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PRESS STATEMENT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Parliament Rushing Laws for Self Interest Undermines Elections

Monday 18 April, 2022 – Transparency International Papua New Guinea (TIPNG) is reminding all Members of Parliament to ensure that the transition from the 10th Parliament to the 11th Parliament occurs within the rule of law and upholds the Constitution. Actions by current MP's will be subject to the Leadership Code while in office and the Organic Law on the Independent Commission Against Corruption should they leave office after the Elections. TIPNG has issued this statement following media reports that there will be no arrangement for a caretaker cabinet during the Election period commencing from the Issue of Writs on 28th April and ending with the Return of Writs on 29th July 2022.

Whilst retaining a full Cabinet up to return of writs is not unlawful and well with the Prime Minister's remit, TIPNG cautions that any significant decisions that may have a long-term effect and high cost on PNG, should be carefully considered. In the midst of the election season, it is difficult to ensure that all stakeholders are engaged, and that all systems and processes of government are adhered to, and not inadvertently breached.

Parliament is scheduled to sit for a final session on 19th April 2022, just nine (9) days before the Issue of Writs.

"It would further jeopardise the integrity of the National Elections if Members of Parliament rush through legislation that would be seen to secure funds for the Government to support their re-election campaigns. Any deliberate abuse of public office by incumbent Members of Parliament will not be tolerated by voters in the Election, such leaders should be voted out and also prosecuted for corruption by law enforcement agencies," said Peter Aitsi, Board Chair of TIPNG in a media statement.

"The people of Papua New Guinea expect our elected legislators to pass laws in the public interest and to demonstrate the highest standards of accountability. We should not have political opportunists take advantage of public trust and abuse it for their own re-election. These types of abuse of power will only compound the administrative challenges faced by the PNG Electoral Commission in delivering a free, fair and safe elections in accordance with the National Constitution and electoral laws," Mr. Aitsi said.

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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.