

President Gregory J. Thwaite
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In co-operation with the *International Law Association, Auckland Sub-Branch*

NOTICE OF PUBLIC ADDRESS

Speaker

Mr Peter Wilson

Topic

Post-Conflict Restoration in Bougainville PNG and in Timor-Leste

Date & Time

Monday 11 September 2023 at 6 p.m.

Location

Lecture Theatre, Old Government House (University of Auckland),
Princes Street, Auckland. Choice of masks and distancing is **RESPECTED**.

Synopsis

Ubi solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant, wrote the historian Tacitus about the Roman army in the first century AD: *Where they create a desert, they call it “peace”*.

Many nations in our Asia-Pacific region – e.g. Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Sri Lanka, PNG, and Timor-Leste - have endured war, followed by a peace.

The United Nations took a lead role in organising projects to repair the post-war *desert* in both Timor-Leste and Bougainville, PNG, between the years 1997 and 2003. Bougainville was managed cost-effectively and achieved good results. As for Timor Leste? Well, that is another story. A story to be shared.

Biographical Details

Equipped with a Diploma in agriculture from Massey Agricultural College and a B.Sc. from Victoria University (in botany and economic geography), Peter Wilson spent four years as a Farm Advisory Officer. In 1969 he started a career in international humanitarian work, as Leader and Agriculturalist in the NZ Red Cross Welfare & Resettlement Team, South Vietnam.

Thereafter for 40 years he worked at field level throughout the Asia-Pacific region on humanitarian projects, in three broad categories: (a) poverty alleviation, (b) increase of agricultural production, and (c) post-conflict restoration. The latter added up to years of working in war-torn nations.

Motivated by a curiosity to see what old -fashioned colonialism looked like, in 1970 he had spent ten days in then-Portuguese Timor. Work as a Rural Development Officer followed in Bougainville, PNG on a two-year contract. Some 30 years later, after Timor's double trauma of Indonesian occupation and a nine-year secession war, he returned to each place for work on post-conflict restoration projects. He is unique in having so worked in both places.

The Forum provides a space and an opportunity for discussion and consideration of topics of international affairs. The meeting is open to the public, without charge or seat reservation.