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PRESS STATEMENT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Appointment of Duma is a Mockery of Justice

TIPNG sees the appointment of William Duma MP to multiple portfolios in the caretaker government as being unjust to the citizens of Papua New Guinea who are expecting accountability and integrity from the Prime Minister and his new cabinet.

Transparency International PNG (TIPNG) is calling on the Prime Minister to keep his promise to the people of Papua New Guinea and revoke the appointment of Hagen Open MP, William Duma, as Minister for Public Enterprise and State Investment. Mr. Duma was one of the two ministers, along with several departmental heads, who were sidelined in March for a controversial land deal, worth K46 million, to transfer a PNGDF base to Manumanu, just outside of Port Moresby.

Prime Minister O'Neill, is on the public record as making a clear commitment to Papua New Guineans that the estimated K2 million Administrative Inquiry, called for by the National Executive Council (NEC), would examine the details of the Manumanu Land Deal as the matter was in the "public interest" and thus should be "treated in [a] fair and transparent manner." Thus far, he has fallen short of his own standards with no publication of the findings of the inquiry, and now the reappointment of the Mr. Duma with no consideration of his promise to those to whom he is accountable - his fellow citizens.

"We as Papua New Guineans expect our leaders, and more so our State Ministers, to be cleared of all alleged serious wrong-doings before they are entrusted to make decisions which will affect us all", said Chairman of TIPNG, Lawrence Stephens. "The Prime Minister must respect the process which he himself started earlier this year. He should revoke Mr. Duma's appointment until the findings of the Administrative Inquiry are released and justice has run its course", Mr. Stephens further stated, "For instance, Prime Minister O'Neill promised that the K46 million funds, in the public's interest would be traced to the various bank accounts- why has he chosen to ignore his own promises so readily now?"

Mr. Duma, whose declaration as Member-elect in Hagen, under concerning circumstances, allegedly caused days of violence and strife in Western Highlands Province was recently announced as Minister for Petroleum and Energy, Housing and Urbanisation, Public Enterprise and State Investments, Transport, Agriculture and Livestock in Prime Minister O'Neill's seven-men caretaker cabinet.

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What is TIPNG?

TIPNG is a member of Transparency International a global anti-corruption movement committed to fighting corruption. TIPNG is an independent organization in PNG known as a Chapter of the international movement. The PNG chapter advocates against corruption and promotes transparency, good governance, honesty and accountability both in private and public sector dealings. TIPNG tries to assist strengthen the integrity systems of our country such as the police, the parliament, the public services and the judiciary.