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- Truth and Justice for the victims of Moruroa

On the day after Jacques Chirac arrived in Tahiti, over two hundred former workers of Moruroa marched with their families, carrying a huge banner 'Truth and justice for the victims of Moruroa.'

President of the Association Moruroa e Tatou Roland Oldham said they want to remind the President of the Republic that although the nuclear tests are over, the consequences of the tests on the health of the former workers unfortunately linger on. "Among the 3359 Polynesian former workers we registered, several hundred have already died – their average age was 51 years – and there are numerous cases of cancers, including a very large number of leukaemia. Very worrying for the families of the former workers is the large number of stillbirths as well as sterility problems," Oldham said.

On Saturday, July 26th after the demonstration, a delegation of Moruroa e tatou had an information dossier about the sanitary impact of the nuclear tests handed over to the President together with the text of a common platform for the recognition of the impact of the nuclear tests in Polynesia.

The elected representatives, the parties and the Churches of Polynesia agreed on the following points:

Recognition by the French State of its responsibility regarding the health of the former workers and of the populations affected by the

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fallout.

Passing of a law in Parliament on the sanitary follow-up of the people affected by the nuclear tests.

Financial compensation for the victims and for their families.

Opening of the military archives in order to bring to light the truth about the so-called 'harmlessness of the tests.'

At the end of June 2003, after a preliminary mission with the Association Moruroa e tatou, Dr. Michel Brugière, General Director of Médecins du Monde, announced that his organisation would open a permanent mission in French Polynesia, as the impact of nuclear testing on populations should be treated in the same way as those who had suffered similar impact of conflicts in Africa, in the Middle-East or in Chechnya.

Working together with the Association of the Veterans of Nuclear Tests (AVEN) in metropolitan France and with the association of the Algerian veterans, and confronted with the lack of good will by the French authorities, Moruroa e tatou has decided to take court actions against the French State for "breach of the criminal law" and to claim full compensation for the damages suffered by all the civilian and military victims of the nuclear tests.

This year, three such court cases ended in the favour of the metropolitan veterans, two of whom had been involved in atmospheric nuclear tests in Moruroa.

Moruroa e tatou notes the announcement by President Chirac of the creation of an "interdepartmental follow-up" on all issues related to the nuclear tests in cooperation "with the concerned persons and associations". This announcement meets a claim the Associations Moruroa e tatou and AVEN have had since their creation. It also comes close to the bill on the sanitary follow-up of the nuclear test that was put to the French Parliament on January 17th, 2001. Moruroa e tatou is anticipating the creation of this "interdepartmental follow-up" in which it intends to be heavily involved.

Press release Moruroa e Tatou, 26 July 2003.



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