



# Pacific Peoples Mission to Kanak New Caledonia

MEDIA BRIEF 2025





# MEDIA OVERVIEW

A Pacific civil society and church delegation has called for urgent regional attention to Kanaky New Caledonia, warning that France's ongoing control over the territory's political processes breaches the Nouméa Accord and undermines decades of progress toward decolonisation.

The Pacific Peoples' Mission to Kanaky New Caledonia, coordinated by the Pacific Network on Globalisation (PANG), documented deepening inequality, youth incarceration, and social unrest following the 2024 crisis. The Mission's findings reveal a territory at a crossroads - where frustration among Kanak communities is growing, and Pacific solidarity is urgently needed to prevent further instability.

Journalists are encouraged to engage with Mission members and Kanak representatives, report on the findings, and help sustain regional attention on this unfinished decolonisation process that continues to shape Pacific democracy and identity.





# CURRENT STATE OF PLAY



Kanaky New Caledonia remains in a fragile political and social transition nearly three decades after the signing of the Nouméa Accord.

The 2024 unrest has left visible scars — not only in the economy, but in trust between institutions and the communities they serve.

Church and community leaders describe a population divided between fear of renewed violence and hope for a fair process that restores dignity and autonomy.

Regional observers note that the situation now hinges on whether France and Pacific leaders can re-establish credible dialogue that genuinely includes Kanak perspectives in shaping the territory's future.



# WHY IT MATTERS

The unrest of 2024 was not an isolated event. It was a manifestation of decades of frustration over unrealised promises of self-determination.

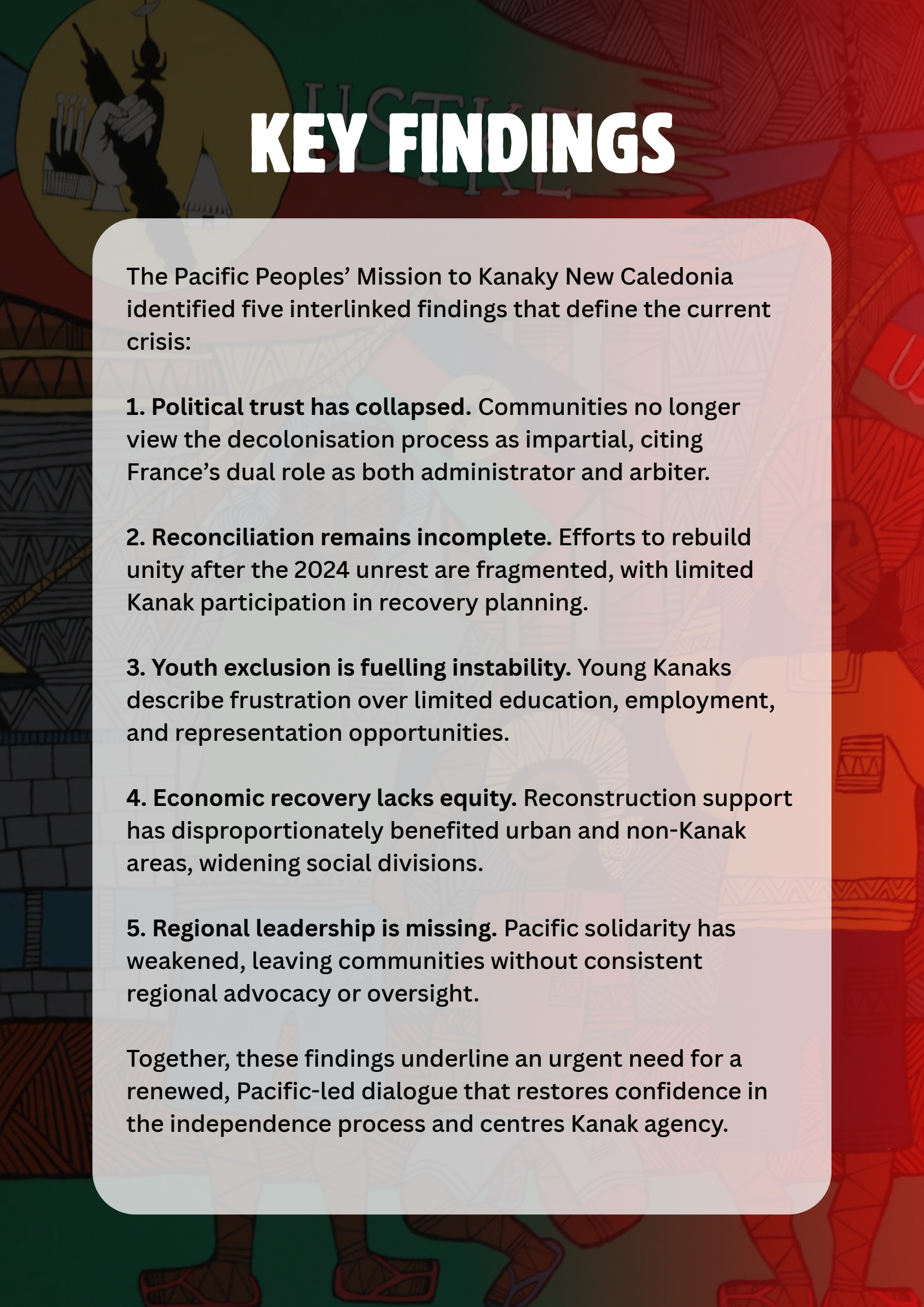
For Kanak communities, the slow pace of reform and persistent economic inequality continue to fuel tension and mistrust. What happens in Kanaky New Caledonia matters for the entire Pacific: it tests the region's commitment to decolonisation, democratic participation, and human rights.

The Mission warns that silence or complacency from neighbouring states risks normalising a stalled decolonisation process under French authority. Renewed attention and reporting are critical to ensure that Kanak voices — especially those of young people and women — remain visible in regional dialogue and policy decisions.

The path forward requires Pacific-led solidarity and transparent engagement that prioritise justice, inclusion, and lasting peace.







# KEY FINDINGS

The Pacific Peoples' Mission to Kanaky New Caledonia identified five interlinked findings that define the current crisis:

- 1. Political trust has collapsed.** Communities no longer view the decolonisation process as impartial, citing France's dual role as both administrator and arbiter.
- 2. Reconciliation remains incomplete.** Efforts to rebuild unity after the 2024 unrest are fragmented, with limited Kanak participation in recovery planning.
- 3. Youth exclusion is fuelling instability.** Young Kanaks describe frustration over limited education, employment, and representation opportunities.
- 4. Economic recovery lacks equity.** Reconstruction support has disproportionately benefited urban and non-Kanak areas, widening social divisions.
- 5. Regional leadership is missing.** Pacific solidarity has weakened, leaving communities without consistent regional advocacy or oversight.

Together, these findings underline an urgent need for a renewed, Pacific-led dialogue that restores confidence in the independence process and centres Kanak agency.



# DATA TRUTHS



Health: 1 in 5 doctors have left since 2024 — clinics in rural and island areas are thinly staffed.



Politics: Less than one-third of local seats held by Kanaks — power sits with French-aligned institutions.



Recovery: Support tilts toward urban, non-Kanak sectors; rural Kanak areas trail.

Youth:  
80% of the prison population are Kanak youth, linked to blocked education/work paths.



Economy:  
800+ firms lost; 20,000 jobs gone — Kanak-owned and small local enterprises most affected.

Land: 27% Kanak ownership — corporate and non-Kanak holdings dominate urban/productive zones.







# WHAT THEY SAID

France cannot act as both referee and participant in the decolonisation process. Its repeated breaches and political interference have eroded trust and prolonged Kanaky's dependency. The Pacific must now take a principled stand to ensure the right to self-determination is fulfilled.

- ANNA NAUPA, HEAD OF MISSION

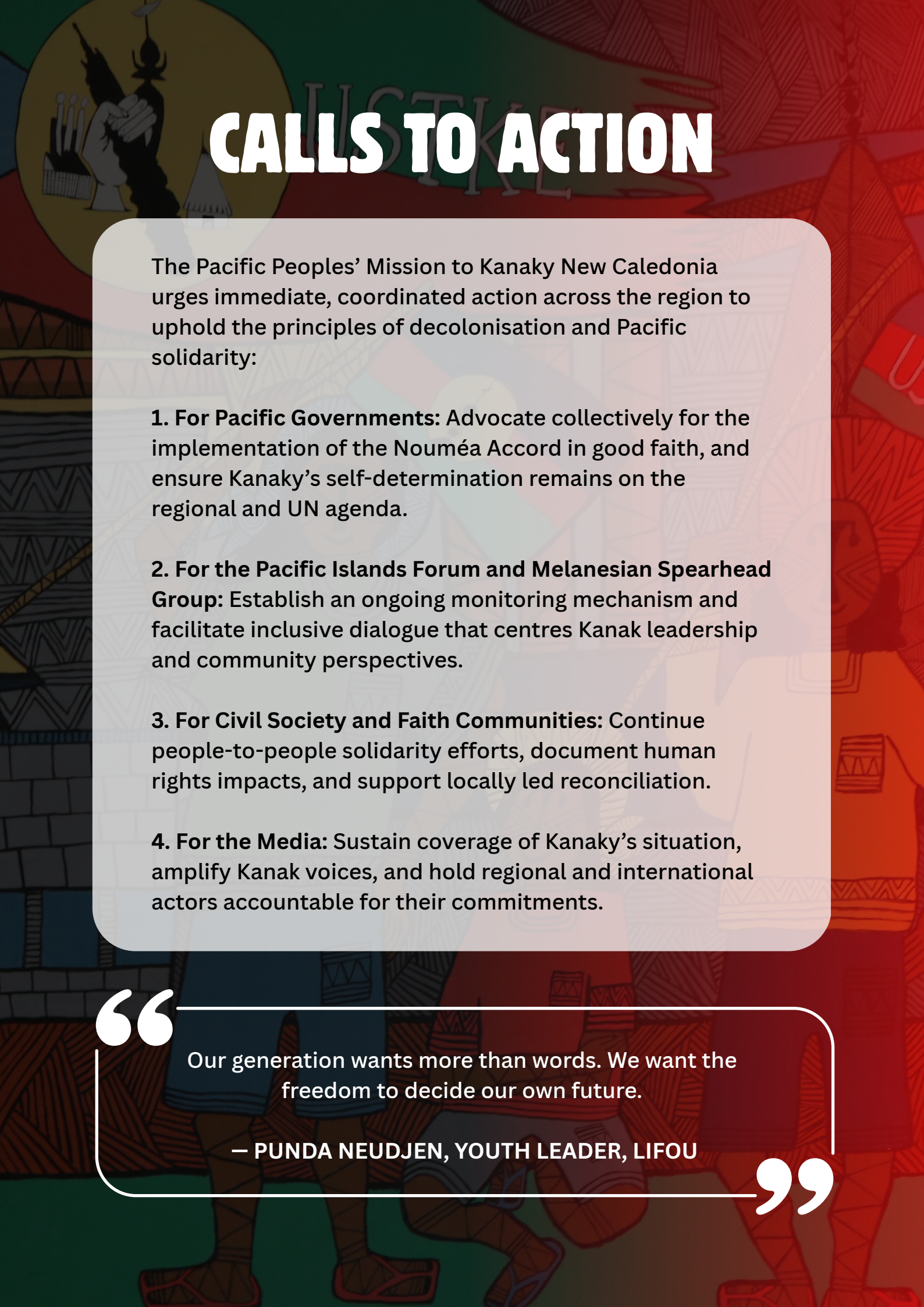
What we witnessed in Kanaky is not instability; it is resistance born from decades of broken promises. The international community must stop treating this as an internal French matter and recognise it for what it is — an unfinished decolonisation process.

Dr DAVID SMALL,  
Academic, Aotearoa New Zealand

Faith communities continue to stand with families who lost homes and livelihoods in the unrest. For us, peace cannot come without justice — and justice begins when the truth is spoken.

Church Delegate  
(EPKNC Representative)





# CALLS TO ACTION

The Pacific Peoples' Mission to Kanaky New Caledonia urges immediate, coordinated action across the region to uphold the principles of decolonisation and Pacific solidarity:

- 1. For Pacific Governments:** Advocate collectively for the implementation of the Nouméa Accord in good faith, and ensure Kanaky's self-determination remains on the regional and UN agenda.
- 2. For the Pacific Islands Forum and Melanesian Spearhead Group:** Establish an ongoing monitoring mechanism and facilitate inclusive dialogue that centres Kanak leadership and community perspectives.
- 3. For Civil Society and Faith Communities:** Continue people-to-people solidarity efforts, document human rights impacts, and support locally led reconciliation.
- 4. For the Media:** Sustain coverage of Kanaky's situation, amplify Kanak voices, and hold regional and international actors accountable for their commitments.

“ Our generation wants more than words. We want the freedom to decide our own future.

— PUNDA NEUDJEN, YOUTH LEADER, LIFOU ”

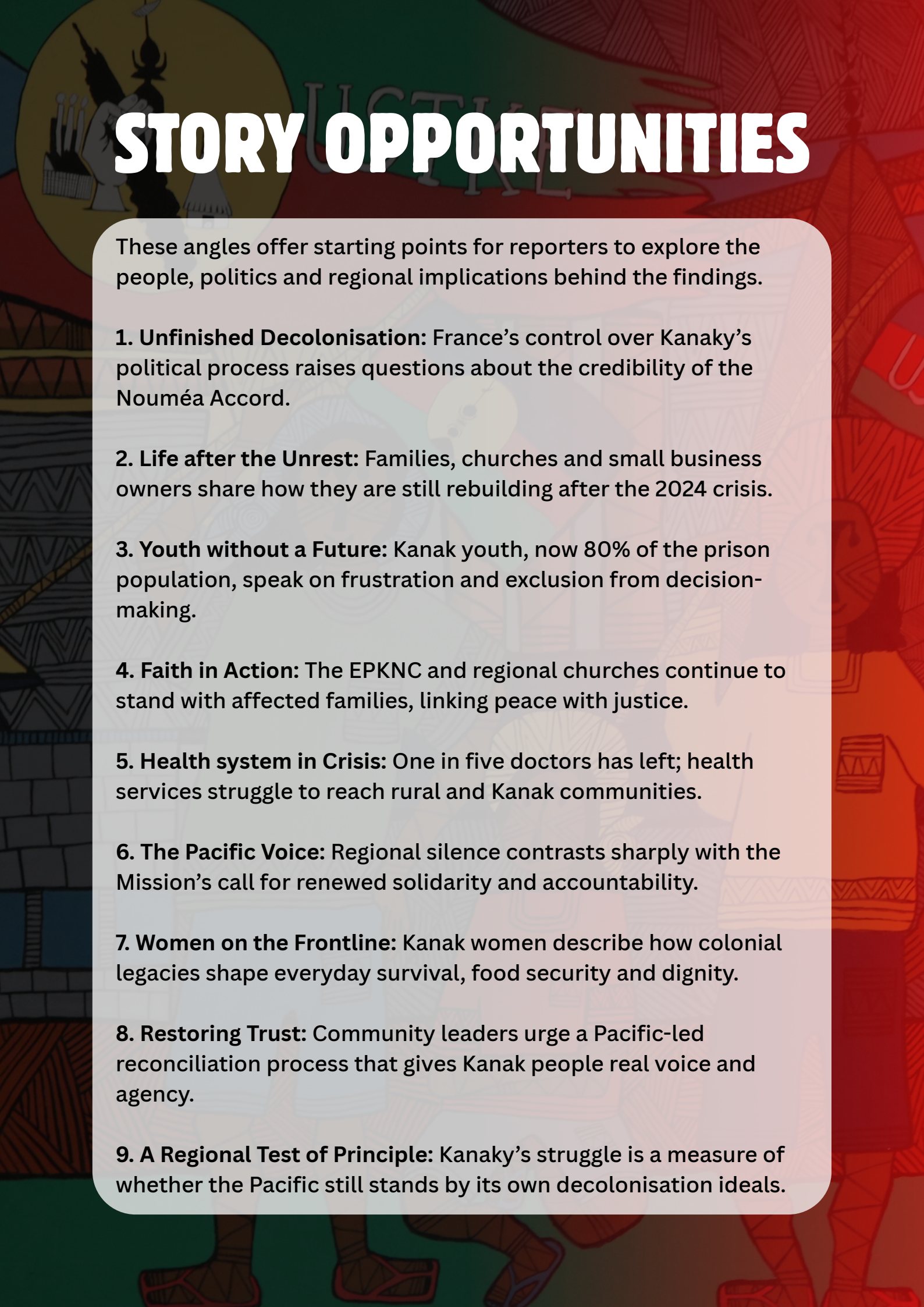


# WHAT'S NEXT



- The Pacific Peoples' Mission to Kanaky New Caledonia Report will be launched in Suva, bringing together church, civil society, regional and media representatives.
- The event will feature a panel discussion, testimonies from Kanak representatives, and recommendations for renewed Pacific engagement in decolonisation.
- The report will be shared with Pacific governments, the Pacific Islands Forum, and the UN Special Committee on Decolonisation to strengthen regional advocacy.
- Mission members will continue outreach across the Pacific to ensure Kanak voices remain visible in policy and public dialogue.
- Journalists are encouraged to attend the launch, seek interviews, and track Pacific leaders' responses as discussions on Kanaky's future evolve.





# STORY OPPORTUNITIES

These angles offer starting points for reporters to explore the people, politics and regional implications behind the findings.

- 1. Unfinished Decolonisation:** France's control over Kanaky's political process raises questions about the credibility of the Nouméa Accord.
- 2. Life after the Unrest:** Families, churches and small business owners share how they are still rebuilding after the 2024 crisis.
- 3. Youth without a Future:** Kanak youth, now 80% of the prison population, speak on frustration and exclusion from decision-making.
- 4. Faith in Action:** The EPKNC and regional churches continue to stand with affected families, linking peace with justice.
- 5. Health system in Crisis:** One in five doctors has left; health services struggle to reach rural and Kanak communities.
- 6. The Pacific Voice:** Regional silence contrasts sharply with the Mission's call for renewed solidarity and accountability.
- 7. Women on the Frontline:** Kanak women describe how colonial legacies shape everyday survival, food security and dignity.
- 8. Restoring Trust:** Community leaders urge a Pacific-led reconciliation process that gives Kanak people real voice and agency.
- 9. A Regional Test of Principle:** Kanaky's struggle is a measure of whether the Pacific still stands by its own decolonisation ideals.



# MEDIA CONTACT



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