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PRESS STATEMENT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Our Day of Shame

Thursday 11th January, 2024 Port Moresby – Transparency International Papua New Guinea (TIPNG) expresses its deepest concerns and condemns the events that led to the violence and looting that took place in Port Moresby on Wednesday 10/1/2024 and that have spread to Lae and some areas.

TIPNG urges the public and all parties involved to return to their homes and prioritise the restoration of peace and order in our cities.

“The frustration and anger amongst police personnel regarding mishandling of payroll tax calculations is but a tip of the iceberg in terms of a dysfunctional government system. The public service and indeed the Police are institutions of state and if they are truly independent and free of political control should play a critical role as a check and balance to executive government.

In the absence of strong, independent and competent institutions we have seen a significant increase of corruption which in turn will reflect in the way we manage our Country and the quality of life for our People.

TIPNG is calling on all citizens to think of their country and to not resort to violence and illegal activities, this is not the answer. Such actions only inflict further suffering on innocent citizens and undermine the very foundations of law and order that we all rely upon,” said TIPNG Board Chair, Peter Aitsi.

“We call on the Government of Papua New Guinea at the highest level to engage immediately in genuine open dialogue with the police representatives to address their legitimate grievances. And to do this quickly through transparent, open communication in order to resolve this crisis and to restore the rule of law and bring order to our society.”

“Furthermore, we urge the Police Commissioner and the senior leadership of the Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary to take all necessary measures to restore order and ensure the safety of citizens. The opportunistic violence and looting witnessed on Wednesday during the day and into the evening is completely unacceptable and must be dealt with swiftly and decisively. Law enforcement authorities must uphold their duty to protect the public and apprehend those involved in criminal activities,” said Mr. Aitsi.

TIPNG also emphasised the need for an independent investigation into the events leading up to the police strike and the subsequent violence. Understanding the root causes of this crisis is essential to prevent similar incidents from occurring in the future.

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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.