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**PRESS STATEMENT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

***Works Minister must publicly provide evidence that Brian is lying.***

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Port Moresby, 13 April 2018 – Transparency International PNG (TIPNG) calls on the Works Minister Honorable Michael Nali to provide evidence that suspended Works Northern Manager, Mr Brian Alois, lied about inflated costs for some roads.

It was reported that Mr. Brian Alois, Senior Engineer in the Momase Region was suspended after making a presentation, at the invitation of the National Planning Minister, on the economics of building roads in PNG. Participants at the National Planning Summit, including the Secretary for Works, heard Mr Alois provide details of the spiralling costs of each kilometre of road construction. Mr. Alois who is also the President of the Institute of Engineers PNG provided details of costs of roads in 1994, 2004 and more recently and stated in his presentation that it currently costs up to an average of K3 million per kilometre of road.

The Department of Works must present its data and justify the suspension of Mr. Alois accused falsehoods, otherwise the public can assume that this is a witch hunt by a Government department terrified of truth.

The Minister of Works called Mr Alois a liar on the floor of Parliament. Mr Alois is a senior public servant and civil engineer who has given his professional opinion appears to have risked his career by presenting, verifiable data in a public forum at the invitation of the government.

"Mr Alois' suspension over allegedly making false comments at the National Planning Summit in March 2018 is simply unacceptable. Speakers were invited by government to assist Papua New Guinea by bringing their experience and advice to a public planning meeting. For the government to then punish speakers for doing what they were requested to do is outrageous.. If ministers or other public servants disagree with the facts and opinions it is up to them to produce facts, " said TIPNG Chairman, Mr Lawrence Stephens.

Citizens expect public office holders to respect a basic principle that effective public service should be seen to be provided with integrity and impartiality.

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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.