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## **PRESS STATEMENT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### ***PM contradicts commitment to integrity in Manumanu Investigation***

*TIPNG is concerned that the Prime Minister has drastically failed to follow through with his own decision to suspend Ministers William Duma and Fabian Pok from their portfolios earlier this year over the K46m Manumanu Land Deal Administrative Inquiry.*

Transparency International PNG (TIPNG) has grave concerns about the Prime Minister's commitment to integrity, given recent remarks justifying his dramatic change of mind in making two key Ministerial re-appointments, effectively acting against his own earlier decision, which in accordance with principles of good governance, was to protect the investigation into the K46m Manumanu Land Deal by sidelining Mr. William Duma and Dr. Fabian Pok until such time as it had been completed.

On Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> September, in responding to questions on the floor of Parliament by Hon. Peter Isoaimo Member for Kairuku Hiri and Hon. James Donald Member for North Fly, the Prime Minister is reported to have justified his controversial decision to re-appoint Mr. Duma and Dr. Pok to ministerial portfolios by saying that, "We will address the issues that may come to light at the end of the enquiry [sic] it's no point me preempt [sic] the outcomes of the enquiry [sic] under our jurisdiction, the members should know all citizens are innocent until proven guilty."

This is a direct contradiction of the Prime Minister's statement to the media in February of this year when he said, Mr. Duma and Dr. Pok, "will step aside from their ministerial responsibilities pending the conclusion and outcomes of the Commission of Inquiry [now an Administrative Inquiry]." Furthermore, Mr. O'Neill said that, "It is now clear that these agencies of Government have not worked together in a co-ordinate way to facilitate the implementation of the 2012 Government NEC decision. The acquisition of this land has been done in clear violation of the Governments decision, and resulted in 78.4 million Kina being paid."

Chairman of TIPNG Mr. Lawrence Stephens, in a media release, said that, "Papua New Guineans know that if a Minister is being investigated he or she must step down to preserve the integrity of the office they hold, the PM must follow through his earlier commitment to integrity and revoke the appointments of Duma and Pok until the Administrative Inquiry into the Manumanu Land Deal is completed and the results made public." Mr. Stephens also observed that the Members of Parliament and media must be commended for reminding the Prime Minister of his commitment to integrity and protecting the course of justice.

Ends.///

**Authorized by:**  
**Lawrence Stephens - Chairman**

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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.