

# 11. Welkam Toktok

Ralph Regenvanu (Daarekta: VKS mo NKK)

Tangkiu tumas long *Jif Murmur* long nambawan toktok blong yu. Mi wantem talem olsem Daarekta blong Kaljoral Senta mo Nasanel Kaljoral Kaonsel welkam bakegen long yufala long tis rum tede long nasenal miusiem mo tu long Port-Vila Vanuatu. Mi aknolejem presens blong Jif mo Presiden blong Malvatumauri, Nasanel kaonsel of Jifs we i stap wetem yumi, mo tu Jif Murmur, Presiden blong Efate kaonsel of Jifs mo tu Representatif blong Ministri blong Intenol Afea we i stap, wetem tu ol olfala filwoka blong yumi we oli stap speseli Jif Richard, James mi no luk sam bakegen long ples ia yet. Wetem ol woman filwokas blong yumi we oli stap ia wetem presiden blong olgeta, presiden blong ol man filwokas yufala ol distinguis riseja, frens blong yumi long ovasi we yufala i stap wok long ples ia long taem, i gat yufala tumas we yufala big bigfala impoten pesen so bae mi no save talem nem blong yufala wetem ol narafala frens we yufala stap, ol staf blong Kaljoral Senta welkam long yumi evriwan long tede long tis opening seremoni. Mi glad tumas se Vanuatu Kaljoral Senta hemi save provaedem ples we yumi mit tis taem long Vanuatu wetem konfrens ia from fulap taem ol risejas we oli stap wok long Vanuatu oli stap mit long ol narafala kantri araon Vanuatu. So hemi gud tumas se naoia yufala i save mit long Vanuatu an yufala i stap tokbaot Vanuatu mo risej blong yufala long ples ia. Mi wantem talem tangkiu long oganaezing komiti we yufala i bin pulum samting ia i kam wan ples, tangkiu long yufala we yufala i putum tingting se bae konfrens i stap long Vanuatu. Mo tangkiu tu long yufala we yufala i save kam, sam long yufala i kam longwe tumas blong stap long ples ia. Hemi gud tumas se konfrens ia hemi stap long medel blong tufala fildwokas worksops blong mifala blong ol woman i jes pas, i finis long last Fraede mo blong ol man bae i jes stat long next Mande. So hemi gud tumas from hemi givim janis long ol filwokas tu blong oli save stap long ples ia we olgeta tu oli stap mekem ol impoten risej projek long raon erias blong olgeta an bae yumi gat janis tede mo tumoro blong harem sam long olgeta bae oli givim toktok abaot risej blong olgeta.

Hemi impoten blong konfrens i stap long ples ia, long taem ia from hemi soemaot tim blong konfrens we hemi '*collaboration*' fasin blong wok tugeta, ol risejas blong ovasis wetem ol lokel pipol long ples ia wetem ol filwokas wetem ol komiuniti blong save mekem risej. From yumi save witaot ia bae eksasaes blong risej bae hemi no save wok gud. Mi glad tumas tu se long konfrens long tis wik bambae i gat trifala lanwis oli kamaot: Bislama, Inglis mo Franis. Hemia tu hemi impoten blong soemaot se hemi wan konfrens blong Vanuatu, abaot Vanuatu. Kaljoral risej polisi we Kaljoral Senta mo National Kaljoral Kaonsel we

i bin endosem long yia 1994 mo hemi stap wok kasem tede hemi wan impoten stamba blong fulap risej we i stap mekem naoia and hemi wan model yet long Pasifik rijen mo long wol. UNESCO i stap yusum risej polisi blong yumi long Vanuatu olsem wan model we i stap promotem mo tu hemi stap long wolwaed wol oganaesesen i stap long websaet blong olgeta olsem wan wan model risej polisi. An mi glad tumas se mifala i stap kontiniu blong promotem long Vanuatu mo ol risejas we oli stap wok long ples ia oli kontiniu blong wok wetem mifala antanit long gaetlaen we hemi provaedem. Hemi wan polisi we i talemaot klia wanem nao wanem mifala i wantem long risej blong Vanuatu, mo wanem nao ekspektesen blong gavman wetem Kaljoral Senta wetem Kaljoral Kaonsel mo tu wetem ol filwokas, ol lokel komiuniti blong yumi. Polisi i talemaot se i sud gat kolaboresen mo hemi askem ol risejas blong trenem wan wan man o wok wetem wan wan man o woman blong mekem risej blong olgeta blong mekem se taem oli aot long Vanuatu ol skills we oli gat oli save stap wetem ol pipol long ples ia.

Mo tu hemi gat fulap narafala samting we hemi askem long ol risejas: fo eksampel evri samting we oli mekem, ol rikoding, ol fotos, ol films, ol samting we oli raetem, mifala i askem se kopi i kam stap long ples ia. An long bilding ia nao ol kopi i stap long hem. I gat Nasonal Film mo Sand Akaev narasaed ia, i gat Nasnal Laebri antap ia, i gat Nasonal Heritej narasaed, detabes i stap. So evri infomesen i kambak mo i stap mo i yus long developmen blong Vanuatu we hem nao i sud bi wan long olgeta men grups of pipol we hemi tagetem risej i go long olgeta. Yumi askem tu se bambae ol risejas oli mas mekem wan samting blong komiuniti we oli stap long hem blong benefitim komiuniti. Samtaem hemi ol buks blong skul long lanwis mo samtaem hemi abaot wan samting long Inglis, Franis we hemi abaot komiuniti ia.

Be sam taems ol komiuniti oli askem wan samting olsem wan wota tang ol samting olsem ia, hemia tu wan samting we i save benefitim komiuniti. Mo tu long kaonsel, Nasonal Kaljoral Kaonsel mo long Vanuatu gavman, mifala i stap askem tu sam seveses blong ol risejas blong mekem wanwan samting we oli stap mekem blong helpem ol risej we mifala i stap mekem, o go tuwods helpem wan polisi we gavman hemi gat. Polisi hemi rikognaesem se spos yumi no putum in ples ol samting olsem ia, fulap taem risej we yumi, we oli stap long yunivesiti ol institusen ol akademik institusen fulap taem risej we yumi mekem hemi rili no benefitim ol man Vanuatu. From wanem? From ol man Vanuatu fulap long olgeta oli no save rid kasem standet we yufala i raetem ol samting blong yufala long hem. An fulap taem ol risejas oli kam long komiuniti oli karem infomesens be hemi impoten blong oli luk save se i gat samting i kambak long olgeta tu.

An hemi wan obligesen long mifala olsem institusen we i lukaotem risej long Vanuatu blong mekem sua se ol komiuniti oli luk save se i gat tu wei relesonsip from hemi fasin blong kastom blong yumi—taem yu givim samting i mas gat samting i kambak. So tats wae mifala i askem, askem long yufala ol risejas mo

ol koligs blong yufala we maet oli tingting blong kam wok long Vanuatu anta long Kaljoral Risej Polisi we yumi gat. From hemi traem setemaot ia mo hemi traem blong sekiurim risej i go long fiuja, from taem ol komiuniti oli luk save se risej hemi benefitim olgeta bambae oli glad blong mekem mo akseptem ol narafala risejas long fiuja i kam. So hemi no wan samting jes blong benefitim blong Vanuatu, hemi wan samting we i save benefitim risej long Vanuatu as a hol, mo hemi wan samting bae yumi save luk long konfrens long tis wik. Bae yumi save luk ol benefit blong kaen kolaboret risej we yumi stap traem blong inkarejem naoia.

Mi wantem talemaot tu long ples ia se long las yia gavman hemi bin establisem, wetem wan act blong Parlamen, Nasonal Lanwis Kaonsel. So Nasonal Lanwis Kaonsel hemi tekem tugeta ol impoten bodis long Vanuatu oganaesesen long Vanuatu, fo eksampol: USP i stap insaed wetem Kaljoral Senta wetem SIL wetem ol narafala oganaesesen olsem Lanwis Ofis blong Praem Minista mo tu sam taem Dipatmen blong Lanwis Seves mo Malvatumauri. So Lanwis Kaonsel wan wok blong hem tu hemi blong apruvum risej long saed blong lanwis, an naoia taem Nasonal Kaljoral Kaonsel hemi wok hemi blong apruvum ol risej, apruvum ol risejas long Vanuatu hemi tekem advaes long Nasonal Lanwis Kaonsel nao abaot wanem nao ol lanwis blong yumi we i nid blong mekem risej long hem.

Naoia we i stap ol wok long lanwis blong Vanuatu we ol linguis we oli stap, ol ovasis linguist wetem linguist blong yumi long ples ia long Pasifik Lanwis Yunit oli stap help blong pripem venakiula edukesen blong Vanuatu. So olredi yumi gat klosap twante skuls long Vanuatu we oli tij finis long lanwis long kindegaten. So hemi wan ajivmen we hemi soemaot hao pipol blong Vanuatu oli save benefit long ol kaen risej we yufala i stap mekem we yufala i kam long ovasis mo tu ol filwocas we yufala i stap wok wetem ol lanwis blong yumi wan wan komiuniti blong yumi.

Mi wantem talemaot tu long ples ia se long next yia bambae gavman hemi establisim Nasonal Saentific Risej Kaonsel. So bae hemi fes taem we gavman i luk save regulesen mo ol i moniterem ol risej long saed blong saens. From naoia Kaljoral Risej Polisi blong yumi hemi no kavremap ol samting olsem ia: ol risej long saed blong ol kaen plant blong yumi o samting we i stap long bus we i save provaedem meresin fo eksampol ol kaen animal o insek we yumi gat—ol samting olsem ia.

Olsem mi talem finis yumi luk fulap finis, fulap gudfala samting i kamaot long ol risej we i stap hapen finis long Vanuatu ol kolaboresen we i stap hapen finis long saed blong risej. Mi talemaot finis tijing blong lanwis long skul hemi wan impoten benefit. Ating fulap long yufala i harem nius blong Teouma Lapita Saet, we hemi stap kolosap long ples ia nomo. Hemi kam wan long olgeta top Lapita Saet long Pasifik we hemi save soemaot hao nao ol man long Pasifik i bin setel

long ol kaontris blong Solomons, Vanuatu kasem Tahiti. Hemi wan saet we hemi diskava tru long kolaboresen ia tru long wok blong ol filwokas we oli risivim trening long ol akiolojis. An yumi gat filwoka we hem nao i tekem trening ia mo hemi faenem, luk wan pis Lapita we wan man ples blong hem and ten hemi go faenem saet ia. So witaot tat kaen of kolaboresen bae yumi neva faenem tat ples.

Mo tu yumi luk se naoia ol filwokas blong yumi oli stap wok wetem ol raetas blong ol musiums we oli benefit long ol save blong ol filwokas oli givim bak blong mekem se ol koleksen blong olgeta oli save gat mo valiu, blong oli save gat mo abaot koleksen blong olgeta tru long wok blong ol filwokas mo ol man we kolaboret mo ol risejas. So yumi tu, yumi benefit long kolaboresen ia.

An blong talem nomo se fulap long ol filwokas blong yumi we oli stap wok long Vanuatu naoia oli gat bigfala ekspirians long saed blong hao blong mekem risej tru long help blong ol risejas we oli wok wetem olgeta and oli soem long olgeta wanem oli stap mekem and givim sam tingting long olgeta long saed blong wanem kaen projek oli stap mekem. An mi glad se naoia long Vanuatu ol filwokas oli mekem fulap ol defren kaen projeks long ol erias blong olgeta. Ol projeks long saed blong diksnari, long saed blong ol Ats Festivals, long saed blong ol seremoni we long taem oli no mekem bae oli mekem bakegen, long saed blong givim givhan long ol man oli askem ol kwestin long olgeta, olsem ol risejas, mo tu long saed blong save pasem kastom i go long yangfala blong oli save lanem bakegen, blong tijim olgeta long saed blong kastoms.

Mi glad tumas se long konfrens ia bae yumi gat ol filwokas oli givim tingting blong olgeta long wok blong olgeta we oli stap mekem mo tu yufala we yufala kam long narafala kaontris, yufala i save talemaot wok blong yufala. Mo yumi evriwan yumi save harem hopfuli bae hemi save jeneretem mo kaen prestij olsem long fiuja an hemia nao yumi luk fowod long hem. So mi wantem talem tangkiu tumas long yumi evriwan blong save stap long ples ia, hemia nao hemi end blong smol toktok blong mi.

# Welcome Speech

Ralph Regenvanu (Director: VCC and NCC)

Thank you very much chief Murmur for your excellent speech. I wish to say, as the Director of the Cultural Centre and the National Cultural Council, welcome once again everyone today to this room in the National Museum, and also to Port Vila, Vanuatu. I acknowledge the presence of the chief and President of the Malvatumaauri National Council of Chiefs who is with us today, and also Chief Murmur, the President of the Efate Council of chiefs and also the representative of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and also all of our older fieldworkers who are with us, especially Chiefs Richard, James, and others who have not yet arrived. Also all of our woman fieldworkers who are here with their President, the President of the male fieldworkers, distinguished researchers, friends from overseas who have worked here a long time. There are too many of you important people so I won't be able to say all of your names, or the names of our other friends who are here, however with the staff of the Cultural Centre I welcome you all today during this opening ceremony. I very glad that the Vanuatu Cultural Centre can provide the venue for this meeting and conference, especially since many times when researchers from other countries who work in Vanuatu meet in those other countries around Vanuatu. So it is very good that now you are able to meet in Vanuatu to talk about Vanuatu and the research that you undertake here. I want to say thank you to the organising committee who pulled this event together, and thank you to those who decided that this conference should be held in Vanuatu. Thank you also those of you who have been able to come, as many of you have come from very far away to be here. It is very good that this conference is situated between the two fieldworkers' workshops—the women's workshop that just passed, and finished last Friday, and the men's which will start next Monday. This is particularly good in that it will also give the chance for the fieldworkers to attend, who also run important research projects in their areas, and you will have a chance today and tomorrow to hear some of them give presentations about that research.

It is important that this conference is held here, at this time, because it shows the theme of the conference: that is 'collaboration', or ways of working together; of researchers from overseas, local people from this place, fieldworkers and communities who can conduct research. We know that without this, the exercise of research would not work well. I am glad also that at this week's conference there will be three languages represented: Bislama, English and French. This also is important in showing that this is a conference of Vanuatu, about Vanuatu. The Cultural Research Policy that was endorsed by the Cultural

Centre and the National Cultural Council in 1994, and that is still working today, is an important foundation to much research that is now undertaken, and it is an ongoing model across the Pacific region and the world. UNESCO is promoting Vanuatu's research policy as a model, and this is demonstrated worldwide on their website as a model research policy. And I am very glad that we continue to promote it in Vanuatu, and all of the researchers who work here continue to work with us underneath the guidelines that it provides. It is a policy that states clearly what we want of research in Vanuatu, and what are the expectations of the government and the Cultural Centre and Cultural Council, with the fieldworkers, and with our local communities. The policy states that there should be collaboration, and asks researchers to train a man or a woman or work with a man or a woman in making their research to ensure that when they leave Vanuatu their skills may remain with the people of this place. There are many other things that are asked of researchers: for example everything that they make, recordings, photographs, films, written material, we ask that copies are made to remain here. All of these copies are kept in this building. There is the National Film and Sound Archive on the other side here, there is the National Library upstairs, National Heritage is on the other side, and there is the database. In this way all information comes back and may be used for the further development of Vanuatu, as should be the main purpose of research.

We also ask that all researchers must do something for the benefit of the community in which they reside. Sometimes this is books for learning language, or sometimes it is about something in English or French concerning that particular community. Also, sometimes communities ask for something specific such as a water tank, or something else that can benefit the community. Also, in the council, the National Cultural Council and the Vanuatu Government, we ask some services of researchers to contribute something of what they do to help the research that we are doing, or to go towards helping a government policy. The policy recognises that if we don't put these things in place, often the research that we do, that takes place in universities and academic institutions, often the research that we do does not really benefit the people of Vanuatu. Why? Because many people in Vanuatu can't read up to the standard that you use in your writing. And often researchers come into communities and take information but it is important that they understand that something comes back to them too.

It is also an obligation of ours, as the institution that looks after research in Vanuatu, to make sure that communities understand that there must be a two-way relationship, because it is the way of our *kastom*—when you give something, there must be something that comes back. That is why we ask you researchers, and your colleagues who may be thinking of coming to work in Vanuatu, to do so under the current Cultural Research Policy. This is because it attempts to set out and secure future research, because when communities understand

that research benefits them, they will be happy to participate and accept the arrival of other future researchers. This is not something that merely benefits Vanuatu, it is something that benefits research across Vanuatu as a whole, and this is something that we will see across the conference this week. We can see the benefits of the kind of collaborative research that we are now trying to encourage.

I also wish to say here that last year the government established, by Act of Parliament, the National Language Council. The National Language Council brings together all the important bodies of Vanuatu, for example: the University of the South Pacific (USP) is there along with the Cultural Centre, the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL), and all the other organisations such as the language office of the Prime Minister and also the Department of Language Service and Malvatumauri. One function of the Language Council is to approve research about language. At present the Cultural Council approves such research and takes advice from the National Language Council about which of our languages require what kind of research done.

As it is now, with regard to work on present languages, foreign linguists with our own linguists at the Pacific Language Unit help to prepare vernacular education in Vanuatu. We already have close to 20 schools in Vanuatu that are teaching in vernacular languages in kindergarten. This is an achievement that shows how the people of Vanuatu can benefit from the kinds of research that you carry out, you who come from overseas, and also the fieldworkers who work with our languages across our various communities.

I also wish to say here that next year the Government will be establishing a National Scientific Research Council. This will represent the first time in which the government recognises the need to regulate and monitor scientific research. As it stands, the present Cultural Research Policy does not cover these things: research about different kinds of plants, or things in the bush that may provide medicine, for example, or different species of animals or insects that we have—these kinds of things. We don't yet have a location, but we can say that work is currently going ahead to establish a National Science Council next year, and this will encompass every kind of research that is currently taking place in Vanuatu.

As I have already said, we have seen a great many good things come out of the research that has taken place in Vanuatu, all the collaborative research projects that have already been undertaken. I have already told you about teaching language in schools, and the important benefits of this. I'm sure that many of you have heard news about the Teouma Lapita Site, which is located close to where we are now. This has become one of the top Lapita sites in the Pacific, showing how Pacific peoples settled in the countries from the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu to Tahiti. This site was discovered through collaboration, through the work of

fieldworkers who received training in archaeology. And we have a fieldworker who undertook such training who looked at a piece of Lapita pottery that a local man found; then he went and found the site. Without that kind of collaboration we would have never found that place.

Also, we are now seeing that our fieldworkers are working with museum writers who are benefitting from the knowledge of fieldworkers to make sure that their collections are more valuable, and that they may know more about their collections through the work of fieldworkers in collaboration with researchers. So we, too, benefit from this collaboration. I would also like to point out that many of our fieldworkers who are working in Vanuatu have gained a great deal of experience in how to make research through the help of the researchers who have worked with them, and who show them what they are doing, and give some ideas to them regarding their particular projects. And I am pleased to see that, in Vanuatu, fieldworkers are carrying out many different kinds of projects across many different areas. There are dictionary projects, arts festivals, projects concerning the rejuvenation of ceremonies that haven't been performed for a long time, projects that help people ask the right questions and pass on *kastom* to young people so that they can learn it again, and to teach them about their *kastom*.

I am very pleased that at this conference we have many fieldworkers presenting their thoughts about their work, and you who come from other countries; you too can present your work. And as we hear about these, hopefully this will generate prestige in the future that we look forward to. So I want to say thank you very much to everyone who is able to be here. This is the end of my small speech.