifically announced to reduce dependence on Australia, but since its announcement in 1994, the policy did not materialise. PNG continued to rely on Australian aid and often used the look north policy as a rhetoric to move away from Australia when its relations with its traditional partner is strained.

While Somare was expressing his concerns about the ECP, policy discussions between his foreign affairs minister, Sir Rabbie Namaliu, and his Australian counterpart continued. There was a lack of coordination between the offices of the prime minister and foreign minister. This lack of coordination stemmed from a misunderstanding of the program, specifically the negotiation of the ECP. According to Namaliu, Somare was disgruntled with the program because he thought that the agreement was made with minimal consultation with PNG, but he capitulated to the ECP after he was advised that the program followed negotiations:

What has changed basically is this. There was a perception out there, here, and obviously that was the perception that the Prime Minister had at the time, that the proposal to inject Australian officials into some of these positions would be done on the basis that Australia would be putting, offering them to us without our input, without our consultations, and once that was cleared, you know that wasn't a package that they were about to shove down our throats but in fact it's a package that is subject to discussions, which exactly happened yesterday and once that was cleared, we then said well, this is something that we've been doing anyway (Namaliu, 2003).

Somare distanced himself from discussions while negotiations between the two foreign ministers continued, partly because he strongly felt that his government was not consulted (Somare, 2003a). Besides in the prime minister's office, there was a lack of consultation between the foreign ministry, other ministries and line departments that would be affected by

the program. Namaliu was the only minister in the Somare government who negotiated the ECP with the Australian Government. During the 15th Australia–Papua New Guinea Ministerial Forum in Adelaide on 11 December 2003, the two foreign ministers reaffirmed the joint statement of 18th September and agreed to the ECP’s details.

In a joint statement, the two foreign ministers agreed that up to 230 Australian police officers, known as Australia assisting police (AAP), would be placed in the RPNGC (DFAT, 2003a). It was also agreed that 18 Australian specialists would work in non-policing law and justice agencies and positions, which include that of solicitor-general, three litigation lawyers in the solicitor-general’s office, five prosecutors in the prosecutor’s office, two correctional service managers, four expatriate judges appointed to the National and Supreme Court and lawyers and specialist officials in other key justice agencies. While policing was a primary focus, the ECP also included a broader state building program with a strong focus on economic governance. According to the joint statement, 36 Australian officials would work in key economic, finance, planning and expenditure agencies to help the country better utilise the 80 per cent of its budgetary resources that was derived internally. The key priorities included the establishment of fiscal sustainability and transparency, restoration of the budget institutions and systems integrity, elimination of weaknesses in the civil service payroll, provision of economic policy advice, improvements in provincial budget management and stronger public sector performance and outcomes. Of the 36 Australian officials: 10 would help streamline PNG’s immigration services, border and transport security and management and aviation safety; four immigration officials would help hone border control and migration management; two transport security officials would be placed within the PNG Department of Transport and Civil Aviation to help guarantee the security and safety of its aviation and maritime transport system and to meet international transport security obligations; one official would be placed as a deputy chief executive in the Civil Aviation Safety Authority to assist PNG maintain its air safety management and governance at a high level; and three customs officials to help improve

revenue collection, international trade security and border integrity. Skills transfer and capacity building would be key features of this assistance. The proposed program was comprehensive and broadly focused on strengthening key governance institutions. Although it was composed of two parts, governance and law and justice, the major focus was on law and justice with a strong focus on policing because the program proposed the deployment of many Australian police officers.

Under this new arrangement, Australian officers would be inserted into ‘in-line’ (Dinnen, 2009, p. 255; Hawksley, 2005, p. 36) positions in key government agencies, which signifies that Australian officials would not only play advisory roles, but would participate in operational duties as well (DFAT, 2003a). Simply put, they would operate as employees of the host government agencies and exercise delegated powers. Australia has been previously sensitive to allegations of neo-colonialism and interference with national sovereignty (Dinnen, 2004, p. 1). Therefore, its aid to the region was provided with a ‘hands-off’ approach, in which Australian consultants were attached to PNG Government departments as advisers who worked alongside local counterparts. The shift in the mode of assistance was the embodiment of cooperative intervention, in that it represented a more demanding and robust form of engagement that linked expectation of influence to the provision of aid. Australia wanted more control to implement and direct the aid program to improve prospects. The new mode of aid delivery included a strong focus on the use of technical assistance, whereby Australian advisers were deployed to government agencies to implement aid objectives and build the capacity of local officials. The proposal to insert Australian officials into in-line positions within the core institutions of government was considered more likely to be influential in pursuing reform agendas or determining program priorities. However, the power, or influence, of Australian officials over their PNG counterparts and vice versa was not clear. Nonetheless, the proposed program was controversial, as it was a clear reversal of the non-intervention policy that marked a deeper form of intervention and that arguably encroached on sovereignty.

PNG accepted the ECP package in general, but the program could not be fully implemented because a treaty-level agreement between Australia and PNG that covered the ECP, including the passage of enabling legislation and other legislative amendments, was yet to be concluded. The requirement of a treaty on the program was consistent with Australia's past aid programs to PNG. Past aid programs were guided by treaties and agreements and the ECP was no exception. For example, the *Treaty on Development Cooperation* stipulated that budget support assistance would be reduced in favour of programmed aid ("*Treaty on Development Co-Operation between the Government of Australia and the Government of Papua New Guinea*," 1989). Therefore, a treaty that provided the framework for the proposed program was required. The drafting of the ECP, however, was controversial.

Australia's DFA, AusAID, the Australian Federal Police and the Attorney General's department collaborated and prepared the ECP (Hawksley, 2005; Parliament of Australia, 2005) without consultation with the PNG authorities who would be affected by the program. These departments and agencies included Police, Civil Aviation, the Attorney General, Customs and National Planning and Monitoring. The exclusion of the key government departments in the consultation process was later revealed by Namaliu, who pointed out that 'Australian officials had been deeply involved in writing the legislation' (Namaliu, 2005). He further claimed that 'an Australian police commissioner' and other Australian 'police personnel that served in the PNG police force helped draft the laws' (Nicholas, 2005). Moreover, there was no inter-departmental dialogue between the departments and agencies that would be affected by the program because 'little was known about the contents of the agreement' (Amet, 2005; Solomon, 2005a) on which inter-departmental discussions could be centred. More importantly, the State Solicitor's Office, which is responsible for advising the government on bilateral treaties, was overlooked (Niesi, 2005b). Australian authorities designed the ECP in Canberra and exported it to PNG with limited consultation with the PNG Government (*The National*, 26 May 2005, p. 2). Namaliu and his government had little influence in drafting the

program. The only times that the ECP came under the jurisdiction of the law-making authorities in PNG were when the two governments negotiated it and when it was enacted in parliament.

Part of the joint agreement on ECP contained provisions on jurisdiction that were designed to protect the AAP and officials deployed under the program, as well as to guard them against vexatious claims. Article 8 of the ECP dealt primarily with the protection of Australian officials from prosecution under PNG laws (*Joint Agreement on Enhanced Cooperation between Australia and Papua New Guinea*, 2004). The AAP would not be subjected to PNG's criminal and civil jurisdiction of the courts or to tribunals of PNG on acts or omissions done within the course of, or incidental to, official duties. The idea of granting immunity to the visiting AAP became a contentious issue in PNG when the Australian Government raised it. Although the PNG State Solicitor advised the government that granting immunity to the visiting AAP would be against the constitution, the government ignored this advice (Niesi, 2005b). On 30 June 2004, during the 16th PNG–Australia Ministerial Forum in Lae, PNG, both governments entered into the *Joint Agreement on Enhanced Cooperation between Papua New Guinea and Australia* and the two foreign ministers signed the treaty. On 27 July 2004, the ECP was enacted into law with less opposition in the PNG parliament. The prime minister strongly opposed the ECP, but he capitulated and voted in favour of the program with the most parliament members. The reason why Somare capitulated and accepted the ECP is explained by examining PNG's prevailing economic environment.

In 2003, the government faced significant challenges to its economy. The country was reeling from the effects of poor economic performance between 1997 and 2002 due to a combination of both internal and external factors (Asian Development Bank, 2002; Gaglioti & Phillips, 1999; Theodore, Levantis & Yala, 1998). The challenges included a significant downward pressure on the kina, price inflation pressures with a subsequent rise in the interest rates on government stock, pressure on the balance of payments, limited cash throughout the

remainder of 2002 due to excessive spending in the first eight months of the year and a recession for some years with negative total GDP growth in 2000, 2001 and 2002 (Price Waterhouse Coopers, 2002). The economy was in bad shape for three consecutive years (see Figure 4.5).

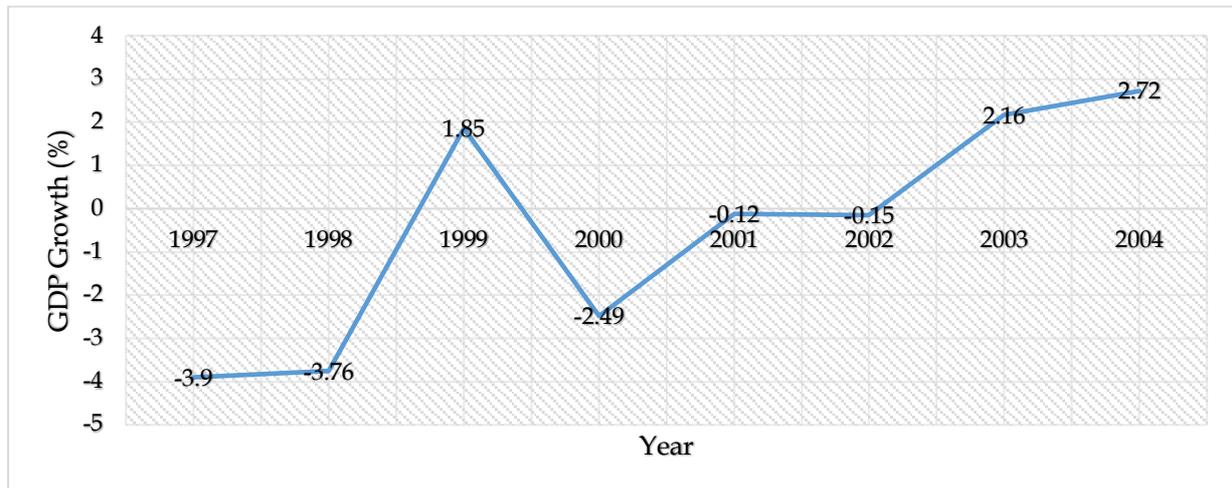


Figure 4.5. Papua New Guinea GDP growth (annual percent), 1997–2004.

Source: World Bank, 2017b.

PNG was slowly recovering from the poor economic performance in 2003 when the ECP was negotiated. PNG's interest was focused on improving the economy, which would include accepting outside offers of help to boost economic growth. Australia was conscious of PNG's economic predicament and knew that, in the end, PNG would accept the Australian ultimatum because its government had no choice (Somare, 2003a). That is, Australia took advantage of PNG's poor economic condition and used its economic power to influence a policy proposal that favoured its interest. Nonetheless, it was apparent that the acceptance of the ECP was influenced by the domestic economic environment.

For many politicians, foreign aid was important under the prevailing economic climate and could not be refused for the sake of political rhetoric, even though both Somare and Wenge preferred non-interference from Australia. Somare saw governance—the act of governing—as his sphere and he wanted limited interference. This is because the ECP was more interventional

than other aid programs. As stated in this chapter, the program proposed a deep form of intervention in the PNG Government system. Many members of the PNG parliament, however, could not be bothered by the prime ministers' concerns about Australia's interference. Australia had a long history of supporting PNG in terms of aid and development assistance. Successive Australian governments have been involved in providing aid, targeting training in good governance, providing advisory support and helping PNG strengthen its government institutions to improve governance and law and order through bilateral agreements. For example, under the *Joint Declaration of Principles Guiding Relations between Australia and Papua New Guinea* in 1992, Australia has been providing development assistance 'as part of an agreed program of cooperation which contributed to development and self-reliance in Papua New Guinea' (DFAT, 1992). The ECP was one such agreement that involved a substantial amount of aid. A total of \$1.1 billion was earmarked for the program over five years (Parliament of Australia, 2005) and would be spent on the programs that were identified under the Agreement.

Somare's acceptance of the ECP, despite his tirades and criticisms, demonstrated contradictory policy positions. It demonstrated that it was difficult for PNG to disentangle itself from the dependent nature of its aid relationship with Australia. The underlying reason for accepting the ECP was known later in 2005 during an interview with the *SBS Dateline* program. Somare said:

Don't you think you are corrupting my mind also? You can't refuse 800 million, you must accept it. Don't you think it's corruption? When you impose your will upon me to accept your money, I think fair and reasonableness and understanding each other, mutual understanding are better ways of solving issues, not the imposition of money (Somare, 2005b).

Somare's statement was crucial. It underscored the reason why he capitulated after protracted wrangling. He admitted that he could not refuse the A\$800 million tied to the program, so his government had to push through the ECP. Nonetheless, his resistance to the ECP was perhaps the first time a PNG Government resisted Australian aid.

The ECP was one of the few items of legislation that got passed into law in a very short time and the ECP was adopted on the 9 August 2004 (*Enhanced Co-operation between Papua New Guinea and Australia Act, 2004*). Article 2 of the schedule to the act sets out the purpose of the law:

Australia may, in consultation with the Government of Papua New Guinea, deploy police and other personnel to Papua New Guinea to work in partnership with the Government of Papua New Guinea to address core issues in Papua New Guinea in the area of governance, law and order and justice, financial management, economic and social progress as well as capacity in public administration, including the Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary.

The new legislation empowered the Australian officials to work alongside their PNG counterparts in various sectors of government. Under the ECP, the officials would be treated differently from their PNG counterparts. They would exercise almost all the operational functions of the organisations they were to be attached to, but they would be immune from prosecution for any acts or omissions done within the course of, or incidental to, their official duties. As part of the agreement under the ECP (Article 11), PNG citizens were to be prevented from seeking redress for wrongs committed by Australian officials who were engaged in the program (*Joint Agreement on Enhanced Cooperation between Australia and Papua New Guinea, 2004*). The ECP shielded the visiting AAP from prosecution under PNG laws.

The first contingent of AAP was deployed in Port Moresby soon after the passing of the ECP. The impact of the program's policing component was felt immediately. A youth from the highlands of PNG, living in Port Moresby, remarked:

In the past, our police officers used to be very abusive. They do not know how to deal with the public and how they handle public complaints. Whatever little they do, they expect some form of recognition. This attitude of policing changed when the Australian police came. We saw dramatic changes. The Australian police officers interacted well with us and treated us as human beings. It would be better if our police officers emulated their policing attitude⁵.

There had been more interaction and engagement, more friendly reaction and less violence from the Australian police officers. They had seen little from the RPNGC, whose policing attitudes were often violent and less responsive. People at the grassroots level saw a new dimension to the policing component, such as responsiveness to complaints, and gave their support to the ECP (Kimisopa, 2005a). Many people in the wider PNG community were neither concerned about the sovereignty issues that lengthened negotiations, nor about the politics involved in the ECP. In general, the ECP was well received by many Papua New Guineans, particularly the policing component. The impact of the governance component, however, was not felt immediately.

On 8 December 2004, Wenge, a very vocal critic of the ECP, filed a special reference to the Supreme Court challenging the validity of the new legislation. Wenge read the fine print

⁵ Excerpt from a conversation with Moss Dama on 6 July 2013, in Port Moresby.

of the ECP, called the legislation ‘deplorable, discriminatory and in contravention of the constitution of PNG’ and further declared that the entire agreement and the manner in which it was rushed through was a ‘charade’ and an ‘insult’ that would not stand the scrutiny of PNG law or international standards (*The National*, 16 May 2005, pp. 1–2). He brought a series of seven overlapping and interrelated questions touching on PNG’s sovereignty before the court. The Supreme Court detected not only inconsistencies in the ECP, but also contradictions within the Act itself; it expressed its concern that the national parliament could have considered and complied with section 38 of the constitution at the time the ECP was passed (Supreme Court of Papua New Guinea, 2004). The inconsistencies and contradictions with the ECP indicated poor vetting in the policymaking process on the part of PNG’s government. A working committee, if one ever existed, failed to sift through the Agreement before it was endorsed by the PNG parliament as law. Moreover, the Supreme Court found that the ECP encroached on section 38 of the constitution and provisions of the *Police Force Act* (Supreme Court of Papua New Guinea, 2004).

On 13 May 2005, the Supreme Court declared that the new legislation was illegal and the AAP withdrew. Many ordinary Papua New Guineans were disheartened and disappointed when the AAP departed (Gumuno, 2005). Many of the grassroots population who were daily exposed to PNG’s law and order and socio-economic problems did not see any benefits arising from the collapse of the ECP’s first attempt (Laracy, 2006, p. 24). The policing component of the ECP halted and was withdrawn after less than a year in operation, following the court’s ruling. The Supreme Court’s ruling only affected the placement of the police component, but it did not alter the operating mode of the ECP personnel significantly. The governance aspect of the ECP, including assistance to economic and legal or judicial areas of government, continued under the PNG Governance Facility.

The Supreme Court's decision exposed tensions within the PNG Government and not all PNG politicians were happy with the court's ruling. Some members of the government, such as Somare, wanted the program back. The Police Minister, Bire Kimisopa, said the 'devastating' (Kimisopa, 2005b) ruling created a critical challenge for PNG and the government that was struggling to reform a corrupt and dysfunctional police service. He said:

The political hierarchy needs to humble itself. We've got to demonstrate leadership and resuscitate this program. Even if PNG were able to pick up the pieces, it could take more than a year to find a solution. We can't continue our reforms without the ECP. We don't have the luxury of the time to abandon this (Kimisopa, 2005b).

Kimisopa was delegated the task of renegotiating the ECP. He stated that the government supported the program:

The PNG Government now has of last week delegated me to re-negotiate the police program so that we can ... whatever needs to be done within the ECP Agreement, as far as the police component is concerned, it needs to be discussed, it needs to be agreed to as soon as possible and hopefully we need to go back to Parliament with a number, with a new agreement. That's basically what the PNG Government is looking for. I mean, the public opinion, the public support for the ECP was overwhelming, and unfortunately the ECP was in operation for just only 6 months, I think, a little bit over 6 months and it got undone, but that doesn't mean we should, you know, drop the program altogether, because this is something Papua New Guinea needs (Kimisopa, 2005a).

Many members in the PNG Government wanted the ECP, but their effort to implement the program jointly with Australia was interrupted by the Supreme Court's ruling. Even Wenge, who took the matter to the Supreme Court, wanted Australia and PNG to return to the negotiating table (Wenge, 2005a). In an interview with Australia's *ABC PM* program on 13 May 2005, Wenge (2005b) said:

I am not saying the Australians shouldn't come here, make it clear to them they are good friends. They are certainly our good friends, our long-time friends. There's no question about that and we must ... that friendship must remain, but whatever dealing that happens in Papua New Guinea and Australia must be consistent and in compliance with the law.

Wenge was concerned about the legal aspect of the ECP, particularly its infringement of the constitution. According to a report in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, dated 14 May 2005, Wenge said that future assistance should be in the form of logistical support, rather than dispatched Australian officers. His statement did not represent the government's position on aid delivery. Somare welcomed the Supreme Court's decision and said that 'we would like to remove the umbilical cord of depending [on] Australia and diversify our relations with the region and the world' (Somare, cited in Anderson, 2006). It was not clear how Canberra interpreted this statement, but the underlying message was apparent—Somare was annoyed by Australia's patronage and wanted to diversify PNG's relations to minimise its dependency on Australia.

The issue of Australia's unilateralism became a point of argument after the ECP collapsed and further deepened tensions in the bilateral relationship between the two countries. Australian foreign minister, Alexander Downer, blamed the PNG Government for the flawed legislation, claiming that Australia was not 'involved with the actual legislation' because it

‘was a matter for the PNG government’ (Solomon, 2005b; Marshall, 2005). However, his PNG counterpart, Sir Rabbie Namaliu, highlighted that Australian officials were deeply involved in writing the ECP and further stated that PNG would review not only the legal issue of immunity, but the substantial sections of the agreement as well:

It shouldn’t be a one-way street, they [Australia] shouldn’t be expecting us only to be accommodative in this situation. After all, it’s supposed to be a bilateral arrangement that is adhered to by both countries (Namaliu, 2005).

Namaliu maintained that the ECP was drafted offshore and pushed through bilateral arrangements, expecting PNG to be receptive to the program. Australian High Commissioner, Michael Potts, refuted this statement and claimed that it was ‘misplaced’ (Huafolo, 2005). The Australian Government wanted the police to return as soon as the legal obstacles were removed. In the wake of the court decision, Australian Prime Minister Howard insisted that the ECP should be resumed as quickly as possible. However, he insisted that the only way forward was to amend the PNG constitution to provide legal protection of the Australians deployed in PNG. In an interview with radio station *4BC* on the 18 May 2005, Howard (2005a) said:

We are not prepared to allow our police to continue to operate there without this immunity. It may well be that the only solution to the problem is an amendment to the PNG Constitution ... So it’s back to the negotiating table with the PNG Government, the aim being to find a way whereby legal immunity on a constitutional basis can be provided.

The idea of immunity is not foreign to international deployments (Akande & Shah, 2010; Ladley, 2005). The Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961 provides

immunity for representatives of foreign states on authorised business and the principle has also been extended to peacekeeping forces to avoid petty or vexatious litigation that detracts from the tasks at hand (Hestermeyer, 2009). Australia's push for the immunity of its officials was consistent with the sorts of immunities that Australia seeks for its officials who are deployed in different parts of the world, including the Solomon Islands (Brown & Peake, 2005). Downer reasoned that these immunities were consistent with those granted to Papua New Guineans engaged in RAMSI and that there was nothing particularly surprising about it (Downer, 2005). Nonetheless, the immunity of Australian police officers in PNG proved to be a vexing issue, primarily because Australia used the same justification for RAMSI as a template for the ECP. The Australian-led RAMSI intervention was justified in Australia by the failing state paradigm. It was perceived that the failing state was unable to fulfil its obligation to protect its inhabitants. Some members of PNG's political elite expressed their reservations about Canberra's new approach and objected to the parallels drawn between PNG and the failing state in the Solomon Islands. Although there were similarities, there were also important differences between the two countries. For example, key institutions such as the police may be weak, but they have not collapsed (Dinnen, 2004, p. 8). Accordingly, the issue of immunity was the source of disagreement between the two governments.

The demand for constitutional change allowed for what amounted to an abolishment of national sovereignty—fuelled tensions within the PNG ruling elite. It also fuelled the wider popular resentment and opposition to Australia's brinkmanship. Many people, including the general public, said that it was 'unreasonable' to amend the constitution and that the proposal to amend the constitution was 'colonialism reinvented' (Niesi, Wakus & Rheeney, 2005)—suggesting that the era of Australian colonialism has revived. Namaliu dismissed the possibility of changing the constitution and stated:

We both know that we are coming from two positions—that we obviously need to move gradually so that we can arrive at a common position. But if it's to be done in the spirit of brinkmanship, then that's where problems start (Namaliu, cited in Niesi, 2005a).

Namaliu (2005) was adamant about the constitutional change and urged the Australian Government to understand PNG's position. In response to Australia's repeated demands, he stated:

Well they [Australia] have to try and appreciate our position, that it is very difficult to amend the constitution. Particularly in the present environment, it's not going to be that easy.

Similarly, Somare opposed a change to PNG's constitution. He countered by saying that there was no need to alter provisions of the constitution to cater for the immunity issue, adding that PNG is a sovereign nation and that amending the constitution to appease Australia would be undermining its sovereignty (Niesi, 2005a; Solomon, 2005a). Somare was bitterly disappointed in 2003 when Australia threatened to reassess its future aid packages to PNG, based on the outcome of negotiations relating to the ECP (Allard, 2003; Chan et al., 2006; Marshall, 2005). In an interview with the SBS *Dateline* program on 14 September 2005, Somare was asked what PNG would do if Australia 'pulled the plug' and said, 'do it our way or there's no money, you'd be in a crisis' (Somare, 2005b), which alluded to Australia's threat to reassess its aid package to PNG pending discussions on the ECP. Somare responded tersely:

Of course, they can pull the plug. It's their money. It's their taxpayers' money. We had an understanding they were going to help us but if they want to take it out, take it out for God's sake.

He then added:

I don't really care. I say we have to work together but if they don't want it, if they want to take their program away, take it away. My foreign minister has come out, said that. We cannot change the constitution. Change the constitution because of security problem for your police coming up and work here. We're not going to treat Australians who come and help us, treat them with contempt or kick them around the streets and go to their compounds and raid their compounds. Look, nobody is stupid around here (Somare, 2005b).

Somare's long diatribe against the ECP underscored his government's position after Australia insisted that PNG changed its constitution to cater for the ECP. The Somare government was adamant about amending the constitution for the ECP and further ignored Australia's attempts to revive other elements of the cooperation program. Somare refused to consider proposals about retaining some of Australia's police and judicial officers. His government further worked to minimise Canberra's direct control. For example, in June 2005, his government barred an Australian official attached with Department of Treasury from entering finance department offices after he was accused of spying (O'Connor, 2007). Somare then fell out of favour with the Howard government.

The Howard government had no intention of backing down or conceding. Australian Foreign Minister, Alexander Downer, was surprised at the refusal of the PNG Government to amend its constitution. On 24 August 2005, during the Australia-PNG Business Council breakfast meeting in Port Moresby, Downer said:

We have obviously given thought as to whether we wanted to salvage it [ECP], or whether we didn't. We have come to the conclusion that whilst the Papua New Government will clearly not, and the Papua New

Guinea Parliament by the way, will clearly not amend the constitution to provide for those immunities and we're disappointed that they won't. But we obviously accept that they clearly won't. Even if they, the government itself, indicated it would be prepared to amend the Constitution it's very questionable that they would get the numbers in parliament to achieve it. In any case, it would take a very long period of time involving enormous domestic controversies. So I've looked at this very closely, and I have come to the conclusion that the immunities simply aren't going to be possible because the constitution isn't going to be amended. We just have to live with the consequences of that. But we decided that what we would like to do is salvage as much of the Enhanced Cooperation Program as appropriate (Downer, 2005).

Downer's message to revive the ECP, along with the issue of constitutional amendment, brought little change to Somare's attitude towards the program. It was apparent that the management and delivery approach of Australian aid to PNG would not be successful with Somare at the helm of PNG politics. Negotiations were lengthy and caustic. There were no signs of either side forgiving the other and the government shelved the idea of the ECP for almost four years.

In late 2007, Kevin Rudd led Labor into government in Canberra. The change of leadership in Canberra provided an opportunity to change the direction of the relationship between Australia and PNG. In early 2008, Prime Minister Rudd visited PNG and presented a document titled 'Port Moresby Declaration'. This document included the announcement of a new Pacific Partnership for Development aid program and, under this program, the Australian Government would provide increased development assistance over time, in the spirit of mutual responsibility. The partnership program committed the Pacific Island nations to improve

governance, increase investments in economic infrastructure and achieve better outcomes in health and education (DFAT, 2008). The fundamental idea behind the partnership program was joint ownership and cooperation to achieve shared goals. In the press conference associated with the release of the declaration, Prime Minister Rudd said:

We are carving out a new chapter in the relationship between Australia and Papua New Guinea. We are carving out a new framework for our relationship with the rest of the Pacific Island countries (Rudd, 2008).

The declaration was centred on the promotion of a closer relationship between Canberra and the Pacific States. It committed Australia to start a new era of cooperation with the island nations and to meet common challenges in the region. The new policy towards the Pacific Island countries constituted a ‘new approach to Australia’s arc of instability’ which proposed ‘fresh ideas for future challenges’ (Rudd, 2007, p. 1). Australia’s new diplomatic approach with PNG and the rest of the Pacific Island countries was widely welcomed in the region.

On 10 June 2009, during the 19th Australia–PNG Ministerial Forum, the Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Hon. Stephen Smith, and his PNG counterpart, Hon. Sam Abal, released a joint statement on the *Strongim Gavman* Program (SGP), which was the successor to the ECP. The SGP was rhetorically anchored to the Pacific Partnership for Development’s principles—mutual respect and mutual responsibility—through respect, openness, dialogue and consultation (DFAT, 2008). However, the SGP was similar to the ECP in many respects. It reaffirmed the fundamental focus of the ECP, which included institutional strengthening, good governance and security. Like the ECP, it aimed to strengthen the performance of key government agencies in the areas of economic and public sector management, law and justice, border management and transport security. The difference, however, was the placement of Australian officials. SGP officials were deployed as policy advisers rather than as ‘in-line’ officers. Experienced Australian Government officials in the Department of Treasury,

Department of Finance, the Australian National Audit Office, the Department of Defence, the Attorney General's Department, the Australian Customs Service, the Australian Tax Office, the Department of Infrastructure, the Department of Immigration and Citizenship and the Australian Office of Financial Management were placed on long-term secondments in counterpart agencies of the PNG Government system to support capacity development and to foster institutional relationships between the two governments (DFAT, 2014c). Somare supported the SPG. During a reception hosted by the PNG High Commissioner to Canberra in April 2009, he said:

Within the Strongim Gavaman Programme (SGP), I would like to see more resources directed towards having Australian judges, doctors, and teachers actually deployed around Papua New Guinea to work (Somare, 2009, p. 6).

Somare did not oppose the SGP as he did the ECP, despite the fact that the SGP and ECP were similar. Rudd's more tactful diplomacy partly influenced Somare's reception of the SGP. For example, in the same speech, Somare said he was pleased that 'the *Partnership for Development Agreement* affirmed the principles of mutual respect embodied in the *Joint Declaration of Principles*' (Somare, 2009, p. 5). According to Somare, mutual respect and understanding were absent in the ECP. The absence of these values were partly the cause of his tirades against the Howard government, which were cited earlier in this chapter (Somare, 2003a). Somare wanted mutual respect as the basis of the relationship between PNG and Australia. Rudd's diplomatic approach to Australia's 'arc of instability' departed from Howard's new interventionism. Rudd bolstered the relations with PNG and the rest of the South Pacific ruling elites that had fractured under the former Howard government. He announced new aid packages and promised a new era of cooperation between Australia and the Pacific Island nations (Rudd, 2007, 2008). This approach appealed to national sovereignty and the

consensus politics of the Pacific way discussed in Chapter 2, which involves cooperation, respect for sovereignty and partnership.

Although Rudd's tactful diplomacy was central to the PNG–Australia relationship post-ECP, the crux of the renewed bilateral relationship was PNG's development needs and aid dependence. Somare's reception of the SGP demonstrated the rooted nature of PNG's dependence on Australian aid and the difficulty for PNG of freeing itself from the dependent relationship. It was often difficult for PNG to pursue its core domestic policies and programs in the areas of health, education, transport infrastructure, justice, and law and order without Australia's assistance. The funding of programs and policies through the program, project and sectoral approaches has been the most notable (AusAID, 2009, 2010; DFAT, 2013b). PNG's dependence on Australian aid has inadvertently strengthened Australia's influence in the country, which is best reflected in the ECP.

PNG's reliance on Australian aid had created a legacy of dependency that has been described as a patron–client relationship (discussed in Chapter 2) in which Australia, who has consistently supported PNG, expected PNG to support Australia's regional initiatives and policies. Australia's Pacific Solution in 2001 (Parliament of Australia, 2013; Phillips, 2012; Warbrooke, 2014) is a case in point. It was an Australian Government regional policy of transporting asylum seekers, who were intercepted at sea, to offshore detention centres that were established on Nauru and PNG's Manus Island. PNG accepted Australia's regional policy because it was agreed that Australia would assist in the reform of the PNGDF with \$20 million, as well as bear the cost of establishing and operating the immigration processing centre (Parliament of Australia, 2013). The aid and promise to maintain the asylum processing centre was predicated on the assumption that the processing centre would be established on Manus Island. PNG accepted Australia's regional policy because the Pacific Solution was a source of revenue for the PNG Government (Wallis & Dalsgaard, 2016; Warbrooke, 2014). Australia

(the patron) used aid as an enticement and expected PNG (the client) to support its regional policy. Such expectations from Australia and compliance from PNG has reinforced colonial-like behaviour, with the patronage through aid programs perpetuating this attitude. Somare was conscious of PNG's predicaments vis-a-vis aid dependency. Being the first prime minister who led the new nation to independence in 1975, Somare did not want PNG's national sovereignty undermined by continued dependence on foreign aid—a desire he and his fellow compatriots held since the 1970s. In April 2009, during the reception in Canberra, he announced the Australian Aid Exit Strategy. He stated:

After over 34 years, Papua New Guinea must forge a new relationship of equitable partnership with Australia ... The intention [of exit strategy] is to further fine-tune and normalise the development support from Australia to meet our long-term development objectives. Resources will initially be redirected to identified sectors to achieve better development outcomes with a view to eventually phase out the ODA. For instance, in the first instance, I would like to see more resources taken away from consultancies and allocated towards enhancing private sector development, including better access to finance. This is in recognition of the role of the private sector in driving economic growth. Likewise, I would like to see more resources shifted from the public service and policy improvement programmes to fund infrastructure development in the transport, health, and education sectors (Somare, 2009).

Somare's idea of the exit strategy demonstrated his frustration with PNG's continued dependence on Australian aid. Essentially, Somare positioned the government's thinking on the need to modify development cooperation arrangements, including modalities for the

delivery of Australia's ODA to PNG, to better reflect PNG's long-term development aspirations, which included gradual phasing out of Australia's development assistance from over time. Somare's ambitions to minimise PNG's dependence on Australian aid will require long-term cooperation from Australia.

4.4 Conclusion

What does the ECP case study reveal about contemporary foreign policy in PNG? The ECP highlights significant continuities in PNG foreign policy. It underscored the continued centrality of the PNG–Australia bilateral relationship in PNG's foreign policy. The colonial legacy still exerts considerable influence over the relationship. It is difficult to imagine many former colonies willingly accepting police and officials from the colonial power back. Nonetheless, the most important centrality of the relationship is the continued dependence on aid and the degree to which this made PNG dependent on its major bilateral donor. Australia's long aid history in PNG created a legacy of dependency. It was not easy for PNG to disentangle itself from the dependent nature of its bilateral relations with Australia. The angry outbursts from the prime minister, Sir Michael Somare, were demonstrations of frustration that relate to PNG's continued reliance on aid. The dependent culture has been an affront to national pride, which essentially undermined national sovereignty. The desire to exercise sovereignty remained in the minds of PNG's political elite, but this ambition is limited by PNG's dependent relations, particularly with Australia.

Much of the ECP controversy stemmed from a personal sense of aggrievement and reflected how the political elites understood the national interest. Somare and Wenge challenged the ECP because they viewed Australia's new interventionism as neo-colonialism and as a violation of national sovereignty. Somare's concern for national sovereignty was primarily driven by nationalist sentiments that were fuelled by the insult to his governance and leadership after the Australian prime minister called PNG a failed state and proposed to help

the PNG Government address its development challenges. His grievances—the insult to his governance and leadership—were personal. Similarly, his perception of national sovereignty was not shared by all the members of this government. Somare’s antipathy to the ECP was undermined by support from other foreign policy actors, particularly members of parliament who voted in favour of the ECP. Nevertheless, it demonstrated how political elites, particularly Somare and Wenge, understood the national interest. They opposed the ECP because they believed it violated national sovereignty. However justified, there was insubstantial evidence of the PNG system’s coherent ability to articulate and pursue an alternative national interest, such as the look north policy, to downplay Australia’s influence. The dominance of highly rhetorical personality politics arguably filled the vacuum in the absence of strong institutions and policy processes.

The ECP case underscored the continued fragilities of PNG’s foreign policy institutions and processes and inferred that informal institutions are still dominant. PNG’s efforts to refute Australia’s demands were poorly coordinated and contradictory. For example, there was a lack of coordination between the offices of the prime minister and foreign minister. As a result, the prime minister perceived that there was minimal coordination between PNG and Australia (as stated by PNG’s foreign minister). Moreover, it is notable that, despite Somare’s opposition, his government still signed the agreement. It is also notable that, despite the inflamed rhetoric of Somare, the end point of the SGP was not significantly different to that of the ECP, which included the reversion to more traditional adviser modalities. It highlights the challenges in moving to more strategic policy and implementation.

The ECP evolved from the existing bilateral relationship between its end point and Australia. This was mutually beneficial, as it would secure Australia’s strategic interests and simultaneously address two persistent development problems that were impeding PNG’s progress: governance and law and order problems. However, Australia’s handling of the ECP

was abrasive. For instance, the Australian Government threatened to reassess its aid package pending the outcome of the discussion on the ECP and further insisted on amending the PNG constitution to suit the program after it collapsed. This act of brinkmanship evoked sentiments of nationalism among the ruling elites and created bilateral tensions between the two countries. The prime minister particularly disapproved Australia's new interventionism and moved to minimise Canberra's influence in PNG, following the collapse of the ECP. The bilateral tension energised and renewed PNG's efforts to 'look north'. The inflamed rhetoric used by the prime minister was noteworthy and speaks of PNG's frustration with Australia. It demonstrated the government's willingness to push back on Australian aid for the first time in PNG's political history. Concurrently, the ECP portends critical junctures in the relationship between the Somare and Howard governments.

Chapter 5: The Julian Moti Affair

5.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the period between 2005 and 2007 and focuses on the Julian Moti affair. The Moti affair involved PNG's refusal to extradite Julian Moti to Australian authorities, where he faced criminal charges. Instead of accommodating Australia's request for extradition, the PNG Government under Prime Minister Somare secretly flew Moti to the Solomon Islands. The Moti affair touches on the issue of national sovereignty and the rule of law and it is significant for understanding the development of PNG's foreign policy. The Moti affair emerged against the backdrop of Australia's activism in PNG and the region at large, which was often resented in PNG and the region as overbearing and neo-colonialist in nature. The Somare government took subsequent steps to minimise Canberra's influence in PNG. Somare and his supporters refused Australia's extradition request and, in the process, violated domestic laws as well as international treaties and conventions. The Moti affair is interesting because it was a high-profile dispute with PNG's leading bilateral partner and further demonstrated PNG's willingness to question the status quo, which suggested shifts in the relations between the two countries.

This chapter is divided into four main parts. The first describes the background to the Moti affair. It sets the scene for the case study by highlighting two factors that played influential roles in the decision to fly Moti out of the country: Australia's decision to intervene in the Melanesian countries of PNG and the Solomon Islands and an incident at the Brisbane airport in which the prime minister, Michael Somare, was unceremoniously told to remove his shoes for a security check. These factors caused deep resentment towards the Australian Government and led PNG to resist Australia's influence. The second part—the Moti affair—forms the core of foreign policy analysis. It covers the arrest and detention of Julian Moti, the investigations and inquiries and the narrative of the incident derived from the DFBI. The third part looks at

the Moti case from the foreign policy perspective. Drawing from concepts that were raised in Chapter 2, I look at the Moti affair using three frames of reference: the state, its formal institutions and the personalised nature of foreign policy. The conclusion, highlighting the key points, constitutes the final part.

5.2 Backdrop to the Moti Affair

The Moti affair is a part of the ECP story. It relates to the relationship between Australia and the Melanesian countries of the Solomon Islands and PNG that was soured after Australian Prime Minister, John Howard, called them failed states and referred to the region as its 'patch'. The subsequent deployment of interventionist policies, RAMSI in the Solomon Islands and the ECP in PNG, as justification for intervention in the region (Fry & Kabutaulaka, 2008) irked the prime ministers of PNG and the Solomon Islands. Australia's new interventionist policies in the region deepened its dominance and control. As interventionist programs, RAMSI and the ECP required 'cooperative regimes' (Haggard & Simmons, 1987, p. 495), or governments that facilitate cooperation. PNG Prime Minister, Michael Somare, and his Solomon Islands counterpart, Manasseh Sogavare, are two Melanesian leaders who had partly built political reputations by challenging Western dominance and influence in the region. They became increasingly antagonistic towards the Howard government. Somare challenged the ECP in PNG and Sogavare challenged Australia's involvement in its internal affairs, including RAMSI.

Sogavare had, over time, been critical of Australia's influence in the region (Associated Press, 2006; Baker, 2006) and had turned against the Australian Government. Towards the end of 2006, he accused Australia of heavy-handed interference in the Solomon Islands domestic affairs and subsequently expelled Patrick Cole, Australia's High Commissioner, to the country (Banham, 2006; Moore, 2007). Cole was declared *persona non grata* after he opposed the Solomon Islands Government's decision to arrange a commission of inquiry into a riot

following the 2006 national elections, which severely damaged the island's capital on 18 and 19 April 2006 (Sydney Morning Herald, 2006a). On 18 April, a wave of lootings, arson and destruction of properties swept through Honiara following the announcement of Snyder Rini—who has been deputy prime minister in the outgoing Kemakeza Government—as prime minister-elect (Hawes, 2006). Many Solomon Islanders anticipated a clean break from the corrupt and dysfunctional politics of recent years (Dinnen & Goldsmith, 2007, p. 1102). Rini's election as prime minister triggered mass protests and riots because many Solomon Islanders accused him of being linked to corruption allegations that dogged the last government and of favouring wealthy Chinese businessmen (BBC News, 2006). Rini resigned on 26 April 2006 (*New Zealand Herald*, 26 April 2006) and Sogavare was subsequently voted and sworn in as prime minister on 4 May 2006.

Sogavare requested an inquiry into the causes and conduct of the riots that took place during Rini's time as prime minister (Sogavare, 2006b). However, the Australian Government believed that the inquiry was designed to release two jailed MPs—Charles Dausabea and Nelson Ne'e, both allies of Sogavare—from the charges of inciting the riots that destroyed most of Honiara's Chinatown and to deflect attention onto Australian police commanders' handling of the situation (Sydney Morning Herald, 2006b; *The Age*, 2006). In defence of the proposed inquiry, Sogavare claimed that Australia 'was not happy' because 'Moti was actively involved in the terms of reference of the commission of inquiry' (Sogavare, 2006b) that his government proposed. Australian Prime Minister, John Howard, staunchly defended Cole and concurrently doubted the commission of inquiry:

We don't accept for a moment the expulsion of our High Commissioner Patrick Cole. He was doing the right thing, he was representing the interests of Australia. He's concerned about corruption in the Solomon Islands. He's concerned that the proposed Commission of Inquiry will

subvert the legal process and could work to the benefit improperly of the people who have been charged under the legal system of the Solomon Islands, based on allegations of criminal offences (Howard cited in Dorney, 2006).

Australia made a formal request to the Solomon Islands Government to rethink its expulsion of High Commissioner Cole by sending foreign affairs envoy, David Richie, to meet Sogavare in Honiara. However, Sogavare refused to budge (Hall, 2006; Sydney Morning Herald, 2006a). In a televised address to the nation, Sogavare defended his decision:

The Government and the people of Solomon Islands are concerned about the manner in which the Howard Government has continued to subtly dictate over sovereign issues that are beyond the jurisdiction of Canberra. The Government is seriously concerned that Canberra has been capitalising on the ignorance of both the Solomon Islands and Australian public about the real issues at stake within the so-called arc of instability. The conduct of a senior official such as Mr Cole is inconsistent with the rules of diplomacy, and impinges on matters of sovereignty due to political manipulation (Sogavare, 2006a).

Sogavare not only accused Australia of interfering with the planned commission of inquiry into the April riots, but also accused Australia of using development aid as an instrument of foreign policy to address fundamental problems that otherwise could have been solved through diplomacy:

We are concerned that Canberra's policies are aimed at excluding and containing the peoples of the region, instead of working collectively to address fundamental problems of social instability that can only be

solved through dialogue, rather than the use of development aid, and political force as leverage, to dictate Australia's involvement (Sogavare, 2006a).

Sogavare's criticism targeted Australia's cooperative intervention that manifested in RAMSI. He was critical of the level of Australian involvement in RAMSI and called for it to be revised. He wanted Australia's contribution to be reduced and for control over public administration to be returned to the Solomon Islands (Sydney Morning Herald, 2006c). Similarly, Somare was not comfortable with Australia's cooperative intervention policy. He was deeply cynical about Australia's interventionist policies. In an interview with SBS *Dateline* in 2005 he said:

Their [Australia's] real intention is they want to have some controlling device in the whole region. They want to control the region so that the Prime Minister can go back and talk to Prime Minister of Britain and President of United States and say, The Pacific is no problem, we're looking after it. ... the imposition of that kind of mentality in the Pacific amongst the Pacific leadership, you're undermining the integrity of the Pacific Island people (Somare, 2005b).

Somare questioned Australia's motives in the region and claimed that Australia's intervention was disrespectful to regional leadership. Both Sogavare and Somare shared the same views about Australia's aid in the region. They resented Australia's overbearing attitude and patronage through its aid programs, became increasingly hostile and acted in different ways to minimise Canberra's influence. Somare has on many occasions criticised Australia's neo-colonial and paternalistic attitudes through its aid programs (McLeod, 2004; Somare, 2003a, 2003b, 2005b). He has often criticised the Australian Government for using its aid programs to 'impose its will onto a sovereign state' (Somare, 2005b). As observed in the preceding

chapter, this was one of the reasons why he protested the ECP. The Howard government was not on good terms with Somare after the ECP collapsed and Somare's subsequent efforts to frustrate Australia's aid programs in the country worsened the situation. The relationship between the two governments further deteriorated after an unfortunate incident at the Brisbane airport, which is explained next.

On 24 March 2005, Prime Minister Somare was in transit through Brisbane to Port Moresby after attending a regional leaders' meeting in NZ. During a security check at the airport, Somare was asked to remove his shoes as he and his delegation passed through security. According to Somare, he was 'forced' (Somare, 2005a) to comply with security regulations even though he said he had nothing in the shoes. Somare was bitterly upset and told PNG's television network EMTV News that:

I said there was nothing in the shoes ... I thought it was an insult to leadership in our region ... I am going to take it up with the Foreign Minister [Rabbie Namaliu], and when they come here, they'll be subject to the same kind of treatment that I have been subjected to (Somare, 2005a).

He added that he had never received such treatment from other countries in the region. PNG gave preference to leaders that visited the country and though their baggage might be searched, the leaders themselves were not checked. Somare stated that Australian leaders would be treated the way he was if Australia does not change its policy (Somare, 2005a), referring to airport security checks involving leaders. Somare felt that his competence and worth as a leader were undermined. Namaliu stated that the incident breached protocol (Radio New Zealand, 2005). Somare summoned Australia's high commissioner to PNG, High Commissioner Mike Potts, and demanded an apology from Australia. The PNG press presented the incident as an outrage. Following the incident, *Post-Courier*, one of the two daily

newspapers, printed the headline ‘Disgraceful!’ to highlight the distress that the incident had caused and emphasised the anger it had provoked among senior PNG Government officials (*Post-Courier*, 29 March 2005, p. 10). The Chief Secretary, Joshua Kalinoe, said:

There was no indication of sympathy or regrets about the way the incident happened to an elderly statesman and Prime Minister of a foreign country and the least we expected from Australian authorities is that they say look it was a regrettable incident, we will be investigating this and try to reach an understanding that it doesn’t happen again in future ... There was no sense of regrets on the situation, and there was no admittance that this thing happened and it was a regrettable occasion (Kalinoe, 2005).

Following that, the PNG Government cancelled the ministerial forum between the two countries and further suspended Australia’s A\$800 million aid program over the airport incident. The chief secretary said that the 149 Australian police and civil servants already in the country as part of the ECP would be allowed to stay, but that the government would not accept new personnel until the Australian Government apologised for Somare’s treatment (ABC News, 2005; *The Age*, 2005). Australia’s Foreign Minister, Alexander Downer, was unapologetic about the incident, saying that Australia’s non-discriminatory airport security procedures were the norm around the world and would not be changed (ABC News, 2005). Australia’s refusal to apologise escalated in PNG. More than five hundred protesters marched to the Australian High Commission in Port Moresby and presented a petition demanding an apology and compensation for the way the prime minister was treated. One of the protest organisers, Steven Mera, said that the protest was held to demonstrate that Papua New Guineans were disgusted with the manner in which their leader was treated and that they would not let their Melanesian culture be insulted. He added:

We can't continue to be insulted by Australians who continue to impose on us as if we are still a colony of Australia. Our prime minister is a world leader, not just in the Pacific. Sir Michael has been a politician longer than John Howard and most politicians in the region. John Howard thinks he's another (US President) George Bush in the region but, sorry, not for Papua New Guineans. The new generation of Papua New Guineans will not accept that (Mera, cited in Sydney Morning Herald, 2005).

The Melanesian culture referred to by Mera, in this context, alludes to the respect that the Melanesian people had for their leaders. To these protesters and the PNG Government, Somare's treatment exemplified what they saw as Australia's overbearing and bullying approach to the region, one that was also manifested in the ECP. Potts received their petition in front of the Commission building's carpark, as PNG police and security officers watched on. The airport incident humiliated Somare's status as a national leader and subsequently deteriorated his relationship with the Howard government. It inflamed tensions that existed over the ECP program and strengthened Somare's resolve to resist Australia's influence.

The Moti affair is covered in the main body, but in this last part of the section, I elaborate on the connection between the Brisbane airport incident and the Moti affair. I examine the psychological and cognitive experiences of politicians and the influence that they have on decision-making. Hill (2003, pp. 116–117) emphasised how facts about the past can influence decision-making:

History provides politicians with a welcome form of structure amidst uncertainty, as well as a way of mobilizing public opinion behind the government. As individuals they have personal memories, as

representatives of a political class, they inherit certain dominant myths, rituals and pieces of conventional thinking which they use and abuse but are also themselves trapped within. It is a common phenomenon for decision-makers to assume that there are 'lessons' to be drawn from history and indeed most human beings constantly refer to the past, so as directly or indirectly to measure their current situation against it.

Hill argues that the historical experiences of key political actors influence their decision-making and he connected personal memories and experiences of political leaders to the environment of decision-making. Leaders can use personal memories in decision-making. Their psychological and cognitive experiences are critical in providing explanations for foreign relations behaviour and actions (DeRouen & Mintz, 2010; Hudson, 2007; Jensen, 1982). Therefore, the Brisbane airport incident on 24 March 2005 cannot be isolated from the Moti affair. The insult to Somare's leadership at the airport was one of the determining factors that helped shape his decision to move Moti out of the country.

As will be observed later in this chapter, Somare is a respected leader among the Melanesian societies and the wider Pacific region. He expected some degree of respect that is normally accorded to foreign dignitaries, prime ministers and presidents when travelling into a foreign country. For example, these important figures are normally greeted by government officials in private airport rooms, far from the public arrivals bay, and have their luggage delivered to them promptly. Special airport protocols have been established in many countries to deal with a set list of VIPs and dignitaries at the highest levels of government. When Somare passed through security at the Brisbane airport on 24 March 2005, such respect was not given to him. He was asked to remove his shoes at the airport for a security check, despite his insistence that he had nothing concealed in his shoes. The airport incident was a humiliating experience. It diminished his ego and self-esteem. Somare demanded an apology from the

Australian Government in response to this incident, but he received none. According to the PNG's chief secretary, 'there was no admittance that this thing happened and it was a regrettable occasion' (Kalinoe, 2005). Essentially, there were no apologies from the Australian Government about the incident, for which Somare harboured a grudge. The incident was a personal experience with Australian airport authorities, but he told PNG's EMTV News that PNG would treat Australian leaders the way he was treated, if Australia does not change its policy on airport security checks involving leaders (Somare, 2005a). This was a personal statement that did not reflect the position of the PNG Government. Nonetheless, it indicated how a personal experience from a key political figure could influence decisions and policymaking. The airport incident was a personal experience, but it was one of the influencing factors that shaped Somare's decision to give safe passage to Moti.

5.3 The Moti Affair

Julian Moti is a Fiji-born Australian lawyer, in regard to his training and citizenship. He was close to the Solomon Islands Prime Minister, Manasseh Sogavare, with whom he shared a dislike of the Australian Government and its policies in the Solomon Islands (Kabutaulaka & Kabutaulaka, 2007, p. 601). In 2006, Sogavare appointed Moti as the Attorney General-designate of the Solomon Islands, with Moti out of the country at the time of his appointment. On the morning of Friday 29 September 2006, Moti arrived at Jacksons Airport, Port Moresby, on an Air Niugini flight en route from Singapore to Honiara, the Solomon Islands, where he was set to take his new post. While he was waiting in the transit lounge at Jacksons International Airport for his outbound flight to the Solomon Islands, members of the Transnational Crime Unit of the RPNGC arrested him. Moti's arrest stemmed from a request from the Pacific Transnational Crime Coordination Centre in Suva, Fiji. This request was based on Interpol's red alert notice to all its member countries and initiated by the Australian Federal

Police. The Australian Federal Police requested the arrest, detention and extradition of Moti to Australia for an alleged sex offence involving a minor in Vanuatu in 1997.

Moti was temporarily detained at Boroko Police Station to await formal extradition to Australia after he was arrested at the airport. However, he was released to the custody of his PNG lawyers on the same day after his bail application was granted. Moti's arrest was controversial. Officials in Canberra collaborated with Australian personnel working in PNG, who then secured an arrest warrant without the knowledge of the Somare government, or the state prosecutor (Chin, 2007, p. 204; Kelly, 2006). International extradition involves coordination between the public prosecutors of countries that have extradition treaties with partner countries (Attorney General's Department, 1988; *Extradition Act*, 2005). According to Somare in an interview with SBS *Dateline*, aired on 25 October 2006, the Australian Government issued the warrant without consulting the PNG state prosecutor (Somare, 2006). He viewed the bypass of the state prosecutor as illegal. However, Moti's dramatic escape from PNG was even more controversial. The PNG Government disregarded Australia's request for extradition, reneged on its commitment to the Chicago Convention, which was a treaty under the *Charter of the United Nations*, and secretly flew Moti to the Solomon Islands using the PNGDF CASA aircraft.

Following revelations of the clandestine operation, the PNGDF suspended the senior officers who were involved and conducted its internal investigation. The investigation was commissioned by the PNGDF Commander, Peter Ilau, and was conducted by Colonel (retired) David Josiah (Rheeney, 2006c). However, the government rejected the internal investigation, saying that it believed the probe involved 'some cover-up in the whole investigation' (Sydney Morning Herald, 2006d). Without releasing the findings, the government launched a new inquiry into the Moti's escape. Concurrently, the government suspended the heads of the defence and police forces and the chief secretary so that investigations could proceed

unobstructed. Meanwhile, the Ombudsman Commission of Papua New Guinea stated that it would conduct its investigation into the clandestine flight of Moti. The Commission's initiative to conduct an independent investigation stemmed from public concerns that leaders had compromised the national security of the country. Many of these concerns related to the breach of procedures, protocols and the violation of the constitution and its by-laws. However, little was heard of this investigation and its findings (Rheeney, 2007). Under sustained pressure from the Howard government (O'Connor, 2007), a more substantial and independent inquiry was commissioned by the Minister for Defence, Martin Aini, a Pangu representative in the governing coalition. This DFBI was chaired by Justice Gibbs Salika, Deputy Chief Justice of PNG, and was convened to inquire into the arrest, detention and escape of Moti using a PNGDF CASA aircraft.

The main purpose of the DFBI was to investigate and report the covert operations that were conducted by members of the PNGDF in collaboration with government officers to use the CASA aircraft and aid Moti's escape. The wide-ranging scope of the DFBI revealed numerous breaches of domestic and international laws and, inadvertently, illuminated the inner workings of the government. The late Hank Nelson, one of Australia's foremost historians of the Pacific and PNG, described the DFBI in Moti's arrest and escape as providing 'outsiders with frank information into the way the government works' (Nelson, 2007, p. 4). The inquiry into the Moti affair, in which Somare was heavily implicated, was commissioned by the Minister for Defence, Martin Aini. Aini came from Pangu Party and Somare from the National Alliance Party. The DFBI's commission inquiry revealed competing interests and dissensions within the coalition government, which culminated in the removal of Aini as the Minister for Defence. Almost all the people involved in aiding and abetting Moti's escape, including the prime minister and those who concealed the truth and misled the inquiry, were recommended to be charged under various PNG laws. The DFBI team presented the Moti report to the prime minister at Parliament House on 28 February 2007. The Minister for Defence, who

commissioned the DFBI, was unable to receive the report because he was decommissioned and replaced by the prime minister, who assumed responsibilities in the defence ministry. This ploy was part of Somare's overall strategy to sabotage the DFBI's recommendations. The report has not been tabled on the Parliament floor and those implicated are still at large. Nonetheless, the narrative of this chapter, which forms the basis of foreign policy analysis, is sourced from the DFBI.

According to the DFBI, the PNG Government received two diplomatic notes soon after Moti was first arrested. The first diplomatic note, dated 2 October 2006, was from the Australian Government requesting the formal extradition of Julian Moti. The diplomatic note was accompanied by supporting documents for extradition. It had the brief description of Moti, the sex offence he was alleged to have committed with a minor in Vanuatu and other relevant documents required to have him extradited from PNG to Australia (Australian Government, 2006). The second diplomatic note, dated 4 October 2006, came from the Solomon Islands Government. It requested PNG's cooperation in according Moti a free and safe passage to Honiara (Solomon Islands Government, 2006). This diplomatic note was personally conveyed to the PNG prime minister by two senior government officials from the Solomon Islands, Mr Robson Tanabose, a senior public servant, and Mr Christopher Hapa, a lawyer. An introductory letter, dated 3 October 2006, accompanied the diplomatic note. The introductory letter was addressed to the PNG prime minister and it introduced the two government officials as representatives of the Solomon Islands Government. The letter requested Somare's assistance in helping the two gentlemen accomplish their assignment, which was to provide personal assistance to Moti in the extradition case that he was facing with the Australian Government in Port Moresby (DFBI, 2007, pp. 40–41). The letter was signed by Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare of the Solomon Islands.

The diplomatic note from the Solomon Islands was a five-page note stating the reasons why the Solomon Islands Government wanted PNG to accord safe passage to Moti. The important part of this diplomatic note is the passionate request for Moti's safe passage, which is expressed in these sentiments:

As the founding country of the Melanesia Spearhead Group and our region's largest nation that has pioneered the establishment of a capable and independent Melanesian identity, the Solomon Islands Government now seeks to secure your understanding and cooperation in our effort to resolve the existing impasse (DFBI, 2007, p. 39).

The 'existing impasse' referred to the deteriorating relationship between the Solomon Islands and Australia that culminated in the expulsion of Cole from the Solomon Islands. The Australian Government told representatives of the MSG countries that Australia does not need mediators to help resolve Canberra's damaging row with the Solomon Islands (Sydney Morning Herald, 2006e). The dispute between the two countries had reached an impasse, as neither side would compromise. The dispute over Moti was the latest instalment in Canberra's worsening relations with Honiara. Sogavare pleaded for Somare's help in the Moti saga, claiming that Australia has 'shut its doors for dialogue' and further stating that shutting doors was not 'the Melanesian way of dealing with things' (Sogavare, 2006b). His note to Somare was imbued with deep sentiments attached to Melanesian identity and solidarity. It explicitly called for understanding and cooperation on the Moti issue and requested cooperation from Somare. The cooperation was essentially a request to give safe passage to Moti back to the Solomon Islands before the Australian authorities caught him.

In the same diplomatic note, Sogavare asked Somare to invoke section 176(3)(b) of the PNG constitution to direct the public prosecutor to withdraw and discontinue the pending court cases against Julian Moti (DFBI, 2007, p. 39). According to the PNG constitution, the Office

of the Public Prosecutor is not subject to the direction and control of any person or authority. However, section 176(3)(b) states that only the Head of State, acting with and on the advice of the NEC, can give direction to the public prosecutor on any matter that might prejudice the security, defence or international relations of PNG (*Constitution of Papua New Guinea, 1975*). Simply put, the prime minister is the only authority that could withdraw or advise the public prosecutor to discontinue any cases against the government of any country or international organisations. He could, in this context, terminate or dismiss Moti's pending cases and invalidate Australia's extradition request.

After receiving the two diplomatic notes, the PNG Government took inconsistent positions. The first was a political position taken by the prime minister and his deputy, Honourable Don Polye. It was a position consistent with the Melanesian solidarity and brotherhood sentiments that were expressed by the Solomon Islands Government in its diplomatic note. It was focused on moving Moti out of the country before the courts could deliberate on his extradition case. The second was a bureaucratic position taken by Chief Secretary Joshua Kalinoe and other bureaucrats at Waigani. Their position was to respect and allow the judicial processes to take their normal course before any decision or actions could be taken.

According to the DFBI, Somare's directive to 'get rid of Moti' was given on 4 October 2006, after he received the second diplomatic note from the Solomon Islands Government. He went on air with Radio Karai, the local radio station, in the evening and said that PNG had no law to 'hold people in ransom' (DFBI, 2007, p. 29) and emphasised that PNG had no extradition laws. He further stated that Moti was cleared by a competent court in Vanuatu and that there was no reason for the Australian court to pursue this matter. His remark, 'let Moti go' (Rheeney, 2006a), was reported in the print media the next day. Somare's decision to let Moti go was premised on the assumptions that there were no proper extradition orders for the

arrest and extradition of Moti and that the Vanuatu judicial system had cleared Moti. However, evidence submitted before the DFBI proved the contrary.

According to a letter from the registrar of the Supreme Court in Vanuatu, tendered as evidence in the DFBI, the allegation against Moti of child sex abuse was dismissed by a magistrate at the lower courts in Vanuatu on 23 August 1999. However, the Vanuatu public prosecutor applied to the Supreme Court on 8 September 1999 to have the decision of the lower court rescinded and the allegation against Moti to be transferred to the Supreme Court for hearing. The application was accompanied by affidavits in support of the case to be revived and heard. This application was still pending before the Supreme Court of Vanuatu because Moti had not returned to the Vanuatu jurisdiction and was, therefore, unavailable to be heard by the Supreme Court (DFBI, 2007, p. 36). Essentially, Moti still had a case to answer. Somare misled the country on Moti's legal status when he said Moti was cleared by a competent court. Further, PNG adopted the *Extradition Act* in 1975, which was repealed and replaced by the *Extradition Act 2005*. The *Extradition Act 2005* provided for the extradition of criminals who were wanted for crimes committed in other countries before fleeing into PNG. It required PNG to assist in extraditing fugitives with arrest warrants for crimes they commit in one country, or who are convicted of an offence against the law of that country, before fleeing the country. Part two of the *Extradition Act 2005* indicated that PNG had an obligation to extradite fugitives to forum countries, with forum country under the Act referring to a country that is a member of the PIF (*Extradition Act, 2005*). Australia is a member of the PIF, so PNG thus had an obligation to cooperate with Australia on extradition matters. Again, Somare misled the country when he claimed that PNG had no law to hold people in ransom.

An NEC submission, dated 27 October 2006, stated that Julian Moti was never a national security concern (National Executive Council, 2006). The submission stated that Moti did not pose a threat to PNG. The prime minister, as chairman of the NEC, sponsored and

signed the submission. In publicly justifying his position, Somare stated that his decision to give Moti safe passage was in line with the strong relationship that existed between PNG and the Solomon Islands. In parliament, on 15 November 2006, he said:

As the House will recall, a few days before the event, I made an off the cuff remark that the Attorney General designate of the Solomon Islands should be assisted with ‘safe passage’ through to the Solomon Islands because I consider this matter to be basically between the Solomon Islands and Australian governments. I made this comment against the backdrop that as a Melanesian Spearhead Group country we have a very closely tied relationship with the Solomon Islanders (DFBI, 2007, p. 43).

Somare attested his support for Melanesian solidarity in the PNG parliament, but he said that the remark ‘let Moti go’ was ‘off the cuff’. In other words, Somare claimed that he made the statement about Moti’s release to the Solomon Islands without having prepared or thought about the statement. However, the DFBI disagreed by stating that the prime minister’s remark ‘let Moti go’ was consistent with the request by his Solomon Islands counterpart for his personal attendance, which was contained in the Solomon Islands Diplomatic Note No. 39-2006 (DFBI, 2007, p. 44). That is, Somare’s remark was not ‘off the cuff’. He made the comments in full knowledge of the close bond between the two countries and the expectation that each country had of the other. His statement on the floor of parliament indicated that his decision to let Moti go was deliberate and consistent with his ideology of Melanesian solidarity.

Somare instructed the safe passage of Moti on 4 October 2006 to his two close confidants, Leonard Louma, his chief of staff, and Barnabas Rongap, the Special Projects officer in his office. Both men relayed the prime minister’s directive to two important office holders in the PNG Government system at different times, Joshua Kalinoe, Chief Secretary to

the Government, and Joseph Assaigo, the Director General of the Office of Security Coordination and Assessment (OSCA). The Chief Secretary to Government is the senior officer of the National Public Service. He or she occupies the apex of the administrative hierarchy in the country, is the principal adviser to the prime minister and the NEC and ensures that the National Public Service implements the decisions, directions and policies of the NEC. In the same manner, he or she ensures that the public service performs effectively and is accountable to the NEC and Parliament (*Prime Minister and National Executive Council Act, 2002*). The OSCA is one of the divisions in the Department of Prime Minister and NEC. It provides assessment, advice and support to the National Security Advisory Committee (NSAC), prime minister and the Cabinet on matters relating to security issues that affect the sovereignty, integrity and security of PNG and its people. It also provides guidance and direction to the government agencies responsible for matters affecting peace and good order in PNG, for combating subversion and espionage and for defending against military attack or armed incursion into PNG's sovereign territory (Department of Prime Minister & National Executive Council, 2016). Both offices are primarily involved in foreign policy and its making.

Following up closely with the two officers, Louma coerced them to execute the directive without delay. According to the DFBI, two executive meetings were held in Port Moresby after the prime minister went on air on 4 October 2006. The purpose of these meetings was to assess and advise the PNG Government of their position on the Moti case. The first meeting was conducted on 5 or 6 October 2006 within the DFA. It was an in-house committee meeting established by the chief secretary to investigate and inform the government of their position (the bureaucratic position) on the issue. The meeting was chaired by Veali Vagi and attended by Lucy Bogari and two senior officers in the DFA: a representative of the Attorney General's department and the prime minister's chief of staff, Leonard Louma. Louma knew of the prime minister's directive, but he took a passive stance and did not disclose the instruction to aid Moti to those who attended the meeting. The committee members resolved that the

government should allow the judicial and extradition processes to continue before any action could be taken.

The second meeting involved the NSAC, an important bureaucratic committee empowered under the *Prime Minister and National Executive Council Act 2002* that monitors and assesses all domestic and international security matters affecting the country. Members of this committee include the chief secretary (chairman), the secretary for personnel management (deputy chairman), the commissioner of police, the commissioner of correctional services, the commander of the PNGDF and the secretaries for defence, finance, treasury, planning and intergovernmental relations. The committee advises the National Security Council (NSC), the body that has overarching authority on all issues relating to national security and is chaired by the prime minister ("*Prime Minister and National Executive Council Act*," 2002). The NSAC met on Sunday 8 October 2006. The purpose of this meeting was to assess and advise the government on the national security implications of the Moti case. Kalinoe knew of the prime minister's directive to get Moti out of the country. He could have easily disseminated this directive during the meeting, but he chose not to do so. The NSAC unanimously agreed that the government should respect and allow the judicial process to continue (National Security Advisory Committee, 2006). The NSAC's resolution was in line with the DFA committee meeting. They resolved that the legal process should be allowed to take its course.

According to the evidence tendered to the DFBI, Somare disregarded the bureaucratic position taken by NSAC and the DFA. He was annoyed that the inner core of the bureaucracy, composed of the senior officers in his department, delayed executing his instruction. His concerns were verbally conveyed by his chief of staff to the director general of OSCA on Monday 9 October. The events that transpired on Monday 9 October 2006 exposed the inner workings of the government and how it managed a foreign policy issue that relates to the extradition of a wanted person. It was the day after the NSAC meeting and the day Moti was

flown out of the country. Apart from the acting commander of the PNGDF, whose office is housed at Murray Barracks, almost all the offices of the key players in the Moti affair were located in the same building at Morauta Haus in Waigani. On this day, the DFBI revealed that many telephone calls and one-on-one meetings were held between the key players inside this building. The one-on-one meetings were isolated from other key players and bureaucratic protocols were overlooked. For instance, the chief secretary was bypassed, instructions were issued to junior officers without his knowledge, no typed or written instructions were issued and no records of meetings were kept, which one might expect in a formal office environment. All directives were issued verbally through telephone and face-to-face conversation (DFBI, 2007, pp. 10–37). The oversight of conventional bureaucratic principles and practices was primarily attributed to the covert nature of the operation. Nonetheless, it underscored how the bureaucracy operated in Waigani and, moreover, how they orchestrated Moti's escape from the Australian authorities.

On the morning of 9 October 2006, Louma, seemingly frustrated by the failure of the chief secretary and the director general of OSCA to execute the prime minister's directive, approached Assaigo and said, 'you Sepiks, you and the Chief Secretary are *gelygelys*' (DFBI, 2007, p. 46). The word *gelygely* in PNG (synonymous with 'girlie' in English) is used as slang for a man who behaves and acts in a feminine way. It is an unpleasant and offensive word that is often used to degrade men who surrender easily, play passive roles and who are unable to behave and perform acts that are traditionally thought to be typical or suitable for men. The use of such a word against provincial and ethnic groups has been a source of tension and violence, particularly in the major towns and cities in PNG, where people are strongly affiliated to their provincial and regional groupings. Louma has used the word as a challenge to complete the job. Louma's statement, 'you Sepiks', indicated that the job of getting Moti out of the country was explicitly assigned to a closed group from the Sepik province. Both the chief secretary and

Assaigo are from Sepik, as is Somare. In the PNG context, they are *wantoks*—or people who share the same language.

Assaigo countered and told Louma to consult the chief secretary for a more coordinated effort. Both men went to their respective offices after the brief encounter. During the day, two more meetings were held between them. In each meeting, Louma reiterated the prime minister's disappointment with Assaigo and the chief secretary for failing his directive to fly Moti out of the country. Louma then 'asked' Assaigo to take a leading role (DFBI, 2007, p. 31). The request was more of order, as it came from a senior bureaucrat in the hierarchical structure. Under normal reporting conditions, the Chief of Staff Louma would issue instructions to Chief Secretary Kalinoe, who would relay it to Director General of OSCA Assaigo. However, this did not happen, as the chief secretary had already expressed his opinion in favour of a more legal and diplomatic approach. Louma intentionally bypassed the chief secretary and communicated directly with Assaigo because the chief secretary opposed the political stance of the prime minister.

Assaigo communicated with the Acting PNGDF Commander, Captain Tom Ur (the Commander, Peter Ilau, was overseas on official duties), at some time before his subsequent meetings with the prime minister's chief of staff and had already made plans to use the PNGDF for the clandestine operation. Assaigo told the acting PNGDF commander that he received directives from the top to remove Moti from the country and ordered him to find options for getting rid of Moti. He never disclosed who at the top gave the directions when he engaged with the acting PNGDF commander, but he always maintained that the direction to manage Moti came from the top at Waigani. Captain Ur asked Assaigo if the chairman of the NSAC (Kalinoe) and the chairman of NSC (prime minister) were aware of the task, to which Assaigo responded 'yes' (DFBI, 2007, pp. 42, 45–56). Assaigo assured Captain Ur that he would take care of the formalities at the NSC and NSAC level, as they were within his jurisdiction. Captain

Ur returned to Murray Barracks to meet with his officers after the meeting with Assaigo at Morauta Haus, Waigani. At Murray Barracks, Captain Ur consulted his senior staff, Colonel Vagi Oala, Commander of the Joint Operations Centre, and Lieutenant Colonel Ron Hosea, Director of Air Operations. Lieutenant Colonel Hosea advised the acting commander that the PNGDF CASA aircraft had sufficient hours to operate and that the job could be done. Captain Ur then issued the orders to execute the direction. After the meeting, Colonel Oala left to prepare his plans on the security aspects of the operations, while Lieutenant Colonel Hosea went to prepare the aircraft for the trip (DFBI, 2007, p. 11). Assaigo laid the groundwork for the covert operation without approval from the chief secretary. He was the middleman between Waigani and Murray Barracks and the mastermind behind the covert operation.

In an affidavit statement deposed to the DFBI by Assaigo on the 7 February 2007, Assaigo said he met with the chief secretary at the chief secretary's conference room at around 3.30 pm to discuss logistics, mobility and how they could get rid of Moti (Assaigo, 2007, p. 3). The chief secretary did not deny his statement. According to the chief secretary, Assaigo suggested the use of the police helicopter, or the defence aircraft, to airlift Moti out of the country. It is worth noting that Assaigo already planned to use the PNGDF CASA aircraft when he spoke to the acting PNGDF commander. He arranged the aircraft without approval from the government. His meeting with the chief secretary was to purposely seek assent from his office to commit the PNGDF. That is, he was covering his tracks, should the clandestine operation backfire. However, Kalinoe was adamant that the government stood by NSAC's resolution that everything would remain as it was until the extradition process was completed. He warned Assaigo against the use of the Defence Force, or the police aircraft (Kalinoe, 2006, p. 16). Kalinoe knew that Assaigo was planning and coordinating the operation, but he could not stop Assaigo because he knew that Assaigo was facilitating a directive from the prime minister (DFBI, 2007, p. 37). Around 5:00 pm, Assaigo went to Murray Barracks and met with Captain Ur and his military strategists and planners, who were working on the details to get rid of Moti.

He was briefed on the plan and left soon after the meeting with Captain Ur and his senior officers.

The DFBI revealed that on the 9 October 2006, in the cover of darkness, Jerry Fruanga, an employee of OSCA and a relative of Assaigo, took Moti from the Solomon Islands chancellery in Waigani and drove him to his hostel. Balthazar Wali, a driver in the Office of the Chief Secretary and a relative of Fruanga, took both men from Waigani Hostel and drove them to the PNGDF Air Transport Squadron, Jacksons Airport. Assaigo joined them later. He drove to a designated location near the airport, took Moti and the others and drove them to the Defence Force hanger (DFBI, 2007, p. 51). Just after midnight on 10 October 2006, the PNGDF CASA stealthily rolled out onto the runway at the Defence Force hanger. Nine passengers, including the two pilots, three soldiers, Moti, the two government officials from the Solomon Islands (Tanabose and Hapa) and another unidentified person were on board the flight codenamed Eagle 502 (DFBI, 2007, p. 19). By 12.45 am, Eagle 502 was already airborne and heading for Munda airstrip in the Western Province of the Solomon Islands. To avoid detection, the pilots did not submit flight plans, flew the plane without any lights, maintained radio silence during the entire flight and kept the aircraft at the height of 17,000 feet to avoid detection from Australian radar (DFBI, 2007, pp. 51, 67). In doing so, the PNG Government, through the negligence of its military pilots, reneged on the country's obligations to comply with Rule 9.407 of the *Civil Aviation Act* (CASA, 2000) and, subsequently, Articles 11 and 37 of the *Chicago Convention (Convention on International Civil Aviation, 1944)*, which elaborates on flight plans. The Somare government successfully evacuated Moti on a state-sponsored illegal operation.

The PNGDF suspended the senior officers involved and conducted its internal investigation, following the revelation of the covert operation. In this internal investigation, Captain Ur justified his actions in these terms:

I asked if Chief Secretary and the old man (PM) are aware of this and Mr Assaigo said yes. So I told him that I will check the status of the aircraft with staff and then let him know if we can help (DFBI, 2007, p. 13).

Captain Ur did not hesitate to commit state resources for the clandestine operation as soon as he knew that the ‘old man’ knew of the operation. In PNG political and bureaucratic circles, Somare is affectionately known as the ‘old man’. As mentioned earlier, the government rejected the internal investigation because it believed that the investigation involved cover-ups. Nonetheless, Captain Ur stated in the DFBI:

As Acting Commander, I believe that the direction was from the government of PNG, and it is my duty to carry them out and not question those directions ... In a high context culture like PNG, the mention of names of people that we have respect for is good enough for me to act upon their direction (DFBI, 2007, pp. 12–13).

Captain Ur asserted that it was culturally acceptable to act on orders from ‘people that we have respect for’ (DFBI, 2007, pp. 12–13), alluding to Somare. Captain Ur’s statement in both inquiries is important, as it sheds light on the influence of culture on the formal policy process. More importantly, the evidence strongly suggested the influence of culture on foreign policymaking.

The DFBI revealed that the Acting Commander of the PNGDF, Captain Ur, went outside his jurisdiction to commit state resources for the clandestine operation (DFBI, 2007, p. 56). He overlooked provisions of the constitution that guided the functions of the PNGDF. Section 205(1) of the PNG constitution is explicit on the PNGDF functions:

The Defence Force or part of the Defence Force may be ordered on active service only by the Head of State, acting with, and in accordance with, the advice of the National Executive Council and may be sent out of the country only by the authority of and on conditions imposed by the Head of State, acting with, and in accordance with, the advice of the National Executive Council (Constitution of Papua New Guinea, 1975).

The decision to engage the PNGDF, or sections within the PNGDF, would have to come from the National Parliament of PNG or the NEC. No one, not even the prime minister, has the authority to commit the PNGDF for any operation. The Secretary of the NSC (Kalinoe) and the Secretary of the NEC (Ms Winnie Kiap) said the NSC or the NEC did not give the orders to evacuate Moti out of PNG's jurisdiction secretly (DFBI, 2007, p. 38). Captain Ur committed men and resources to an operation that was not sanctioned by the PNG authorities. In addition, section 205 of the constitution outlines the active service of the PNGDF:

The Defence Force or a part of the Defence Force may not be ordered on, or committed to active service or an international peace-keeping or relief operation, outside the country without the prior approval of the Parliament (Constitution of Papua New Guinea, 1975).

The only peacekeeping operation approved by the National Parliament and NEC at the time of Moti's escape from PNG was the Australian-led RAMSI operation in the Solomon Islands. The flight taken by the PNGDF CASA aircraft on 9 October 2006 was not part of the RAMSI operation. Further, section 205(4a) of the constitution makes allowance for 'normal administrative or training purposes' (*Constitution of Papua New Guinea*, 1975). However, there was no training conducted between the defence forces of the Solomon Islands and PNG

at the time of Moti's escape. Captain Ur breached the provisions of the constitution that guide the operation and functions of the PNGDF.

Relations between Australia and PNG rapidly deteriorated after Australia discovered that Moti secretly flew out to the Solomon Islands. Australia suspended ministerial contacts with PNG and barred the PNG prime minister from visiting Australia until an investigation was undertaken (Nicholson & Skehan, 2006). Foreign Affairs Minister Downer denounced PNG for violating international agreements on the extradition of alleged fugitives who were wanted for arrest. He said the issue also raised concerns about the continuation of Australia's A\$300 million aid program to PNG (Rheeney, 2006b). Australia further postponed the annual PNG–Australia Ministerial Forum that was suspended after the collapse of the ECP, insinuating that the PNG Government facilitated the escape. In turn, PNG recalled for consultation its high commissioner to Australia, Sir Charles Lepani and the Commander of the PNGDF, Peter Ilau, who had gone to Australia on official duties. By the end of the Howard government in 2007, Australia's diplomatic relations with PNG were at a low point.

The new Australian Government under Kevin Rudd, which took office in November 2007, recalibrated Australia's diplomacy. Shortly after taking office, Rudd was invited by Somare to visit PNG, which he did in March 2008. During that visit, he delivered the Port Moresby Declaration, as discussed in the last chapter. The declaration stated that Australia wanted 'a new era of cooperation' with PNG and other Pacific Island states and would work with them 'on the basis of partnership, mutual respect and mutual responsibility' (Rudd, 2008). Somare observed that 'this is the beginning of our revised and new relationship' (*Post-Courier*, 6 March 2008, pp. 3–5). The relationship between the two countries improved, following Rudd's gesture of reconciliation. The annual PNG–Australia Ministerial Forum resumed in April 2008, after four years of postponement.

5.4 The Moti Case and Foreign Policymaking

The Moti case touches on the rule of law and foreign policy. Somare and his followers violated the constitution and its by-laws, as well as international treaties and norms, when they disregarded Australia's request for extradition and flew Moti safely to the Solomon Islands. Under those circumstances, the Moti incident was illegal and subsequently became the subject of the DFBI. In this section, I look at the Moti case in relation to foreign policy. I start by asking the question: what influenced the Somare government to disregard Australia's extradition request and give safe passage to Moti? This is an important question, as it highlights the underlying factor that drove foreign policy. I reflect on this question by reviewing the main point that was raised in the beginning of this chapter and Chapter 4. Prime Minister Somare viewed Australia's new interventionism as a violation of national sovereignty and pushed back on Australia in the ECP case. However, he failed, as the government embraced the SGP. The Moti case, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, is a part of the ECP story. Prime Minister Somare, working in tandem with the Solomon Islands prime minister, moved to minimise Canberra's influence in PNG. Somare used the same rationale—national sovereignty—as justification and gave safe passage to Moti.

This justification of national sovereignty was strengthened after Somare alleged that the Australian Government, without consulting the PNG state prosecutor, went ahead and issued a warrant of arrest for Moti. As mentioned, he claimed that the bypassing of the state prosecutor's office was illegal. He viewed it as a violation of national sovereignty. The incident inflamed sentiments of nationalism, which existed since the ECP was announced. Subsequently, Somare commenced the campaign to let Moti go. Somare's idea of nationalism, which focused on minimising external influence in PNG, influenced his decision to give safe passage to Moti. He refused Australia's extradition orders in defence of what he believed to be PNG's national interest—national sovereignty.

Somare's idea of the national interest—national sovereignty—was not widely shared. The public saw the Moti affair as a violation of international treaties and norms, as well as the violation of the constitution and its by-laws. This prompted the Ombudsman Commission of PNG to conduct an independent investigation. Similarly, the coalition partners in Somare's government saw the Moti affair as illegal and unrepresentative of collective government interest. The interest of the coalition government (and the bureaucracy that deliberated on the Moti issue) was to uphold the government's commitment to international treaties and norms, as well as to maintain its close relations with Australia. The illegality of the Moti affair formed the basis of investigations and inquiries including the DFBI.

Nonetheless, the national sovereignty rationale influenced foreign policy decision-making in the Moti affair. At the core of the national sovereignty rationale is the issue of PNG's ambition to chart foreign policy that is independent of Australia's influence. This ambition has been the driving force behind PNG's evolving foreign policy approach, which is reflected in the doctrines of universalism and then active and selective engagement. This key point is important and it provides the basis for analysis in the Moti case.

5.4.1 Weakness of state

Foreign policy, as discussed in Chapter 2, is a state function. The state is responsible for foreign policy. For this reason, it is important to evaluate the state in relation to the Moti case. The Moti case essentially highlights the weakness of the state. To support this point, I look at the concept of state and its capacity to support the government's ambitious foreign policy—to chart foreign policy that is independent of Australia's influence. A state is 'a set of organized governing institutions which are formally connected to each other and have some cohesiveness' and are 'run in large part by bureaucracies' (Dryzek & Dunleavy, 2009, pp. 2, 5). The strength of the state is measured in terms of the capacity of its formal institutions—state bodies such as the courts, legislatures and bureaucracies—to support basic economic

functions, deliver basic services, keep law and order and support government functions and policies. The state's formal institutions (and statutory authorities) carry out these functions. The strength of the formal institution is defined in terms of its capacity to support government functions and policies. The Moti case exposed the weakness of the state. As mentioned, the government deployed nationalist rhetoric to justify PNG's independence and national sovereignty in giving safe passage to Moti. National sovereignty, as mentioned in Chapter 2, is understood as the recognised right of domestic political authorities to be the only arbiters of legitimate behaviour within the territorial boundaries of their state, free from external interference (Krasner, 1999, p. 4). This includes control over economic sovereignty by external actors. It is not realistically possible to exercise state power and justify such actions with nationalist arguments unless the state is genuinely independent. As mentioned in Chapter 4, PNG is dependent on Australia, even in the twenty-first century. The government's ambition for independence from external influence is limited. Its capacity to institutionalise this ambitious foreign policy in the form of a coherent set of policies shared across the government is limited. As a result, the government deployed the rhetoric of national sovereignty as justification for minimising Australia's influence in PNG.

The state's weakness was also reflected in its political institutions and bureaucracy. For instance, the formal institution's strength is defined in terms of its effectiveness, with its effectiveness, in turn, depending on the extent to which rules and procedures that exist on paper are enforced or complied with in practice (Helmke & Levitsky, 2006, p. 6). The commander of the PNGDF overlooked Section 205(1) of the PNG constitution, which guided the functions of the PNGDF. The weak enforcement of rules and laws pointed to the state's weak political institution. Moreover, bureaucracy holds the essence of the state. Modern-day governance largely occurs in and through the bureaucratic mechanism, with emphasis placed on hierarchy, management by written and inflexible rules, regulations, procedures and impersonal relationships to make the system more effective (Blau & Meyer, 1971; Downs, 1967). The

government often operates on the basis of legal–rational authority. In the Moti case, a selection of highly placed bureaucrats with varying abilities and positions of power used their offices, chose strategies and carried out a foreign policy directive in quite dysfunctional ways. They bypassed formal channels of communication and authority. For example, under the conventional hierarchical structure, the chief secretary—who occupies the apex of the administrative hierarchy—would issue instructions and directives to departmental heads. However, the chief secretary was bypassed because he was considered a major stumbling block for completing the operation. His position to respect the rule of law and allow the judicial process to take its normal course worked against the prime minister’s interest. The chief of staff bypassed the Office of the Chief Secretary and gave directions to the director general of OSCA, a junior officer, who subsequently influenced the acting commander of the PNGDF to commit state resources for the operation. Moreover, they avoided bureaucratic protocols (e.g., formal meetings) and bent the formal rules in international relations (the *Extradition Act 2005* and *Chicago Convention*). These examples point to weakness of the state’s institutions and bureaucracy.

However, not all political institutions involved in the Moti case are weak, which is defined in terms of the capacity to carry out their functions. The collective decision of senior representatives from the National Security Council (NSC), NSAC, the DFA and the Department of the Attorney General to respect the extradition and judicial process demonstrates their resolve to adhere to laws and processes. They planned to enforce the rules and laws that would consolidate and strengthen the power and position of the respective institutions. However, the prime minister, in his capacity as chairman of the NSC, used his power to override their decisions. This is further discussed in the later part of this analysis under the subheading ‘personalised nature of foreign policy’.

5.4.2 Signs of informal institutions

The state's weakness discussed so far is caused by the influence of informal institutions on formal government institutions. The Moti case displayed signs of informal institutions. In this section, I examine the informal institutions and reflect on their influence on foreign policy. I start by considering the definition of informal institutions. Helmke and Levitsky (2004) defined informal institutions as 'socially shared rules, usually unwritten, that are created, communicated, and enforced outside officially sanctioned channels' (Helmke & Levitsky, 2004, p. 727). This intuitive understanding of informal institution has been applied to a variety of phenomena, including clans and mafias (Collins, 2002, 2003; Lauth, 2000), folkways (D. H. Fischer, 1991; Matthews, 1959; Sumner, 1906), corruption, clientelism, patrimonialism (Böröcz, 2000; Dahlström & Lapuente, 2012; Lauth, 2000; O'Donnell, 1996; Pejovich, 1999; Persson, Rothstein & Toerell, 2012; Taylor-Robinson, 2006), personal networks (Wang, 2000) and culture (Dia, 1996; Pejovich, 1999). This wide range of phenomena encompass all behaviours that are not accounted for by the written rules.

Cultural, personal and *wantok* networks featured prominently in the Moti affair. In this section, I unpack the key concept of culture to determine its influence on foreign policy. I highlight the 'big man' personality and *wantok* network as intrinsic parts of the Melanesian culture and society and show how they play out in the Moti affair. Culture is defined as 'those customary beliefs and values that ethnic, religious, and social groups transmit fairly unchanged from generation to generation' (Manz, Sapienza & Zingales, 2006, p. 23). It is a system of inherited conceptions that shape the patterns of thought, human behaviour and action. Cultural beliefs are an important component of culture:

Cultural beliefs are the ideas and thoughts common to several individuals that govern interaction—between these people, and between them, their gods, and other groups—and differ from

knowledge in that they are not empirically discovered or analytically proved. In general cultural beliefs become identical and commonly known through the socialisation process by which culture is unified, maintained and communicated (Greif, 1994, p. 915).

Captain Ur's previous statement, 'in a high context culture like PNG, the mention of names of people that we have respect for is good enough for me to act upon their direction' (DFBI, 2007, pp. 12–13), reflected a causal link between cultural belief and its influence on decision-making. His statement, 'the mention of names of people that we have respect for', identifies Somare with the 'big man', whose directions cannot be questioned.

The 'big man' is a type of leadership that is closely associated with the traditional Melanesian culture and society. Its status is attained by 'the outcome of a series of acts which elevate a person above the common herd and attract about him a coterie of loyal lesser men' (Sahlins, 1963, p. 289). His power, regarded as 'personal power' (Sahlins, 1963, p. 289), is often more influential than legal–rational authority (which is further discussed in next section). The 'big man' is a highly influential individual that has a large group of followers, both from his clan and from other clans. In particular Melanesian tribes, the phrase 'big man' also denotes 'man of importance' or 'man of renown' (Sahlins, 1963, p. 289). In the Pacific region, two types of leadership are common: the 'big man' leadership systems of Melanesia and the chieftains of Polynesia. Leadership in Polynesia is inherited. Leadership in Melanesia, by contrast, is usually determined by the personal prestige of community members (Goldman, 1970; Sahlins, 1963; Sand, 2002). However, this system of leadership has limits. In parts of New Caledonia, Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands and PNG, chiefs were hereditary over several generations (Sand, 2002, p. 290). Somare is one of the very few leaders in the region who straddles both systems. In his Karau village in the Murik Lakes of East Sepik, he is barely acknowledged as the prime minister. In this village, he carries a more important title, the chief,

like his father before him. In PNG, he is the prime minister. He is regarded as the founding 'father of the nation' (Chin, 2003, p. 460; Griffin, 1997, p. 77) who brought the country to independence in 1975 and became its first prime minister. In contemporary PNG society and politics, Somare is affectionately referred to as the 'old man', or 'grand chief'. His face's appearance on the PNG's legal tender, kina (50-kina denomination), symbolises respect for the national leader. Captain Ur's reference to Somare as the 'old man' (DFBI, 2007, p. 13) and 'people that we have respect for' (DFBI, 2007, pp. 12–13) demonstrated the link between Somare's 'big man' personality and its influence on his followers. The acting PNGDF commander ignored Section 205 of the PNG constitution because he believed that the instruction came from a respectable person in society (DFBI, 2007, pp. 12–13), despite its questionable nature. This is because in Melanesian and Polynesian societies, leaders and chiefs are treated with great respect. This example revealed the influence of the 'big man' personality on foreign policy decision-making.

The various actors involved in the Moti affair are *wantoks*, which in Melanesian Pidgin means 'one talk', or someone who shares the same language. In practice, a *wantok* group is based on shared language, family or tribal relations, regional location and other forms of association (Dinnen, 1997, p. 12). *Wantok* more generally refers to a system of socio-economic obligation, reciprocity, status and preferential treatment that binds members of a group (Alpers, 2005, p. 34). The *wantok* network or system is an informal institution, in that its operation is largely based on unwritten rules that are socially shared. Understanding the *wantok* system as a socio-economic and political network is critical to understanding Melanesian societies and political behaviour in the country and region.

Excluding the prime minister's chief of staff, all the key players are from the Sepik province, or the same province as the prime minister, including the chief secretary, the acting commander of the PNGDF, director general of OSCA and the two drivers (Jerry Fruanga and

Balthazar Wali), who drove Moti out of the chancellery to the airport. The prime minister's chief of staff knew that *wantoks* from Sepik were specifically assigned to perform the illegal operation when he said 'you Sepiks, you and the Chief Secretary are gelygelys' (DFBI, 2007, p. 46). The involvement of the various actors who carried out the clandestine operation may have been involuntary, but the fact that this group of elites came from the same province as the prime minister underscored the *wantok* network in the Moti affair. It left the impression that *wantoks* were specifically selected for the purpose. The highly placed Sepik group also engaged relatives (the two drivers) to perform the operation.

The *wantok* label is also extended to the wider Melanesian societies who share the same cultural features and identity. This brings the Solomon Islands Prime Minister, Manasseh Sogavare, into the picture. Somare and Sogavare are *wantoks*; they share the same Melanesian cultural identity. States that have identical cultures often engage in cooperative and integrative behaviour. They relate easily to each other with mutual understanding and cooperation (Cobb & Elder, 1970; Rummel, 1979). Somare and Sogavare's behaviours and actions in getting Moti out of PNG, against Australia's extradition request, can also be understood from the *wantok* network and their identity as Melanesians. They colluded to oppose Australia's extradition request and, more generally, to influence in the region. The collusion between the two prime ministers, for instance, was manifested by the consent to use the Solomon Islands territorial airspace without prior arrangement. There was no complaint of territorial violation when the PNGDF CASA aircraft flew into the Solomon Islands airspace without permission. In international relations, when one state violates the territorial airspace of another, there is usually a diplomatic protest in the strongest terms possible against such intrusion or invasion. The Solomon Islands Government did not send a protest note to PNG against the illegal entry into its airspace. The inability to protest the violation of its territorial airspace indicated that there was a consensual agreement between the two governments for the clandestine operation.

5.4.3 The personalised nature of foreign policy

The Moti case highlights the personalised nature of foreign policy. In this part, I look at the term ‘personalised’ more closely to understand how it influenced foreign policy in the Moti case. The term personalised identifies with personalism, which raises associations of absolute power in the hands of one person who is surrounded by a loyal group of followers (Van den Bosch, 2015, p. 12). Simply put, power is largely in the hands of one leader. In the last section, I identified this power—personal power—with the traditional Melanesian society and associated it with the ‘big man’ leadership. Bratton and Van de Walle (1994, pp. 474–475) describe the personalisation of power in these terms:

[The leader] rules personally by controlling the flow of public revenues and selectively disbursing rewards to a narrow entourage of familial, ethnic, or factional clients. He takes exclusive charge of policy-making (rather than relying on technocratic planning) and implements instructions through personal emissaries (rather than formal institutions).

The Moti case underscored the personalisation of power and its influence on foreign policy. The prime minister wielded power and exerted influence on both the policy process and the political institutions. Somare went on air on Radio Karai in the evening, after he received the diplomatic note from the Solomon Islands, and explained why PNG should release Moti to the Solomon Islands instead of handing him over to the Australian authorities. He then issued instructions to his close confidants to get rid of Moti, but he used the personal and *wantok* network instead of formal government institutions. Somare’s loyal supporter functioned as a personal emissary to implement the prime minister’s instructions, as there are almost no institutions left that would be able to do this (and, in the process, disregard formal rules and laws). Somare used his veto to override the bureaucratic position, sponsored and signed an

NEC submission with the claim that Moti was not a threat to security (after the NEC deliberated that Moti posed a security threat to PNG) and defended his decision to let Moti go on the PNG Parliament floor. These actions demonstrated the prime minister's personalised power. This power was further reflected when Somare sacked the defence minister and assumed responsibility of the ministry after the completion of the DFBI. The purpose was to prevent tabling the report in Parliament. Altogether, the Moti case revealed the considerable power of the prime minister who used it to manipulate foreign policy. It underscored the personalised nature of foreign policy.

5.5 Conclusion

What does the case study of Julian Moti reveal about contemporary foreign policy in PNG? First, the Moti case demonstrated the influence of culture on foreign policy. The 'big man' leadership and personality, the personal and *wantok* network and the Melanesian cultural identity have all shaped foreign policy decision-making. Second, the prime minister wielded power over foreign policy. This manifested in several ways: he used his power to influence the policy process and subsequently pushed his interest, he used his power to override the collective bureaucratic decision to respect the extradition and judicial processes and he exerted pressure on the bureaucracy to carry out the foreign policy direction. Essentially, the prime minister dictated foreign policy. Third, the Moti affair exposed informality, or the absence of formality, in foreign policy. It highlighted the tension between the aspiration for independence and the weakness of a Melanesian state with limited capacity to identify and implement coherent policies in pursuit of a commonly shared national interest. Somare's ambition for the independence from external influence in PNG, which discussed in the ECP case study, marked the beginning of a more contentious bilateral relationship with Australia. However, the political institutions who were responsible for foreign policy development did not support this ambition. The Moti case reflected the limited capacity of formal institutions to institutionalise the

ambition for independence from external influence. As a result, Somare deployed the nationalist rhetoric of national sovereignty as a justification for foreign policy, which the bureaucracy supported in a dysfunctional way. Finally, the Moti affair strengthened PNG's Melanesian identity and solidarity, but it destabilised its bilateral relationship with Australia. The affair created a rift in bilateral relations with Australia, with no development of a realistic alternative. Tension in the bilateral relationship between the two countries simmered for almost three years. Prime Minister Rudd diffused the tension when he assumed office in late 2007.

Chapter 6: West Papua

6.1 Introduction

This chapter examines PNG's foreign policy in relation to West Papua. On 5 February 2015, PNG Prime Minister, Peter O'Neill, made a statement about human rights abuses in West Papua. He acknowledged the atrocities committed against the Melanesian people and vowed to lead discussions in the region. His statement was stronger than any of his predecessors. It signalled a departure from the non-interference policy, which holds that a state should not meddle in the internal affairs of another state. The case of West Papua is interesting because it demonstrates the emergence of a coherent foreign policy. It is one of the first instances of foreign policy that is supported by resourcing and a degree of policy coherence. It is also important in the analysis of the development of foreign policy in PNG.

The story of West Papua is about the struggle for the political independence of the Melanesian people living in Indonesia. It is a continuing struggle that seemingly has no end. The story started soon after the Dutch Government ceded authority to the Indonesian Government in 1949. It has many parts with different issues and dates back to the 1940s. To avoid tangential information, I will focus on the period 2015–2017. This period is significant because PNG overturned the non-interference policy and supported a West Papuan group to be a member of the MSG, which gave them a voice to be heard in the region. However, I will provide a historical background from the period 1960–2014 to illuminate previous governments' foreign policies on the 'West Papua issue'.

In this chapter, the West Papua issue denotes both the political freedom for West Papuans and the human rights abuses committed against them. I further refer to West Papuans as the inhabitants of both the Papua and West Papua provinces. The chapter is divided into three main parts. The first is the story of West Papua, in which I provide the historical background of the West Papua case and shed light on the geopolitics of West Papua. The

second part outlines PNG’s foreign policy on West Papua and it is divided into two sub-parts: 1960–2014 and 2015–2017. The former explores past foreign policies and the latter examines the contemporary period. Foreign policy analysis vis-a-vis West Papua is covered respectively in the two periods under review and the conclusion constitutes the final part.

6.2 The Story of West Papua

West New Guinea was also known as Dutch New Guinea, or Netherlands New Guinea, during the Dutch rule (see Figure 3.1). After its annexation in 1969, it became known as West Irian Jaya, or Irian Barat, and it was renamed Irian Jaya in 1973 by the Suharto administration. The region was administered as a single province—Irian Jaya—until 2003, when it was split into the provinces of Papua and West Papua. Papua is bordered by the nation of PNG to the east and its capital is Jayapura. West Papua is a province composed of the western parts of Papua province and its capital is Manokwari (see Figure 6.1). In this chapter, the terms Irian Jaya and West Papua are used variously, according to the political context in which the reference is being made.

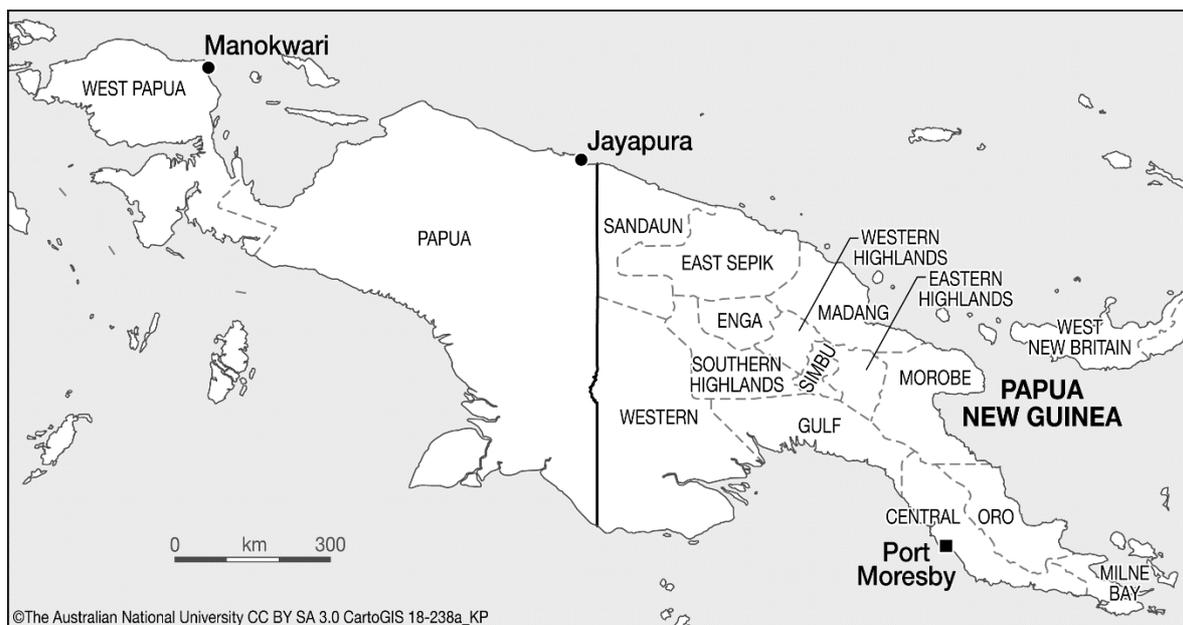


Figure 6.1. Map of Indonesia and PNG showing West Papua and Papua.

Source: CartoGIS, The Australian National University.

The history and occupation of West Papua have been covered by many writers (Bohane et al., 2003; King, 2004; May, 1986a; Nyamekye & Premdas, 1979a; Ondawame, 2010; Saltford, 2003; Webster, 2001; Wesley-Smith, 1987). In brief, the Dutch transferred sovereignty to Indonesia on 2 November 1949, but refused to relinquish the South Molucca Islands and West New Guinea soon after Indonesia declared independence. On 27 December 1949, the Dutch Government issued a decree that established a permanent colonial administration for West New Guinea under a governor appointed by, and responsible to, the Dutch Government alone. This decree, embodied in the *Treaty of The Hague*, prevented Indonesia from including West New Guinea as its territory in the transfer of sovereignty to Indonesia. The departing Dutch Government appealed to the principle of self-determination and insisted on a special status for West New Guinea. It argued that the people were ethnically and culturally different from rest of the people in the Indonesian archipelago and that the Dutch had an obligation to offer them an opportunity to determine their future (Cozens, 2005, p. 488; Nyamekye & Premdas, 1979a, p. 930; Saltford, 2003, p. 5). The Dutch wanted West New Guinea to be liberated from the rest of Indonesia, who took an opposing view. They dismissed the ethnic and cultural argument as an irrelevant basis for determining national boundaries. In Indonesia's view, its sovereignty extended to all the territories that were held by the Dutch before 1949. As a result, the *Treaty of The Hague* was revoked in 1956 and Indonesia subsequently extended its control over West New Guinea.

The confrontation between the Dutch and Indonesian Governments over West New Guinea after 1949, known as the West New Guinea dispute (1950–1962), intensified to the point of warfare. During the first phase of the West Irian dispute (1950–1954), Indonesia pursued bilateral negotiations with the Netherlands. During the second phase (1954–1958), Indonesia attempted to raise support for its territorial claims in the UN (Djiwandono, 1996, pp. 1–2). During the third phase (1960–1962), Indonesia pursued a policy of confrontation against

the Netherlands that combined diplomatic, political and economic pressure with limited military force. The final stage of the confrontation with Indonesia involved a planned military invasion of the territory. Military weapons and support for the planned invasion were sourced from the Soviet Union, which induced the US to react (Djiwandono, 1996, pp. 122–135). In 1962, the US intervened and played a third party role in settling the dispute in what became known as the *New York Agreement* (United Nations, 1962). This agreement was established between the Netherlands, Indonesia and the US and provided for the administration of the disputed territory. It was supervised by the UN. The agreement sustained Indonesia's claim to West New Guinea despite Dutch efforts to exercise control, but it conceded the principle of self-determination demanded by the Dutch. This strategy was a face-saving device intended to salve Dutch pride (Nyamekye & Premdas, 1979a, p. 930). West Papua's political fate was effectively sealed with the signing of the *New York Agreement*.

The agreement marked the end of a lengthy and bitter dispute between the Dutch and Indonesia over the future of the territory, but it did not specify who would determine the 'will of the people' that was demanded by the Dutch. The actual mechanism of determining the will of the people was left deliberately vague, except that it was to be carried out 'in accordance with international practice' (Saltford, 2003, p. 94). There was no mention of the words referendum or plebiscite in the *New York Agreement* and no real hope that the rights of the West Papuans would be respected (Bohane et al., 2003, p. 8; Saltford, 2003, pp. 93–94). In 1969, seven years after the *New York Agreement*, the Act of Free Choice was administered. Article XVIII(d) of the *New York Agreement* specified that all men and women in Papua who were not foreign nationals had the right to vote in the Act in accordance with international practice (United Nations, 1962). However, between 14 July and 2 August 1969, the Indonesian Government selected 1025 men and women out of an estimated population of 800,000 as the Western New Guinea representatives for the vote. They were asked to choose between two alternatives: either to remain with Indonesia, or to sever ties with Indonesia and become an

independent state separate from Indonesia. Their views were identified not by means of a referendum, but by the Indonesian process of *musyawarah*, or ‘consultation’, between government officials and the 1025 selected representatives (Wesley-Smith, 1987, p. 47). The process has been widely condemned by human rights groups because the ballot was far from free and fair. The men who were selected for the vote were subjected to a series of threats, insults and bribes for voting against independence (Saltford, 2009, p. 65). The farcical nature of this exercise was reflected in the fact that this self-determination principle was governed by Indonesia and overseen by the UN. Moreover, it was scheduled seven years after Indonesia assumed control of West New Guinea.

The passing of the Act was a serious diplomatic setback for West Papuans. More than 179 people petitioned the UN representative and expressed their concerns over the conduct of the Act. They complained to the representative that the vote was not legitimate, but the UN representative could do little as an observer (Ondawame, 2010, p. 56). According to human rights groups, the Act of Free Choice was devised in such a way that the outcome of the elections was guaranteed before a ballot was cast. For example, Article XVIII(a) of the Act of Free Choice called for ‘*musyawarah* with the representative councils on procedures and appropriate methods to be followed’ (United Nations, 1962), which effectively ruled out free and fair elections. Human rights groups and OPM activists called the exercise the ‘Act of No Choice’ (Nyamekye & Premdas, 1979a, p. 930). The Act of Free Choice was often cited as one of the most disruptive events in Papuan history (Cozens, 2005; Heijmans, Simmonds & Veen, 2004; King, 2004). It endorsed Indonesia’s takeover of West Papua and was rubberstamped by the UN.

The ramifications of the events surrounding the Act and Indonesia’s handling of the process undermined a wide variety of human rights, not only that of self-determination. It brought West Papua into a new era of colonialism. Since Indonesia’s occupation of West

Papua, serious human rights violations and atrocities against indigenous West Papuans have increased. For a number of years, different sources including the US State Department, Tapol, Human Rights Watch, Yale Law School and Amnesty International have reported occurrences of torture, rape, harassment, unlawful detention and extrajudicial killing of the people perceived to be politically opposed to the Indonesian Government (Amnesty International, 2011; Hayworth, 2012; Human Rights Watch, 2007; US Department of State, 2013). According to a report by the Allard K. Lowenstein International Human Rights Clinic at Yale Law School, the main perpetrators were the Indonesian military and security forces who had a long history of mistreating the indigenous Papuans frequently and with impunity (Brundige, King, Vahali, Vladeck & Yuan, 2004, pp. 59–63). Over 500,000 civilians are believed to have been killed in a genocide against the indigenous population (Robinson, 2012). The Indonesian Government has time and again denied the allegations of human rights violations in West Papua. Indonesia's denial of human rights abuses lacked credibility, as it banned UN and non-government human rights monitors, including foreign journalists, from visiting and preparing reports on the allegations of human rights abuses. In August 2010, the Indonesian Government banned the Dutch international aid organisation Cordaid from West Papua, asserting among other things that the organisation had assisted Papua pro-independence activists (*The Jakarta Post*, 2010). In 2011, the Peace Brigades International had to close its Papua operations because the Indonesian Government imposed a series of challenges and constraints during the past years that have severely limited its ability to adequately protect human rights defenders at risk (Peace Brigades International, 2010, p. 5). International human rights organisations, such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, and foreign academics have also been denied access to West Papua (Human Rights Watch, 2015a, pp. 47–57).

The issue of West Papua was embroiled in Cold War geopolitics. The rights of West Papuans to national self-determination would typically have found support from Americans, who present themselves as a world champion of democracy, liberty and peace. However,

human rights concerns in West Papua were pushed aside by the US as part of its efforts to contain communism. The Americans turned away from the Dutch and supported Indonesia's claim of West Papua. They supported Indonesia to keep the country out of the communist camp and were prepared to sacrifice the future of the West Papuans for regional stability (Bohane et al., 2003, p. 5; Penders, 2002, pp. 290–295). In brief, West Papuans were sacrificed in the name of Cold War politics. Moreover, the US had substantial commercial interests in West Papua's mineral reserves. The American company Freeport, one of the world's largest producers of copper and gold, is involved in Indonesia's mining industry. It is Indonesia's largest export earner (Leith, 2003, p. 84). Freeport was central to Indonesia's economy as well as to the shareholders of the company. Therefore, it was not in the best interest of the US to destabilise its relationship with Indonesia over West Papua.

The UN did not discharge its mandate in West Papua. It accepted the flawed Indonesian system of voting, which indicated that it sanctioned the illegal procedure. The UN's oversight in handling the West Papua issue and its failure to achieve an acceptable solution that represented the interests of the West Papuans proved to be disastrous, as it had raised a then reasonably low-key issue into a full-blown international human rights violation concern between the Indonesian Government and indigenous West Papuans. The UN and the international community have not taken any action to redress the injustice. Subsequently, the UN lost its credibility in West Papua and was considered an organisation that the powerful states use to pursue their interests.

The West Papua issue has also been complex in terms of regional politics. In Australia, two dominant and opposing schools of thought have emerged vis-a-vis West Papua. One is adamant that moral imperatives should take precedence over diplomatic niceties. This is primarily influenced by the human rights abuses in the provinces. A central feature in this school of thought is the belief that the Australian Government has a moral obligation to act as

a voice for the West Papuan people. The other dominant strand of thought believes that the Australian Government's support for West Papuan independence would be counterproductive and would bring disastrous foreign policy implications (Day, 2015). This said, Australia's interest has been pragmatic and focused on respecting Indonesia's sovereignty over West Papua. Australian policymakers have believed that the appeasement of Indonesian nationalism is in the broader security interests of Australia (Australian Department of Defence, 2009, 2013). It is not in the interest of Australia to side with any factions, groups or individuals that fight for the rights of the oppressed in West Papua, as it could threaten more important national interests like security and trade (O'Keefe, 2013).

Various Australian governments, including the Rudd and Abbott governments, have maintained strong support for Indonesia's sovereignty over West Papua (O'Keefe, 2013). The Howard government has also maintained a similar stance on West Papua and had declared, on multiple occasions, that it would not support the West Papuan separatist movements (Elmslie, 2007; Fernandes, 2006; Rimmer, 2006). However, in 2006, the Australian Government granted temporary protection visas to 42 West Papuan asylum seekers who arrived on Australian shores by canoe. Indonesia considered the Australian Government's action, although inherently humanitarian and based on Australia's commitment to human rights and obligations to the 1951 *United Nations Refugee Convention*, an act of betrayal and a sign of Australia's support for the West Papua independence movement. Relations between Australia and Indonesia fell to its lowest point. Indonesia recalled its ambassador to Australia, signifying the tense state of relations between the two countries (Dempster, 2006; Robertson, 2006). The incident destabilised the relationship between the two countries. Following this experience, Australia tightened foreign policy and migration laws to make it increasingly difficult for West Papuan asylum seekers (Jennett, 2006; Rimmer, 2006). Further, the *Lombok Treaty* signed in November 2006 between Australia and Indonesia, reinforced Australia's stance on West Papua. The treaty reaffirmed Australia's security and strategic interests. Defence cooperation between

the two countries has increased significantly since the signing of the treaty (Habir & Roberts, 2014; Leahy, 2010; McGrath, 2013) and the relationship between the two countries was elevated to a 'strategic partnership' in March 2010 (Habir & Roberts, 2014, p. 1). In the light of these developments, it was difficult for Australia to accommodate the West Papua issue.

The support for West Papua varied between MSG member countries. Vanuatu and the FLNKS (Kanak and Socialist National Liberation Front) are the staunchest supporters of West Papuan emancipation and liberation (Blades, 2015a; Cain, 2014; Cullwick, 2013). FLNKS has been sympathetic, given its struggles for independence from France. Vanuatu has consistently been at the forefront of lending support for West Papua political freedom. In June 2010, the Government of Vanuatu unanimously adopted the *Wantok Blong Yumi Bill* to express their support for West Papua liberation and freedom from oppression (Buchanan, 2010). Vanuatu wanted MSG to push for West Papua's political independence, an issue that has often created a difference of opinion between political elites in the sub-regional group. Political elites have been ambivalent about backing West Papua against human rights violation and supporting it for political independence. Some political elites in the MSG have been cautious about political independence, but they have at times alluded to self-determination and autonomy for West Papua. Indonesia has been aware of West Papua support within the Vanuatu body politic for many years, but it has only recently sought to counter it. For example, Indonesia offered former Vanuatu Prime Minister Sato Kilman lavish trips to Jakarta, forged a closer relationship between the two countries and offered direct aid, such as police uniforms (Dorney, 2013). However, Kilman was forced to resign on 21 March 2013 ahead of a non-confidence vote, largely due to his dealings with Indonesia. Kilman's successor, Moana Carcasses Kalosil, reaffirmed Vanuatu's support for West Papua's political freedom (Makin, 2013).

The Solomon Islands Government's decision on West Papua has been wavering between autonomy for West Papua and its economic interests. The trade volume between the

Solomon Islands and Indonesia has progressively increased over many years, to the benefit of the Solomon Islands. For example, in 2012, Indonesia's import share was 2.25 per cent and its export share totalled 0.52 per cent, while in 2013, Indonesia's import share was 2.32 per cent and its export share was 0.34 per cent (World Bank, 2013). The balance of trade was in the Solomon Islands' favour. The increase in import share, though minimal, indicated that Indonesia was an important trade partner in terms of the overall import profile of the Solomon Islands economy. Despite government pledges to support West Papua's right to self-determination, no concrete actions have been taken to support the cause in regional and international forums, primarily because of the economic benefits the Solomon Islands would forego should it support the West Papua issue. However, the incumbent prime minister, Gordon Darcy Lilo, pledged in 2014 to pursue the West Papua issue through the Solomon Islands' newly established diplomatic office in Indonesia (Theonomi, 2014). The Solomon Islands' position on West Papua did not change after Prime Minister Lilo vacated office. In 2015, Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare assured the people of West Papua that his government will support West Papua's bid to join the MSG (Sogavare, 2015).

Fiji has a long history of flirting with Indonesia. Relations between Fiji and Indonesia were minimal under previous civilian governments, partly reflecting Fiji's disapproval of Indonesia's treatment of the West Papua Melanesian people. Since the military takeover in 2006, relations between Fiji and Indonesia have improved. One of the reasons for the improvement in this relationship stemmed from Fiji's suspension from the PIF and subsequently the Commonwealth of Nations, following the military coup (Firth, Fraenkel & Lal, 2009; Herr, 2010). Perceived as a pariah state, Fiji 'looked north' and elsewhere under the leadership of Commodore Bainimarama for international recognition and support. Relations between Indonesia and Fiji improved after Commodore Bainimarama looked to Indonesia. Fiji established its embassy in Jakarta in 2011, which paved the way for more efforts to enhance relations between the two countries. Fiji enjoyed a close relationship with Jakarta and

supported its belief that West Papua is an integral part of Indonesia. Overall, West Papua posed a significant challenge for MSG leaders; they faced the difficult task of managing their economic relations with Indonesia, of responding to regional human rights concerns and of supporting their liberation from Indonesia's authority, based on the Melanesian ethnicity.

6.3 West Papua and PNG's Foreign Policy

PNG's foreign policy on West Papua is traced back to the Dutch decolonisation of Indonesia. Resistance to Indonesian rule commenced almost immediately after the Dutch withdrew. The transfer of West Papua sovereignty to Indonesia provoked strong Melanesian resistance. While the Dutch abandoned their desire to retain Irian Jaya, many Irianese nationalists did not. The armed guerrilla group OPM, or the Free Papua Movement—an umbrella term for the independence movement—appeared from this residual group. The OPM has been the central vehicle of West Papua nationalism. It has often organised military actions against Indonesian soldiers and installations and has been using the PNG side of the border as a base and refuge from persecution (May, 2004, pp. 286–301). Throughout the 1960s and early 1970s, sporadic armed clashes throughout Irian Jaya between the OPM and Indonesian authorities produced widespread unrest, violence and fear among the people. Since the 1960s, the Irianese have been crossing the border into PNG in search of refuge due to the armed confrontations. The government responses to the border crossers since the 1960s varied, which reflects both contradictory and ambiguous foreign policies. I observe PNG's foreign policy vis-a-vis West Papua from 1960–2000 to examine the different positions of the PNG Government.

6.3.1 1960–2014

In this part, I examine PNG's foreign policy on West Papua since Indonesia's decolonisation. As mentioned earlier, the Irianese resistance to Indonesian rule commenced soon after the Dutch departed. After Indonesia extended its control over Irian Jaya in 1962,

hundreds of people per year crossed over into the Australian-administered territory of PNG. By the end of 1968, more than 1200 refugees had crossed into PNG (Budiardjo & Liem, 1988, p. 94; May, 1986b, p. 89). Australia, who had supported the Indonesian nationalists in their struggle against the Dutch, were less tolerant of anti-Indonesian movements and deported most of the refugees for illegal entry into the territory. In late 1968, over 200 refugees were granted permissive residence (Budiardjo & Liem, 1988, p. 94). Sixty-nine of them were moved from Vanimo to offshore Manus to prevent their participation in anti-Indonesian politics in the Territory of Papua and New Guinea (MacLellan, 2006; Neumann, 2004). Independent PNG did not depart from the colonial administration's policy of permissive residence. Between September 1975 and June 1977, 157 Irianese were granted citizenship (May, 1986b, p. 135). However, the new Somare government that emerged after independence understood that the presence of Irianese nationalists endangered its diplomatic relations with Indonesia. In the 1980s, those granted refugee status were moved with the assistance of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to third countries such as Sweden and Greece (May, 2004, p. 290; R. Osborne, 1986, p. 59).

In 1994, more than 12,000 West Papuans crossed over into PNG in three groups, as a result of sustained armed confrontation between the OPM and the Indonesian military (Hewison & Smith, 1986, p. 202; Preston, 1992, p. 849). The first group of refugees, 95 altogether, crossed into Vanimo, Sandaun Province, in early February. The PNG Government applied its standard border crosser policy—arrest of illegal border crossers (Blaskett, 1989, p. 283; Glazebrook, 2001, p. 269). In handing down the decision in Vanimo on 21 March, by which time the number of border crossers charged had increased to 111, 84 crossers were found guilty by one magistrate, while the second magistrate dismissed the case against the other 27. Seventy-three of those convicted were sentenced to six weeks imprisonment, but their conviction was quashed by the National Court (Hewison & Smith, 1986, pp. 203–204; May, 1986b, p. 116). It was unclear whether those freed by the National Court qualified for refugee

status, but PNG's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Rabbie Namaliu, announced that OPM rebels and army defectors would be sent to a third country. He further announced that none of the refugees would be charged with illegal entry (Glazebrook, 2001, p. 271). This was because some of the border crossers had their traditional lands straddling the international border; they had been moving freely over what is considered by many as an arbitrarily determined international boundary by colonial powers. This group of border crossers crossed en masse because they fled to seek safety from actual or expected persecution from the Indonesian military (Amankwah, 1990). Namaliu's announcement of the non-arrest reflected a departure from the standard border policy that called for the arrest of border crossers.

The second group of refugees, as many as 3000, crossed into areas near the Sandaun Province between March and April 1984 (Hewison & Smith, 1986, p. 204; May, 1986b, p. 120). The PNG Government, confronted with a growing volume of border crossers, met with Indonesian officials on 13 April 1984 to discuss repatriation of the refugees (May, 1986b, p. 116). The meeting agreed on the repatriation of border crossers, but three major obstacles frustrated the agreement. First, the PNG Government's official position was to secure Jakarta's assurance of safe conduct before it could return the Irianese refugees (May, 1986b, p. 123; Premdas, 1985, p. 1065). Namaliu was verbally guaranteed the safety of refugees on more than one occasion, but when he first sought a written undertaking and, subsequently, a formal commitment from both the foreign minister and military as part of a joint repatriation agreement, it met resistance. Second, the PNG Government considered the human rights and humanitarian aspects of the problem and requested the involvement of the UNHCR. However, Indonesia refused UNHCR's intervention because it opposed internationalisation of the issue and Indonesia claimed that involving the UNHCR would complicate the repatriation process. Finally, Indonesia asked for a list of names and details of key refugees before deciding on repatriation, which PNG was reluctant to provide (Hewison & Smith, 1986, p. 204; May, 1986b, pp. 123–124). Although there was a mutual desire on both sides to resolve the refugee

issue, talks between the two governments on the issue of repatriation became deadlocked and remained deadlocked, even after the extra sessions. Nevertheless, repatriation was one of the policy options.

Between April and July 1984, the third group of refugees crossed into the Western Province along a 150 kilometre stretch of the border from the northern end of the Fly River to the border between Sandaun and Western Provinces because of the intensified military activity in Irian Jaya. Faced with a stalemate in its repatriation program, the Somare government 'opted to take a harder line with the border-crossers, permitting conditions in the camps to deteriorate, to try to persuade their inhabitants to return home' (Harris & Brown, 1985, p. 42). The national government stopped assisting the government officers in Western and Sandaun Provinces to mitigate the costs of administration (Fitzer, 1987), instructed officials to send refugees back (Hewison & Smith, 1985), discouraged the involvement of UNHCR (Hewison & Smith, 1986), devoted minimal resources and prevented church groups from sending food and medical aid to some camps (Blaskett, 1989; May, 1986b). The policy, by virtue of its harshness, was tantamount to the government's policy of forced repatriation. However, the government was forced to shelve this plan because of the death of 92 refugees from starvation and malnutrition-related causes in a southern border camp in August 1994, combined with criticisms from the PNG parliament (Bell, Feith & Hatley, 1986, p. 542; Preston, 1992, p. 858), the general public (through the local media), worldwide media (Glazebrook, 2001, p. 11), churches (Blaskett, 1989, p. 290) and university students (Blaskett, 1989, p. 291).

Among the intellectuals of Port Moresby and university students in the border provinces, there was a growing sympathy for fellow Melanesians from the West who had 'dark, frizzy-haired people like ourselves' and were fleeing Indonesian oppression (Bell et al., 1986, p. 541). Concerns about the Melanesian brothers increased, but relations between the PNG Government, the OPM and its supporters simultaneously deteriorated (May, 1986b, p. 135)

because the OPM has often used the PNG side of the border as a sanctuary and base for attacks against the Indonesian army. PNG governments have always believed that they cannot afford to antagonise Indonesia by harbouring the OPM guerrillas, or by being too welcoming to refugees fleeing its rule. Moreover, the PNG Government had no policies in place that would help to cope with the situation in either international political arenas or locally. There were no plans for food relief, shelter or medical assistance and no policy in respect of the relations between host communities and the government (Preston, 1992, p. 856). Much of the initial assistance in providing for the refugees came from the UNHCR (Blaskett, 1989, p. 283) and partly by church organisations (May, 2004, p. 293). Assistance also came from the Red Cross and Austcare (Crowe, Mongi & Raper, 1984; Hewison & Smith, 1985, p. 92).

Since the 1980s, the government employed a variety of policies to discourage the movement of OPM guerrillas and of West Papuans fleeing Indonesia's rule into the PNG border. These policies include repatriation (forced and voluntary), relocation to East Awin in Western Province, deportation, resettlement and offering permissive residence to refugees that were found to be genuine. Occasionally, the PNGDF and mobile police squads were deployed in the border area to discourage the movement of OPM guerrillas into the PNG border (May, 2004, p. 294). These deployments were a major foreign policy decision by the government, as they represented what Premdas (1985) called, an 'aggressive posture against the OPM' (Premdas, 1985, p. 1072). It was an aggressive PNG Government policy position, as it demonstrated the deployment of armed forces (PNGDF and mobile police squads) against West Papuans.

PNG's policy on West Papua varied. Sometimes, the government adopted policies that were ambiguous and, at other times, adopted policies that were contradictory. For example, PNG displayed much sympathy to the early group of asylum seekers and granted them permissive residence. However, government attitude changed throughout the 1970s, as

tensions along the border increased. Many asylum seekers were found guilty of being illegal immigrants and were subsequently imprisoned or deported to third countries (Preston, 1992). Since the early 1980s, PNG developed ambivalent attitudes to refugees and OPM guerrillas alike. The government offered limited assistance to the refugees and expected them to leave, while conversely offering assistance to those in need of it. The various government policy positions were partly a consequence of diverse pressures. Some of these pressures emerged within PNG and others outside PNG.

The internal pressures affecting decision-makers came from three broad sources. First was the ‘Melanesian brother’ (Nyamekye & Premdas, 1979a, p. 939) pressure that was driven by ethnic bonds, cultural identity and cultural links between the Melanesian residents on both sides of the border. The Melanesian brother pressure came from a significant segment of individuals and groups—including churches, university students, human rights NGOs, anti-colonial political movements, the PNG Parliament (Bell et al., 1986, p. 542; Blaskett, 1989, pp. 290–291; Preston, 1992, p. 858) and even political parties and leaders in opposition—who opposed the PNG Government’s recognition of Indonesian territorial sovereignty over West Papua (King, 2004, pp. 171–173; Nyamekye & Premdas, 1979a, p. 940). Sympathy with the plight of the Melanesian brothers across the border was often reinforced by nationalist anger at the Indonesian military incursions along the unmarked frontier in the course of anti-OPM operations (MacQueen, 1989a, p. 532). The Melanesian brother pressure not only had its origins in PNG, but also elsewhere in the region that had Melanesian societies. The second source of pressure came from the church. The church exercised strong influence over public opinion through pastors, priests and missionaries. Its concerns largely hinged on human rights and the rights of the minority of Christians in a dominantly Muslim community (May, 1986b, p. 146). The third source of pressure came from the opposition members of the PNG Parliament (Nyamekye & Premdas, 1979a, pp. 943–944). Since the 1980s, the opposition members led by Sir Iambakey Okuk have expressed strong support for the self-determination of the West

Papuans. In the mid-1980s, opposition members like former prime minister, Julius Chan, United Party Leader, Paul Torato, Deputy Opposition Leader, Steven Tago and Ted Diro have strongly opposed repatriation (May, 1986b, pp. 150–154). These leaders blamed the government's acquiescence to Indonesian pressure, which prompted the government to prolong its repatriation policy.

The external pressures on West Papua came from three primary sources. The first came from Australia, who was faced with the challenge of managing border security issues from its two northern neighbours. The northern islands of PNG and Indonesia were important to Australia for security and strategic reasons. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, Australia was cautious of its northern borders (Hunt, 2017; Laki & May, 2009). It took precautions to secure the border by helping PNG increase the number of patrol posts, provide rudimentary schools and health centres and construct government councils to establish presence on the border (Herlihy, 1981, p. 172). Concurrently, Canberra developed equally close relations with Jakarta to secure the border area (Blaskett, 1989, p. 64). Canberra's position has been one of 'moderation and accommodation on both sides' (Nyamekye & Premdas, 1979a, p. 942) and has often exercised caution on the border tensions between PNG and Indonesia. Canberra's views about how the border should be managed have often been communicated through its behaviour. For example, in April 1985, the premiers of Fly, Morobe and the North Solomon provinces offered to resettle refugee families temporarily in their respective provinces (Blaskett, 1989, p. 295). Canberra feared that providing long-term accommodation for West Papuans in PNG would encourage more border crossings. As a result, Australia withheld funds for relocation, insisting that the UNHCR should instead persuade Indonesia to allow an international agency to monitor the return of refugees (Tapol, 1988, p. 2). The second source of pressure came from the UN. PNG was expected to justify its refugee policy within the forums of the UN family. As such, Port Moresby was concerned about avoiding the unnecessary criticisms on the grounds of denying humanitarian assistance to those in need of

it (Nyamekye & Premdas, 1979a, pp. 942–944). The final source of pressure came from Indonesia.

Successive PNG governments have long balanced competing tensions: domestic and international pressures, populist sentiments in support of West Papuan rights, growing economic links with Indonesia and ASEAN (which was explained in Chapter 3), border management following the Border Agreements⁶, strong ethnic and religious links between Melanesians in PNG and West Papua and the moral obligation to raise the plight of Melanesians in Indonesia in international bodies and forums. Successive governments have often been placed in delicate situations, as they balance these competing imperatives in their relationship with Indonesia. Moreover, they have been preoccupied with PNG's security along the border. As mentioned before, PNG governments have always believed that they cannot afford to antagonise Indonesia by harbouring the OPM guerrillas or by being too welcoming to refugees fleeing its rule. They believed that Indonesia was too powerful to antagonise (Nyamekye & Premdas, 1979a, p. 941). As such, various PNG governments were concerned about the implications of the situation in West Papua for the stability and security of PNG and, ultimately, of Australia and the rest of the South Pacific region (MacQueen, 1989a; Nyamekye & Premdas, 1979a). The security emphasis has subsequently diverted attention from other equally important aspects, notably the welfare of the West Papua people, their political oppression, economic exploitation and human rights abuses that include torture, death and politically motivated violence (Brundige et al., 2004; Budiardjo & Liem, 1988; Ondawame, 2010). The various prime ministers have disregarded the human rights violations that were committed against West Papuans. Their respective governments have refrained from

⁶ Agreement between Australia and Indonesia concerning certain boundaries between Papua New Guinea and Indonesia, 1973, Border Agreements between Papua New Guinea and Indonesia, 1979 and Treaty of Mutual Respect, Friendship and Cooperation, 1986.

condemning human rights abuses, often claiming that it was Indonesia's domestic problem, and have consistently denied OPM supporters and rebellious West Papuan groups opposing Indonesia's sovereignty access to their territories.

The OPM's existence is premised on the illegitimacy of Indonesian control of Irian Jaya. The challenge constituted a fundamental threat to the territorial integrity of Indonesia. As PNG and Indonesia share a common border, Indonesia often put pressure on PNG to quell the OPM. However, successive PNG governments have not seriously considered the option of military operations along the border to quell OPM operations. Such operations would trigger protests in PNG and other Melanesian societies in the region, given the widespread sympathy for the Melanesians living in Indonesia. Instead, successive governments have sought to manage the border problems with Indonesia through peaceful means. The cooperation between PNG and Indonesia to deal with problems arising from the common border has been captured in various border agreements. The agreements called for collaboration and cooperation, but 'non-interference' into the internal affairs of the other.

The non-interference policy is recognised by the *Charter of the United Nations*. Article 2(7) recognises 'the principles of national sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of any State' (United Nations, 1945). This is based on the notion that a state should not interfere in the internal politics of another state, as well as the principles of state sovereignty and self-determination. The non-interference policy has been accepted and practiced by many countries that are bounded by the *Charter of the United Nations*. Indonesia has a longstanding preference for non-intervention and an opposition to external attempts to meddle in the internal affairs of others; this aligns conveniently with its desire to avoid criticism of its own domestic agenda. This is one motivation behind Indonesia's failure to ratify the *Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court*, which supported an end to genocide, to crimes against humanity, war crimes and crimes of aggression. PNG has long been committed to the non-interference

policy. In 1988, PNG's then Foreign Minister, Akoka Doi, reinforced the non-interference policy. He said that Port Moresby recognises West Papua as 'an integral part of Indonesia' and, in his words, a 'mistake done by the colonial powers so let it stay as it is' (Doi, cited in MacQueen, 1989a, p. 534). Successive governments have continued to maintain the non-interference policy.

6.3.2 2015–2017

The period 2015–2017 was a significant period, in that PNG overturned the non-intervention policy. However, the events that set the foundation for this date back to the beginning of the twenty-first century. The period was marked by renewed populist support for the West Papua movement, partly due to the improved mobile phone network and wider coverage of the issue. The dissemination of information and pictures of brutality through the internet and social media has mobilised opinion, raised public awareness and gained wider support for the West Papua movement as people subscribed to the improved network coverage and communication technology. The adoption and use of information communication technology in PNG has significantly increased in the past decade. This is reflected in the mobile phone network coverage, which grew from 4.7 per cent in 2007 to 47 per cent in 2015 (Galgal, 2017). Increased access to mobile phones, the internet, Facebook, Twitter and other forms of social media increased the political engagement and participation in democratic debates of more people (Watson & Duffield, 2016, p. 278). The issue of West Papua also became a discussion topic in many social media forums. The prime minister acknowledged the 'pictures of brutality of our people' that 'appear daily of social media' (O'Neill, 2015a), as will be observed later in this chapter, when he spoke about human rights in West Papua.

Populist support for West Papua gained momentum at the beginning of the twenty-first century as the civil society—including NGOs, students, human rights advocacy groups, prominent PNG citizens and church groups—joined the call to end human rights violence in

West Papua. For example, in early October 2012 at a Lutheran women's conference in Lae, Morobe Province, a conference representative named Rose Muingepe appealed to the government and said:

We are asking the government to raise the plight of the West Papuans on the floor of parliament. We know that women are being raped, men are being tortured and we want our government to pay attention to the issue (EM TV News, 2012).

O'Neill responded, saying that his government would deliver a diplomatic note through the DFA that expressed the concerns of PNG citizens to the Indonesian Government. He said:

We need to respect international conventions made in organisations like the United Nations. We also need to respect that Indonesia is a part of those organisations. Through those conventions, we will deliver a diplomatic note raising the concerns of our citizens over some of the reports that we are getting from West Papua on human rights abuses (EM TV News, 2012).

The DFA did not make any representation to the Indonesian Government through PNG's Jakarta office via diplomatic note as promised by the prime minister. Nonetheless, O'Neill's acknowledgement of human rights abuses and his pledge to address the issue was the first known position of the O'Neill government regarding West Papua, after a church group urged the government to raise the plight of West Papuans in Parliament.

Even members of the PNG Parliament supported the West Papua movement for ending the human rights abuses against West Papuans. Powes Parkop, National Capital District Governor, parliamentary leader of the Social Democratic Party and one of the coalition partners in the O'Neill government, had been a human rights activist, lawyer and vocal supporter of the

free Papua movement even before entering Parliament. Both Parkop and Gary Juffa, Governor of Oro Province and ardent supporter of the West Papua movement, are members of the International Parliamentarians for West Papua—a cross-party group of politicians from around the world whose primary objective is to promote international parliamentary support and awareness for the West Papuan independence movement. Pressure from the Parliament to support the West Papua cause emerged from two controversial issues: the Paul Paraka case and a controversial United Bank of Switzerland (UBS) loan. These two issues implicated the prime minister of corruption and misconduct in office. They are covered by many writers (Cochrane, 2014; Garnaut, 2015a, 2015b; May, 2017), though this chapter will not dwell on them. The key issue, however, is that the allegations almost led to the prime minister's political demise. The Paul Paraka and UBS loan cases were major issues that brought the prime minister's integrity and leadership into disrepute. The allegations incited public debate and mostly criticised O'Neill's leadership and alleged corrupt practices. The allegations of corruption and misconduct went viral on the internet and were met with widespread criticisms among anti-corruption bodies, including the PNG branch of Transparency International (Yalo, 2014). The civil society, members of the opposition and the Transparency International PNG branch called for the prime minister to step down while investigations continued (Pok, 2014; Yalo, 2014). The pressure to support the West Papua cause during this period would have emerged from the government's coalition partner—the Social Democratic Party—because responding to the coalition partner's interest (West Papua) was one of the ways to consolidate government solidarity at a time when the prime minister was urged to relinquish his position. I make inference here because in PNG's political culture and landscape, political party-hopping and switching of alliances from the government to opposition and vice versa is common for political and other reasons and interests (May, 2003c; Okole, 2012; Standish, 2007, 2013).

Subtle pressure to support the West Papua case came from the Melanesian societies, including the United Liberation Movement for West Papua (ULMWP). ULMWP is an

umbrella organisation that represented the different factions of the West Papua independence movement including the Federal Republic of West Papua, the National Coalition for Liberation and the West Papua National Parliament. Benny Wenda, an international lobbyist, is the chairperson of the group. Together with other lobbyists like John Otto Ondawame and supporters of the free Papua movement, they have carried out extensive peacemaking and public awareness activities in various countries by promoting a peaceful solution to the conflict in West Papua and establishing solidarity links among oppressed, colonised and indigenous peoples. They encountered different people in the countries that they visited (including prominent ministers, politicians and university students), talked to the media and, in the process, widened the support and campaign for West Papua liberation. On 4 February 2015, ULMWP applied for membership to MSG.

The following day on 5 February 2015, during a leadership summit⁷ in Port Moresby, Prime Minister O’Neill said:

Papua New Guinea today is a respected regional leader. After 40 years of undisturbed democracy, we are in a unique position to lead mature discussions on issues affecting our people in the region. Our leading role in encouraging Fiji to a democratically elected government and voicing our concerns about the plight of our people in New Caledonia are examples of our growing influence. We have also participated in the restoration of democracy and law and order in countries like Vanuatu and Solomon Islands. But sometimes we forget our family,

⁷ Cabinet ministers, provincial governors, business leaders and development partners including Australia attended the summit.

our brothers and sisters, especially those in West Papua. I think as a country the time has come for us to speak about oppression of our people. Pictures of brutality of our people appear daily on social media and yet we take no notice. We have the moral obligation to speak for those who are not allowed to talk. We must be the eyes for those who are blindfolded. Again, Papua New Guinea, as a regional leader, we must lead these discussions with our friends in a mature and engaging manner (O'Neill, 2015a).

Prime Minister O'Neill's remark was a significant policy statement in that it departed from the traditional non-interference policy. It was the first time an incumbent PNG prime minister spoke directly about the rights of West Papuans concerning torture and politically motivated violence against them in a public forum.

Prime Minister O'Neill's statement about human rights in West Papua is not purely influenced by human rights concerns. This is because PNG has rarely fixed its human rights issues. PNG's record of human rights abuses has been a worrying concern for human rights advocacy groups. For example, a country report on human rights practices, released by the United States Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labour in 2015 noted that:

The principal human rights concerns were severe police abuse of detainees and police and military abuse of citizens; violence and discrimination against women and girls; and vigilante killings and abuses, some related to alleged involvement in sorcery and witchcraft. A significant area of controversy involved the Australian-run refugee processing centre on Manus island ... Other human rights problems included poor prison conditions; lengthy pre-trial detention; infringement of citizens' privacy rights, particularly in highland areas;

government corruption; discrimination against persons with disabilities; intertribal violence; and ineffective enforcement of labour laws (US Department of State, 2015, p. 1).

Similar concerns of human rights abuses were raised by the Human Rights Watch, an international NGO that conducts research and advocacy on human rights. In its 2015 annual assessment of more than 90 countries, it noted that:

Despite Papua New Guinea's (PNG) current extractives-led economic boom, an estimated 40 percent of the country live in poverty. Pressing human rights issues include gender inequality, violence, corruption, and excessive use of force by police. Rates of family and sexual violence are among the highest in the world, and perpetrators are rarely prosecuted ... Physical and sexual abuse of detainees—including children—by police and paramilitary police units continues to be widespread ... Members of PNG's notorious paramilitary police units (Mobile Squads), detention centre staff, and local residents were implicated in excessive use of force in quelling protests in February 2014 at the Manus Island detention centre, which holds asylum seekers transferred by Australia for refugee status determination and resettlement ... Papua New Guinea is one of the most dangerous places in the world to be a woman, with the majority of women experiencing rape of assault in their lifetime and women facing systemic discrimination (Human Rights Watch, 2015b, pp. 425–426).

The two reports raised concerns about human rights abuses, including gender inequality, violence, corruption, excessive use of force by the police (RPNGC) and the government's failure to take sufficient steps to address them. It also raised concerns about the

RPNGC's lack of accountability and prevailing impunity for violations by members of the organisation who commit extrajudicial punishments, killings, torture and sexual violence. This is additional to the increasing incidences of violence against women and sorcery-related attacks in the PNG highlands. The reports did not portray PNG as a keen observer of human rights. Indeed, these concerns have lowered PNG ratings as a protector of human rights by world standards (Human Rights Watch, 2015b, pp. 425–429). This leads to an important question: why did PNG raise concerns about human rights abuses in West Papua when its own record of defending human rights is relatively poor? I reflect on this question by looking at PNG's efforts to address its human rights issues and its growing confidence in the foreign policy.

In 2010, the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment and punishment visited PNG and made a series of recommendations to prevent torture and improve the conditions of detention in the country (US Department of State, 2011). In 2012, the government invited the Special Rapporteur on violence against women to conduct a human rights fact-finding mission on violence against women in PNG (UNHR, 2012). Following these visits, the government endorsed several legal initiatives, ratified human rights treaties and withdrew laws that supported the perpetuation of violent crimes. For instance, in 2013, the government repealed the *Sorcery Act*, which provided a defence for violent crime if the accused was acting to stop witchcraft. The government took steps to build government institution capacities and it supported the activities of national human rights institutions and faith-based organisations so it could observe the laws and customs of human rights that were espoused by the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. This indicated that the government considered human rights issues in the country. PNG's focus on human rights in West Papua, however, was more related with regional politics.

PNG became increasingly confident in international relations at the beginning of the twenty-first century, partly because of the frictional relationship it had with Australia (which

was discussed in the ECP and Moti cases). Since the 2012 general elections, the O'Neill government became much more present in the Pacific Islands region in terms of investment, development assistance and diplomacy (which is discussed in detail later in this chapter). PNG's confidence was also reflected in its dealings with Australia. In 2012, O'Neill demanded that Australia's aid program be realigned to support his government's priorities, including roads, schools and hospitals (March, 2012). Accordingly, Australia directed aid away from its governance and public sector management priorities towards the PNG Government's preferred infrastructure projects—though some of the programs remained focused on Australia's core interests in health, education and policing (DFAT, 2013a, 2014a). O'Neill's demand was made against the backdrop of PNG's accommodation of the *Pacific Solution*, an Australian Government policy of transporting asylum seekers to detention centres on Manus Island and Nauru. However, PNG's demand on where Australia should expend its aid program demonstrated PNG's self-confidence in its dealings with Australia and the region. PNG's confidence is also reflected in its hosting of the APEC Summit in 2018. The government's foreign policy on human rights in West Papua is part of the demonstration of PNG's growing confidence in dealing with regional issues.

PNG has been developing a stronger sense of its place in the region and has increasingly seen itself as an important regional power with a role to play in shaping regional order. The prime minister was clearly focused on building and securing PNG's reputation as a regional leader. Not only that, but the prime minister was also projecting his views about how PNG and its Pacific neighbours should interact in the region. For example, on 28 November 2014, Prime Minister O'Neill urged Fiji and the Pacific Island countries to accept Australia and NZ as part of the Pacific community, after Fiji sought to exclude Australia and NZ from the PIF. According to Fiji, Australia and NZ are outsiders and not part of the Pacific Islands region (Dobell, 2014). Fiji contended that the two regional powers have been interfering with the ability of the Pacific Island states to look for solutions to the regional problems that are

affecting the Pacific Islands (Bainimarama, 2013). Prime Minister O'Neill said that the structure of the PIF does not need changing:

We must make sure that we don't forget that we all live in the same region and Australia and New Zealand are very much part of that region ... We need to encourage more dialogue and more common sense to prevail in these discussions ... Our traditional partners like Australia and New Zealand continue to be important to the Pacific Island countries. It is foolhardy to think this is not the case because we live in the region, we understand each other, our people travel between our countries (O'Neill, 2014b).

O'Neill's concern about maintaining the regional order demonstrated his views about how the Pacific Island countries should interact in the region. His emphasis on dialogue and common sense in conversations in the region is significant in the case of West Papua because Prime Minister O'Neill would push for Indonesia to be included in the dialogue on human rights in West Papua, as will be explored later in this chapter. O'Neill's statement is significant in terms of leadership because he saw PNG as a regional power with responsibilities to shape regional order.

Prime Minister's O'Neill's perception of PNG as a regional leader is captured in his speech on 5 February. He projected PNG's leadership image more than concerns about human rights. O'Neill used PNG's undisturbed democracy as a benchmark for leadership against other MSG member countries in the region. Other member countries of the MSG had experienced some form of disturbance in their political history: in 1980, Vanuatu had the democratically elected government of Father Walter Lini challenged by an insurgent group led by Jimmy Stevens (which was discussed in Chapter 3); Fiji has had four different coups d'état in the past 20 years (Firth et al., 2009); and the Solomon Islands slid into anarchy after a civil conflict

between two major island provinces, Malaita and Guadalcanal, evolved into a lengthened period of violence and lawlessness, which brought the country to the brink of collapse (Kabutaulaka, 2005; Moore, 2005; Nanau, 2008). Prime Minister O'Neill perceived PNG as a regional leader because it played a part in restoring peace and democracy in these troubled Melanesian states. PNG, with support from Australia, quelled the rebellion in Vanuatu. It helped Fiji back to democracy. In April 2013, the PNG Government helped fund Fiji's first elections since the 2006 coup by contributing K50 million. PNG topped the list of international donors. Indeed, PNG's contribution exceeded the cost to hold the polls. Its contribution of FJD18.6 million was twice as much money as the Fiji government's contribution for its elections (Radio New Zealand, 2014; Saneem, 2014; Swami, 2014). Further, PNG contributed to RAMSI to restore peace, law and order in the Solomon Islands. According to Prime Minister O'Neill, PNG's undisturbed democracy and, moreover, its contributions to peace and democracy in the region set it apart from the rest of the Melanesian states. As a regional leader, PNG felt it had a moral responsibility to speak for the oppressed in West Papua. O'Neill's statement on 5 February demonstrated PNG's confidence in dealing with a complex policy issue that has troubled successive PNG governments for many years.

PNG's confidence as a regional leader was strengthened by a decade of economic growth. This was expressed by the prime minister on 15 May 2014, during the launch of the first LNG cargo's first shipment. Prime Minister O'Neill said:

This project puts PNG on the world stage as a country that can work with foreign investors to deliver projects on time. It instils confidence in this country, and that is something for all of Papua New Guinea to be proud of (O'Neill, 2014a).

The LNG project is the largest investment from ExxonMobil, the world's largest oil and gas company, operating in PNG. ExxonMobil initially invested US\$19 billion in the LNG

project (ExxonMobil, 2016). The LNG project is a newly developed project in the extractive industry that has contributed to the national economy. PNG, however, has experienced an economic transformation since 2002 because of a resource boom. The economic growth, which is represented GDP, is shown in Figure 6.2.

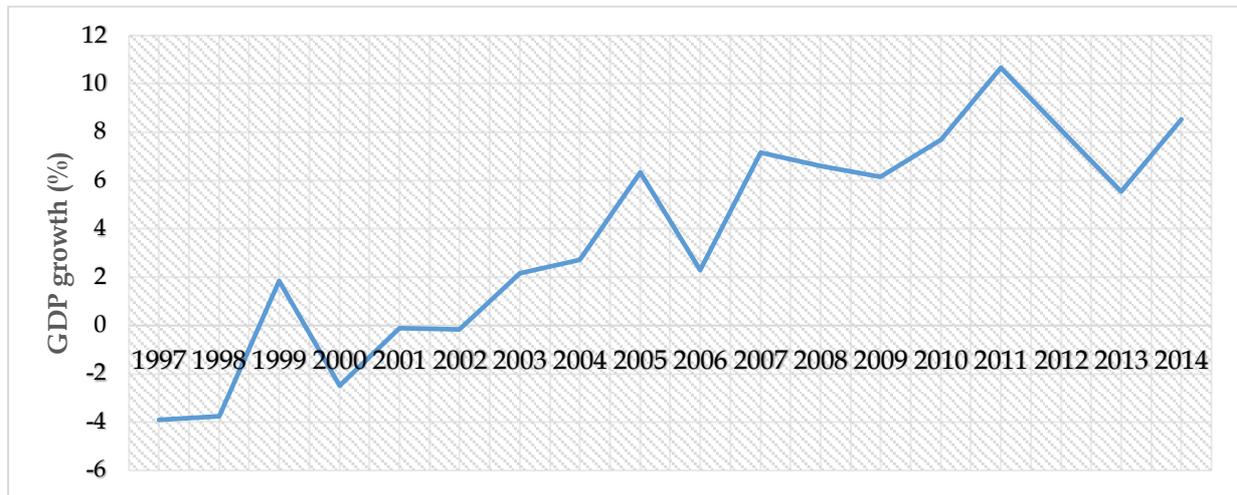


Figure 6.2. PNG GDP growth (annual per cent), 1997–2014.

Source: World Bank (2017b).

Because of the strong economic growth, PNG increased its aid diplomacy and role as a development partner in the region, which means it supported more activities and devoted more money to development assistance. PNG supported the Solomon Islands’ internal development programs. The 2013 Solomon Islands budget records indicate that PNG funding was \$75 million (Solomon Islands Budget, 2013). In 2013, it funded the creation of a permanent secretariat and headquarters for the parties to the Nauru Agreement. In the same year, PNG helped fund Fiji’s election, as mentioned earlier. The government also committed \$150 million to the Pacific Small Island Developing States. This amount was intended to be spread over five years to address challenges in education, health, capacity building, climate change and infrastructure rehabilitation and development, following natural disasters in their countries (United Nations, 2015).

In December 2014, Prime Minister O'Neill said PNG's expansion of its regional support program to help other developing Pacific nations was a consequence of the country's ongoing economic development. He stated that PNG has a responsibility to strengthen the relationship with its Pacific neighbours, as well as an obligation to continue representing them in some of the global forums, such as the APEC meetings, to deliberate on issues like climate change, fluctuations in energy prices and the transmission of communicable diseases (*Post-Courier*, 11 December 2014, p. 3). This statement is important because PNG saw itself as a regional leader representing the smaller island countries in the Pacific. As a regional leader, PNG felt that it had a responsibility to speak of issues that are central to the Pacific Island nations. In this context, PNG felt that it had a responsibility to speak against human rights abuses in West Papua, which is an issue that is central among the Melanesian societies.

O'Neill was not the first prime minister to disburse aid to the Pacific Islands, but the increased distribution of wealth during his term so far has surpassed that of his predecessors (Batley, 2015). The provision of aid became a significant part of PNG's regional diplomacy. The amount of aid it disbursed to other Pacific Island countries is not large by global standards, but it gave PNG greater leverage. It provided the platform for the government to pursue its commercial interest in the region. For example, PNG's pension fund, NASFUND, formed joint ventures with other pension funds and businesses to invest in Fiji and the Solomon Islands, PNG's BMobile acquired a telecommunications licence in the Solomon Islands (Kumul Consolidated Holdings; NASFUND, 2015) and PNG's Bank South Pacific acquired banks in Cook Island, Samoa, Tonga, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu (Bank of South Pacific, 2017). The deployment of aid—a foreign policy tool—to consolidate, influence and enhance PNG's commercial interest in the region is important in the analysis of PNG's foreign policy development. The case of West Papua is seen in this light. PNG used its nascent foreign policy tool to consolidate its position, commit resources in the region and subsequently push for West Papuan rights.

For the rest of this chapter, I return to the prime minister's statement on 5 February 2015, regarding West Papuan rights. O'Neill's statement reflected an unstable foreign policy. I use the term unstable policy to denote the contradiction, rhetoric and ambiguity of PNG's foreign policy on West Papua. His statement was rhetoric. It was an ambitious foreign policy that had no impact in terms of foreign policy implementation. O'Neill's statement on 5 February targeted the domestic audience. The statement helped to diffuse tensions that emerged from the two allegations levelled against him. It also helped to restore his public image. Following his rhetoric statement on 5 February, members of the opposition who were critical of his leadership welcomed his stance on West Papua. Deputy Opposition Leader, Sam Basil, thanked the prime minister for taking the issue of West Papua on board (Blades, 2015b). Similarly, Governor Juffa, one of the outspoken politicians in the opposition bench and a staunch supporter of the free Papua movement, welcomed O'Neill's stance on West Papua. Speaking to the local television network, EMTV on 7 February, Juffa said:

It's good to see the Prime Minister getting onboard with the West Papua issue. Now we have to take it further. We have to demand that the UN review its 1969 decision and give freedom to the people of West Papua. Nothing else, we demand freedom (Juffa, 2015).

Not only were the opposition members convinced, but various NGO groups and prominent leaders were also persuaded. An outspoken advocate for West Papua People's Consultative Committee and former Sandaun Governor, John Tekwie, thanked the prime minister and welcomed his position on West Papua. He asked the prime minister to take that position further into official government policy so that the Committee can work properly with the government to reach an ultimate conclusion (Ramoï, 2015). The prime minister used the West Papua case to his advantage; he diffused tensions that emerged from the allegations by announcing his policy on West Papua, much to the pleasure of the civil society. Speaking

publicly about the rights of West Papuans played well to the domestic audience. His statement on West Papua improved his political image as prime minister, which was tainted by allegations of corruption and misconduct. He won the parliamentary opposition over and gained the confidence of the civil society, human rights advocacy groups and the Melanesian society at large.

The prime minister's statement on 5 February was ambiguous and contradictory. It was ambiguous in that it was not known whether he supported political rights and the freedom of West Papuans, or the freedom from persecution and torture. He used the word 'oppression' (O'Neill, 2015a), which he associated with 'brutality' (O'Neill, 2015a) and human rights concerns, but he was still misread by many human rights activists, including the Indonesian Government. After the prime minister's announcement in February 2015, the head of Indonesia's National Commission on Human Rights, Hafid Abbas, said Indonesia would ask PNG for clarification on O'Neill's comments (ABC News, 2015a). On 1 March 2015, O'Neill met the Indonesian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Retno Marsudi, in Port Moresby and reiterated that PNG supports Indonesian sovereignty over West Papua. He clarified PNG's position, stating that the issues of human rights and sovereignty in West Papua were 'not linked' (O'Neill, cited in *The Economist*, 2015). O'Neill maintained that West Papua was an integral part of Indonesia and that PNG's concerns were about the human rights abuses against the Melanesian population living in it, not their political freedom. This response essentially reflected two contradictory foreign policy positions on West Papua: on 5 February, the prime minister made a statement that encroached on the non-intervention policy and on 1 March, he said he respected Indonesia's sovereignty over West Papua. Prime Minister O'Neill changed the tone of his language from interventionist to cooperative. During President Joko Widodo's visit to Port Moresby on 11–12 May 2015, O'Neill said:

We [Papua New Guinea and Indonesia] will be sitting down and sharing our views and looking at how we might work together to improving the lives of Melanesian people in the Papuan provinces. We know that in our countries, and around the region, there are contesting views on issues concerning the Papua province that has an 820km land border with PNG, and the West Papua province further west on the New Guinea island ... Deep down, everyone wanted the same outcomes—peace, calm, and understanding between PNG and the Papuan provinces. We share the same border, we share the same culture, so a strong relationship is a must ... For some years now I have been engaging in dialogue with our friends in Indonesia on issues relating to our relationship with Melanesians in the Indonesia provinces of Papua and West Papua ... We [Papua New Guinea] appreciate that there is a great deal of passion and emotion in these discussions ... Our Government looks to work with the Indonesian Government, and use our special connection with the Melanesian people of Papua and West Papua to encourage peace and stability (O'Neill, 2015c).

O'Neill pulled back on his earlier statement, which made news headlines in PNG and abroad three months before. He offered to use PNG's Melanesian connection to cooperate and assist Indonesia to improve the lives of the Melanesian people in the Papuan provinces. Prime Minister O'Neill essentially changed the tone of language from interventionist to cooperative, which reflects the policy contradiction on West Papua. The keynote of the meeting between Prime Minister O'Neill and President Widodo was that O'Neill eased the doubts that emerged after his speech on 5 February. The statement pointed more to the social welfare of West Papuans than to their political emancipation and it strengthened O'Neill's justification that PNG was concerned about human rights and not political rights.

The prime minister's statement on 5 February also targeted the MSG member countries. As mentioned previously, the prime minister made his statement a day after ULMWP submitted its application for membership to the MSG. O'Neill's statement indicated PNG's acquiescence to ULMWP's bid for membership to the sub-regional group. His statement was an appeal to other MSG members to be more decisive on the human rights abuses against West Papuans when considering ULMWP's bid for membership to MSG. He knew that PNG cannot handle West Papua alone, as will be observed later in this chapter. O'Neill appealed to the MSG member countries using cultural identity as a legitimating course. He used the terms 'our family' and 'our brothers and sisters' when he spoke against human rights abuses in West Papua (O'Neill, 2015a). Expressions such as 'our people', 'our family' and 'our brothers and sisters' strongly emphasise the cultural identity and ethnic link between the Melanesian societies. This emphasis is significant among the MSG member countries. PNG has long been pressured by the Melanesian societies to take a decisive stance against the oppression in West Papua because of the Melanesian brother pressure (Nyamekye & Premdas, 1979a, p. 939), which capitalises on ethnic bond. The prime minister's statement on 5 February strengthened the Melanesian brotherhood rationale and helped endorse ULMWP's bid for membership in the MSG.

On 26 June 2015, during the MSG Leaders' Summit in Honiara, the MSG member countries admitted ULMWP as an observer member of MSG, in which it represented Melanesians living abroad, and they admitted Indonesia as an associate member of the group, 'representing the five Melanesian Provinces in Indonesia' (ABC News, 2015b). The compromise was messy, but better than the alternatives of alienating Indonesia or forsaking West Papua aspirations. Despite being denied full membership, ULMWP Secretary General Octavius Mote regarded the observer status positively. He said, 'we might not be a full member of the MSG, but a door has opened to us. We will sit across a table from Indonesia as equal'

(Mote, cited in Fox, 2015). The MSG's diplomatic recognition of the pro-independence group was historic. It was the first time that the Indonesian Government and a West Papua organisation would have a seat at the same table in a regional forum. PNG's endorsement of ULMWP's bid for membership in the MSG does not constitute a call for autonomy, but it gave ULMWP a voice to be heard at the sub-regional group. Moreover, the West Papua case showed that cultural identity was influential in foreign policy.

The West Papua case is significant in terms of PNG's foreign policy development. Prime Minister O'Neill pushed for an active regional diplomacy to manage the complex West Papua issue. It involved competing interests: the economic interests of MSG member countries and their relationship with Indonesia; political independence, freedom from persecution and the physical abuse of West Papuans; PNG's commitment to the non-interference policy; the Melanesian brotherhood pressure; and Indonesia's growing influence in the region. O'Neill knew that PNG could not handle the West Papua issue alone, so he advocated a more inclusive approach. Prime Minister O'Neill said the 'Pacific cannot deal with West Papua alone' (O'Neill, 2015b). West Papua, he said, required a concerted effort from both the Melanesian societies and Indonesia. O'Neill wanted the Pacific Island countries to be more inclusive and to include Indonesia in the dialogue if they wanted to see improved social conditions for West Papua (Hayward-Jones, 2015b). PNG supported this political statement when it backed Indonesia's bid to become an associate member of MSG (Callick, 2015). Concurrently, PNG pushed for ULMWP to be included as an observer member of MSG. PNG's push for Indonesia to be included in discussions that involved West Papua was a significant move because it brought Indonesia into the conversation. Making diplomacy more inclusive in the region was considered a step forward in addressing West Papua human rights, a sensitive foreign policy issue that had troubled successive PNG governments and the Melanesian societies for a very long time. It demonstrated national maturity in foreign policy vis-a-vis human rights in West Papua.

6.4 Conclusion

What does the case study of West Papua reveal about contemporary foreign policy in PNG? I reflect on this question by observing at the concept of national interest and the different aspects of foreign policy. I begin with national interest. National interest, as discussed in Chapter 2, is an intrinsic part of foreign policy, in that it forms the basis for state actions in the international arena. Simply put, national interest drives foreign policy. This prompts the question: what drove foreign policy in the West Papua case? As observed earlier in this chapter, PNG had its own issues with human rights. Therefore, the issue of human rights was not the primary driver of foreign policy in the West Papua case. Human rights became secondary to PNG's leadership ambition in the region. However, the leadership ambition did not represent the interests of Papua New Guineans. It reflected the prime minister's perception of PNG and his views about how PNG should behave in the region. Many Papua New Guineans, including the public, church groups, human rights activists and members of the government and parliamentary opposition did not see West Papua in the light of regional politics. Instead, they saw human rights as the primary concern and West Papuans as 'our family, our brothers and sisters' (O'Neill, 2015a). The prime minister's statement on 5 February 2015, regarding the oppression and brutality inflicted on West Papuans, received wider approval from the domestic audience and the Melanesian societies at large. The issue of human rights in West Papua essentially played into PNG's ambition to consolidate its leadership status in the region. Concurrently, cultural identity also played an influential role in PNG's foreign policy on West Papua. The words 'our family, our brothers and sisters' highlighted the cultural identity among the Melanesian people, which appealed to the domestic audience as well as to Melanesian societies in the Pacific region. In the context of national interest, I argue that PNG's foreign policy in West Papua was driven by competing interests such as culture, human rights, regional

politics and PNG's leadership ambition in the region. Correspondingly, the competing interests have been reflected in an unstable foreign policy, which is covered next.

The case of West Papua portrayed two aspects of foreign policy: unstable and strategic foreign policy. The unstable aspect of the policy is reflected by the prime minister's contradictory statements. The policy is contradictory in that the government's statement on 5 February 2015 signalled a departure from the traditional non-intervention policy, much to the delight of human rights activists and the Melanesian society at large. However, PNG still respected Indonesia's sovereignty over West Papua, as mentioned by the prime minister on 1 March of the same year. Second, it is rhetoric because it demonstrated a disconnect between policy and practice. The government announced an ambitious foreign policy to address human rights in West Papua, but the policy lacked a detailed plan for implementation, which points to weak institutional support. That is, the formal institutions responsible for foreign policy did not support the government's ambition to address human rights in West Papua at either the domestic or regional levels. It alluded to the prevalence of informal institutions in foreign policymaking, or foreign policy was conversely made outside the government's formal institutions. Finally, the foreign policy on West Papua is ambiguous. This ambiguity manifests in two ways. First, it was unclear whether the prime minister supported political rights and freedom, or freedom from the Indonesian authorities' persecution and torture of West Papuans. Populist support for West Papua in PNG and elsewhere in the Pacific largely leaned towards political freedom and freedom from oppression (e.g., cruelty, abuse and brutality), or both. The prime minister was concerned about oppression and human rights, which had connotations of social and political freedom. Therefore, Indonesian authorities urged him to clarify PNG's position. Second, PNG pushed for human rights in West Papua because it felt that, as a regional leader, it had the moral obligation to speak about the oppression of Melanesians living in Indonesia. The government's move to lead discussions on West Papua was justified along the lines of human rights abuses. Therefore, the moral justification was invoked. However, the

moral justification became secondary to the leadership rationale as a legitimating course. It reflected the ambiguity of foreign policy on West Papua.

I now consider the strategic feature of foreign policy. This is significant in the analysis of PNG's evolution and development of foreign policy. The West Papua case demonstrated one of the first instances of a substantive PNG foreign policy that was supported by resources and a degree of policy coherence. Supported by a period of strong economic growth, PNG expanded its nascent foreign policy tool—aid—to consolidate its position and pursue its interests in the region. The case of West Papua is an example. The government pursued its interest by regionalising the issue of human rights. PNG pursued an active regional diplomacy to manage a complex foreign policy issue that has troubled successive PNG governments for many years. This is unique to foreign policy and is significant in the evolution of foreign policy in PNG. It demonstrated maturity in foreign policymaking.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

In this concluding chapter, I return to the question that was posed in the introduction: what factors have been influential in shaping PNG's foreign policy in the twenty-first century? Since the 1990s, PNG has experienced significant changes domestically, in its region and in its place in the global society. Despite these changes, very little scholarly attention has been devoted to understanding how PNG's foreign policy has changed, or what factors are driving these changes. This chapter reflects on this research question. In doing so, it contributes to the scholarship on PNG's foreign policy and its making in the twenty-first century. The study is important for scholarly and practical purposes, particularly for foreign policy practitioners. PNG's future depends on how well policymakers understand and manage their connection to the rest of the region and the rest of the world. Understanding the factors that influence contemporary foreign policy is important, if policymakers are to have a sense of any future directions. The chapter is divided into three parts. The first sets the foundation for the period under review by examining the foreign policy environment from the period 1975–2003. The findings in this study are covered in the second part. It is focused on the period 2003–2015, where there are deliberate continuities, changes and challenges of foreign policy. In the final part, I reflect on PNG's foreign policy.

7.1 The Foreign Policy Environment, 1975–2015

To understand key changes in the contemporary period, one must first have a sense of the foundation. Chapter 3 explored the nature of PNG's postcolonial foreign policy. Independent PNG's evolving foreign policy approach—reflected in the doctrines of universalism and then active and selective engagement—point to a tentative attempt to articulate an independent foreign policy. However, the period from 1975 to the early 1980s was characterised by competing dynamics. PNG's capacity to implement an independent foreign policy was limited institutionally, as reflected in its small foreign ministry and

inexperienced political leadership (Boyce, 1978). PNG's aspiration to conduct foreign policy that is independent from external influence has often been limited because PNG remained heavily dependent on Australia. This limitation was best manifested in the high levels of aid dependence on Australia, which indicated that PNG's external relations with other countries in the region could not be thoroughly pursued. Its foreign policy often showed almost a default support for Australia's foreign policy positions.

In the mid-1980s, PNG began to reconsider its national interest by adopting the active and selective engagement approach to foreign policy. The policy approach succeeded in diversifying economic and aid relations. Over the period, different prime ministers and their foreign affairs ministers adopted different strategies under the rubric of active and selective engagement, but the foreign policy initiatives did not differ much in substance and objective from the immediate postcolonial period. Foreign policies were constrained by an unclear sense of the national interest and a lack of strategic policy direction. National interest, under the broad active and selective engagement approach was extensive and left to the government in power to decide. Changes began to occur by the 1990s and early 2000s. Changes in the international environment—especially at the end of the Cold War and with the increasing economic dynamism of Northeast and Southeast Asia—embodied new challenges and opportunities. As observed in Chapter 1, the prime minister who was under pressure from domestic and external forces moved unilaterally to give Taiwan diplomatic recognition in exchange for billions of dollars in aid, soft loans and investments. China and Australia denounced the move. Nonetheless, this period was quite turbulent for PNG in terms of foreign policy, as it responded to implications prompted by the end of superpower rivalry and an increasing multipolarity. It also responded to the enhanced influence of international and regional organisations, international law and the emphasis on economic issues in international affairs. The period coincided with the growing influence of China in the Pacific. The rise of China as an economic and military power created geopolitical opportunities for PNG and other Pacific Island

countries. PNG no longer needed to identify itself solely with regional hegemons like Australia and NZ, as it had more choice of which external power or powers it engaged with. The period was simultaneously marked by a growing populist resentment towards external influence, particularly the World Bank, IMF and their support for a privatisation policy that was discussed in Chapter 3.

Since the 2000s, the foreign policy environment in which PNG finds itself has become more fluid. The Pacific region has observed the entry of more active external participants, which is reflected in the growing engagement of China and Indonesia. In the early 2000s, Australia has also improved its regional engagement, which is best reflected in its new interventionism. It considered the region a part of securitised borderlands that can be used as a buffer for protecting its security interests, which ultimately manifested in the establishment of the offshore detention centres in Manus and Nauru. Further, Australia decided to recast its aid programs in the region to include security and demanded good governance to secure its security interests, as can be exemplified in the RAMSI and the ECP. These changes signified that PNG had more options in terms of foreign policy.

Internally, PNG was also changing. Its economic development, based on the LNG project, gave PNG a new sense of economic independence and confidence. The increasing self-confidence is powerfully symbolised in PNG becoming an aid donor to Melanesian neighbours like the Solomon Islands and in its hosting of APEC in 2018. A new generation of leaders, supported by a few from the old group (like Somare), were becoming more nationalistic and assertive. Deference to Australia has often been replaced with disputes and frequent opposition. PNG's domestic politics have also created pressures on foreign policy. NGOs, pressure groups and civil societies have increased their efforts to influence foreign policy, which is best demonstrated in the issue of West Papua. PNG has also developed a stronger sense of its place in the region and increasingly sees itself as an important regional power with a role to play in

shaping regional order. This is best reflected in its insistence on maintaining the regional architecture, following the exclusion of Australia and NZ in the Pacific Islands Development Forum (which is discussed in Chapter 6). In combination, these factors have interacted to unsettle the postcolonial status quo. However, does it result in the emergence of a more coherent foreign policy? This question is answered by examining the three case studies.

7.2 Papua New Guinea's Foreign Policy, 2003–2015

The research illuminates important areas of continuity as well as significant changes that have occurred in regard to PNG's foreign policy over the period 2003–2015. An important area of continuity has been the centrality of the PNG–Australia relationship, albeit a relationship whose tenor has changed over time and will continue to change. Despite tensions between the two countries, as exemplified in the Moti case, PNG's bilateral relationship with Australia remains a fundamental element of its international relations. Australia continues to support PNG's development through bilateral agreements. PNG reciprocates and supports Australia's regional policies, which is best reflected in PNG's renewed commitment to the *Pacific Solution*, in which it signed the *Regional Resettlement Arrangement between Australia and Papua New Guinea* in 2013.

The relationship between PNG and Australia has historically been one of aid donor and aid recipient. Since independence, PNG has focused on reducing its dependence on Australia and this objective has been the hallmark of its foreign policy, as reflected in universalism and active and selective engagement. One of the defining elements of PNG's foreign policy during the period under review has been the increasing enthusiasm for moving away from Australia's influence. In the ECP case study, the prime minister showed an increased willingness to push back on Australia, but he failed. After a period of conflict and a court case, PNG embraced the successor to the ECP—the SGP—in 2009, despite its resemblance to the ECP. This prompted

a sort of reluctant return to a less intrusive program, which underlies the reality of PNG's continued dependence.

PNG has long aspired to move away from its dependence on Australia, but its ability to do so has arisen more as a result of the growing economy (resource-driven) and increasing investment from other countries (globalisation) than from any deliberate act of foreign policy. Measured against key foreign policy concepts that are introduced in Chapter 2, the study does not convey a strong sense of institutional consolidation and coherence in terms of PNG's capacity to make and implement coherent foreign policy. The Moti case demonstrated that foreign policy was influenced by individuals in the bureaucracy and further indicated political interference in the policy process. The pervasive indigenous cultures and deep-rooted traditional values challenged formal government institutions, as observed in the Moti affair. The case of the ECP has highlighted a lack of foreign policy coordination. Overall, the period under review has not observed a strong sense of institutional development in foreign policy. To some extent, the weak institutional environment reveals more about the development of the state. After 42 years of independence, PNG is still struggling to manage the impact of its traditional cultures on the modern political and administrative institutions. While the institutional context of foreign policy in PNG remains weak and has arguably become significantly weaker—and more personalised in individual political leaders—over the years, other PNG institutions, notably the courts, have continued to operate according to formal rules and procedures. The courts have acted to stabilise foreign policy engagement, but this has been largely reactive, as reflected in the ECP case.

The period 2003–2015 marked the beginning of a more contentious and emboldened (on PNG's part) bilateral relationship with Australia. National pride and a sense of nationalism increasingly became important. The period displayed a growing resistance to Australia's influence in PNG, reflected in the ECP and Moti cases. Frustration at Australia's influence was

connected with PNG's dependent culture. Dependence on Australia has often been an affront to national pride. PNG's ambition to minimise its dependence on Australia did not meet the expectations of policymakers. PNG's continued dependence on its former administrator has raised the ire of some in certain quarters in the country, particularly those sharing nationalist sentiments. Political elites often evoked sentiments of nationalism and deployed nationalist rhetoric—usually against a perceived Australian dominance—to justify PNG's independence and national sovereignty. What is interesting about the use of nationalism is how it has not been translated into a coherent policy to downplay Australia's influence. The cases of the ECP and Moti provided examples of how inflammatory rhetoric complicated bilateral relations with Australia, but they did not result in significant changes to key parts of bilateral relations such as aid dependency and commercial interests. The period under review has not seen the emergence of a more coherent foreign policy, or the successful pursuance of alternative foreign policy choices that can minimise PNG's dependence on Australia, apart from the rhetorical look north policy and the elusive exit strategy.

The look north policy created economic opportunities for PNG, particularly in the increased aid and investment from China (Crocombe, 2007; Wallis, 2017). However, the policy did not emerge because of an articulate or planned policy, as discussed in Chapter 3. PNG leaders have often declared support for the look north policy to reduce national dependence on traditional partners in Australia and other Western countries, but there is not much evidence of a coherent ability of the PNG's system to articulate and implement the look north policy. It represented a tentative and incoherent foreign policy that was not supported by sustained diplomacy and strategic repositioning. PNG leaders often deployed it to entertain and incite populist nationalism because pushing back on Australia played well to the domestic audience. During the study period, the government also announced its exit strategy as an incentive to gradually phase out Australian aid. Ironically, much of this policy initiative would require continued Australian assistance and a long time to materialise. It signifies that Australia's

subtle influence through its aid programs (e.g., financial aid, technical assistance and military cooperation) and its economic influence will remain indefinitely. As such, PNG's ambition to move away from its dependent relationship remains a formidable challenge for policymakers in PNG.

PNG also became increasingly confident in its relations with other Pacific Island countries. Backed by a relatively strong economy, PNG increased its aid diplomacy and consolidated its position as a regional leader. It developed a stronger sense of its place in the region and increasingly saw itself as an important regional power with a role to play in shaping regional order. In doing so, PNG departed from the rhetoric of 'work the Pacific' in the mid-1990s (see Chapter 3) when it played a relatively passive role in regional politics. PNG's confidence in the region is best reflected in West Papua. The West Papua issue is a sensitive policy issue that has been avoided for many years. Countries in the region, including Indonesia and Australia, are aware of the human rights abuses in West Papua, but have not given much attention to it because they find the discussions uncomfortable. For the first time in PNG's political history post-independence, the government spoke directly about the rights of West Papuans concerning torture and politically motivated violence against them in a public forum. This was a significant departure from the non-interference policy in Indonesia.

The case of West Papua is an outlier in PNG's foreign policy development, in the sense that it demonstrated a concerted foreign policy. PNG pushed its interest by regionalising the issue. It deployed its nascent foreign policy tool of aid diplomacy, consolidated its position in the region, endorsed the inclusion of West Papua in the sub-regional group of MSG, supported Indonesia's elevation to associate member of the sub-regional group and included Indonesia in the dialogue concerning human rights in West Papua. This is a significant development in the evolution of foreign policy in PNG, as it confirms a concerted foreign policy. It is one of the first instances of foreign policy that is supported by resourcing and a degree of policy coherence

in terms of active diplomacy. Foreign policy in PNG, as Wolfers and Dihm (2009) argued, has 'been a matter of government trying to take advantage of external opportunities or responding to external pressures' (Wolfers & Dihm, 2009, p. 307). This suggested the reactive nature of PNG's foreign policy. The West Papua case departed from the status quo in that it suggested a more strategic than reactive foreign policy.

One of the defining characteristics of foreign policy in the study period has been the personalisation of foreign policy, a feature of foreign policymaking that was consistent with the previous period. The key political figure wielded influence over the policy process and political institutions. The prime minister particularly enjoyed a pre-eminent position in foreign policy decision-making in an otherwise pluralistic domestic environment. He excluded opposition, prevented civil society participation, circumvented the policy process and subsequently excluded senior public officials in the policy process, as reflected in the cases of the ECP and the Moti affair. This is largely because the prime minister had personal power in leadership. In PNG and elsewhere in Melanesian societies, personal power is deeply ingrained in culture. The 'big man' wielded influence over decision-making and politics in traditional Melanesian societies. The influence of the 'big man' continues to pervade the modern systems of government and politics. Political leaders use this power in different ways. In the context of foreign policy, for example, Prime Minister Somare used this power to easily manipulate foreign policy in the direction that corresponded to his personal biases and interest, which is reflected in the Moti case. The Moti case established that the prime minister wielded influence over the policy process. The case also revealed the tensions between the efforts to institutionalise foreign policy, which would consolidate and strengthen the power and position of formal institutions, and the personalisation of foreign policy, which undermined formal laws and the effectiveness of political institutions. The personalisation of foreign policy significantly undermined formal rules and power of the formal institutions. The prime minister ignored the collective bureaucratic position to respect the extradition and judicial process. In doing so, he

undermined certain prospects for strengthening the formal institutions and foreign policy. His supporters circumvented the formal processes and procedures and subsequently violated the PNG constitution and its by-laws, the *Chicago Convention* and extradition treaties. Conversely, Prime Minister O'Neill personally handled a sensitive issue that has for almost four decades troubled PNG and the rest of the Melanesian societies with diplomacy. Overall, the personalisation of foreign policy remains an important feature of foreign policymaking in PNG.

7.3 Reflection on PNG's Foreign Policy

This study highlights the state's limited capacity to identify and implement coherent policies in pursuit of a commonly shared national interest. This is partly because foreign policy has been conducted in a fragmented manner, as discussed in Chapter 3. The main reason for this is foreign policy consultation and coordination, which has been one of the formidable challenges in PNG's political and bureaucratic landscape (Bogari, 2010; Wolfers & Dihm, 2009). One of the contributing factors that challenges foreign policy coordination is the isolation of the foreign affairs ministry in the Central Agency Coordinating Committee (CACC). The CACC was established in early 2000 (NEC Decision No: 10/2000) and it included the foreign affairs ministry. However, the ministry's inclusion appears to be on paper only. In practice, it has never been an active member. This concern was raised during the Heads of Mission Conference in 2014, when foreign affairs officials met to review PNG's foreign policy in the twenty-first century (PNG Department of Foreign Affairs, 2014). The conference urged the government to give the DFA due recognition and to allow it to be an active member of the CACC. The proposal was made to ensure that, under the whole-of-government approach to doing government business, there is better coordination between domestic policies and foreign policy. The conference reiterated that policies and proposals initiated by the bureaucracy could be appropriately reconciled with foreign policy and that actions by other departments and agencies that have international relations implications can have the benefit of

proper advice from foreign affairs. This study affirmed the lack of foreign policy coordination, as discussed in the cases of the ECP and West Papua. Such recommendation from foreign policy practitioners should not be overlooked. It is not only fitting, but necessary—particularly at this time in history when the foreign policy environment has become more fluid.

The case of West Papua established the importance of political stability in foreign policy. Political stability gave PNG's political leadership more scope to pursue new foreign policy objectives. For example, the O'Neill government enjoyed a political environment that was relatively stable. O'Neill assumed office in August 2011, served two consecutive terms and is currently still serving. He completed the full five-year period of the parliamentary life as prime minister from 2012 to 2017. During his tenure in office, Prime Minister O'Neill strengthened PNG's relations with the Pacific Island countries and pushed the West Papua case in the MSG. The stable political environment enhanced the confidence of key political leaders, not to mention the investor confidence in PNG. This is a new development in PNG's political landscape. PNG governments do not normally serve their full term before they are voted out through votes of no-confidence. Indeed, every government since independence has been a coalition and no government has lasted a full parliamentary term (May, 2003b, p. 4). Political instability has posed significant challenges for policy continuity and policy implementation in PNG. The West Papua case demonstrated the importance of a stable political environment. The government pursued its regional policies with confidence, including preparing for the APEC meeting in November 2018.

The conduct of foreign policy under Prime Minister O'Neill has departed from the personalised approach to foreign policy, which has been one of the hallmarks of foreign policymaking in PNG since independence. O'Neill was more receptive to public opinion and has shown diplomacy in handling PNG's foreign policy. O'Neill's approach to managing foreign policy is partly influenced by interest groups (people who joined together for a specific

purpose or to advance a cause they believe in) and the attentive public (people who have a serious interest in the events around the globe) who have been informed about either specific foreign policy issues or foreign affairs in general. The dissemination of foreign policy information and issues is largely attributed to the improved information and communication technology in the first decade of the twenty-first century. Before this period, the scarcity of foreign affairs information accessed by the PNG public has generally been limited. Many Papua New Guineans paid little, if any, attention to the day-to-day developments in world politics. As a result, political leaders like the prime minister had more freedom in foreign policymaking. However, the government has recently been increasingly responsive to public opinion, as demonstrated in the case of West Papua. The changing approach to foreign policymaking is likely to be strengthened by the departure of the old generation of political leaders who wielded influence over foreign policy. For example, Somare epitomised the ‘big man’ who wielded influence in government, politics and foreign policy, as is reflected in the ECP and Moti cases. By virtue of his charismatic personality, he instigated the huge political mobilisation effort to prepare PNG for independence (Momis, 2016). Highly respected throughout the Pacific Islands region, Sir Michael Somare was instrumental in ushering PNG to independence from Australia in 1975 and now serves as the country’s first prime minister. On 4 April 2017, the founding father of the nation and former prime minister, Sir Michael Somare, was given a standing ovation as he gave his farewell speech to Parliament. The day marked exactly 49 years since Sir Michael first entered the House of Assembly in the Territory of Papua and New Guinea as a politician (Blades, 2017; Mauludu, 2017). Somare’s departure from PNG’s political landscape marked the end of era in which he and others of his kind had more control over foreign policy.

From 2013 to 2015, PNG experienced a comparatively robust economic growth that underpinned a strong government revenue growth. This performance was aided by high commodity prices for PNG exports, supportive macro-economic policy settings and

developments in the resources sector, the most notable of which being the construction of the PNG LNG project and the first gas exports in 2014 (Osborne, Harden & Hoy, 2017; World Bank, 2017a). The strong economy gave PNG a sense of independence and instilled confidence in the government, as confirmed by Prime Minister O'Neill (O'Neill, 2014a). Reinforced by a strong economy and self-confidence, PNG increased its presence in the region. Following years of relatively strong economic growth, it is now confronting a period of significantly weaker growth (Osborne et al., 2017). An important question is posed, given this shift in the environment: would PNG pursue its regional policies with the same vigour that it did in the period 2003–2015? This is a question with an answer that is yet to be seen.

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