



TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL (PNG) Inc.  
5<sup>th</sup> Floor Mogoru Moto Building, Champion Parade  
PO Box 591 Port Moresby, NCD Phone 320 2188 Fax 320 189  
E-mail: [tipng@daltron.com.pg](mailto:tipng@daltron.com.pg)  
Website: [www.transparencypng.org.pg](http://www.transparencypng.org.pg)

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Press Release for immediate release

## **ARE OUR PARLIAMENTARIANS WORKING**

TIPNG is very concerned of the current trend being shown by our government in using its numerical strength to bulldoze many important decisions including passing of bills, without a rigorous debate by our parliamentarians and its shortcutting practices without adhering appropriately to duly established procedures.

There is a dire need for the Government to demonstrate the quality of its leadership. Poorly thought out decisions by the government are bound to have a direct impact on the going re-current budget and place pressure on limited human resources that are already stretched.

TI's concern is highlighted this week with the reported walking out of Parliament by the Minister for Community Development Dame Carol Kidu over her concerns that a major initiative 'Education Bill' had not been properly deliberated upon before being introduced and as a consequence may have huge financial implications if passed.

TIPNG Chairman Peter Aitsi said: "the Senior Minister's reported walk out protest over voting for the Education bill sends out very strong warning signals that procedures are not being followed in parliament leading to either inefficient processes or worse yet direct loss of public funds because of a lack of thorough review and debate."

Another similar rushed decision by the government that is likely to be challenged by the people was also highlighted by Kairuku Hiri MP Paru Aihi late last week in relation to Konedobu land owners calling on the government to review the Konedobu Petroleum Park Authority Act which was reportedly passed with a 70-1 majority without land owner participation.

The anti corruption organisation believes that the deterioration of every government begins with the decay of the principles on which it was founded. These principles are the cornerstone of our Democracy and must be reinforced and demonstrated through a rigorous parliamentary process. TI warns this must be upheld and adhered to at all times by all leaders including politicians and bureaucrats in order for the public to continue to

have trust and faith in the institutions of state, such as Parliament, and in particular the members of parliament.

This erosion of lawful parliamentary process and procedures through many of the governments' line agencies must be of significant concern to all of us, as it creates an environment that will allow for greater corruption and theft of public assets to take place.

The Government must demonstrate leadership in this area and must not take the easy way of bulldozing decisions. TI calls on our Government to follow a process ensuring wider consultation and deliberation when dealing with legislation, placing the interest of the nation ahead of the few elites. We believe whatever is morally wrong can never be politically right.

Ends.