



**WELCOME REMARKS & INTRODUCTION BY  
VICE-CHANCELLOR AND PRESIDENT, PROFESSOR PAL AHLUWALIA  
ON THE VISIT OF HONOURABLE SCOTT MORRISON MP,  
THE PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA TO THE UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH  
PACIFIC LAUCALA CAMPUS.**

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- The Hon. Scott Morrison, Prime Minister of Australia
- The Hon. Rosy Akbar Fiji's Minister for Education, Heritage and Arts
- The Hon. Anne Ruston, Assistant Minister for International Development and the Pacific
- Pro-Chancellor and Chair of USP Council, Mr. Winston Thompson
- H.E. Mr. John Feakes, the Australian High Commissioner to Fiji
- Members of the Diplomatic Corps
- Heads of Regional and International Organisations
- Members of the Private Sector and NGOs
- Senior Management, Staff, Alumni and Students of the University
- Media representatives
- Ladies and gentlemen

On behalf of The University of the South Pacific, it is my great privilege to welcome you all to Laucala Campus and I especially extend our warmest greetings to you Honourable Prime Minister. We are honoured to host the Australian Prime Minister's first visit to USP- the region's premier University.

I am pleased also to welcome The Hon. Rosy Akbar, Fiji's Minister for Education, Heritage and Arts, as well as Hon. Anne Ruston, Australia's Assistant Minister for International Development and the Pacific.

I welcome all those joining us through livestream from across the region and the world.

USP is particularly proud to host the Hon. Prime Minister here at our Laucala Campus. This is a historic occasion for the University and for all our Member Countries. We have had the pleasure of hosting various Australian Ministers and to have the current Prime Minister of Australia here at our campus reinforces the importance of our partnership.

Thank you Hon. Prime Minister for your visit.

USP and Australia have enjoyed a longstanding relationship since its inception in 1968. The Australian Government has worked with, and supported, the University over the last 50 years. We have just celebrated our golden jubilee last year; during which our partnership and friendship was highlighted and duly celebrated.

The Australian Government's assistance has meant that the University has been able to meet its critical needs through infrastructure development, provision of scholarships, ICT, enhancing research performance and numerous capacity building initiatives. This

has helped to enhance the University's reputation and global standing and cemented its place as an exemplar of regional cooperation and integration.

A few highlights of Australia's support includes the construction of the University Library in 1988; the construction of the AUSAID Lecture Theatres in 1998, which is now renamed Australia-Pacific Lecture Theatre; the development of the Banner system; and establishment of direct internet connection between USP with the Australian Academic Research Network (USP - AARNet).

As we finalise our new Partnership Agreement, which will support the University's Strategic ambitions, a major drive will be on improving the quality of teacher education and training, providing our students with the skills required to meet the needs of the Pacific region.

Introduction of Australian PM

Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, it is now my great pleasure and privilege to invite the Prime Minister of Australia, The Honourable Scott Morrison, to deliver today's address.

**Thank you and Vinaka Vakalevu**