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PRESS STATEMENT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Countdown to 2027 National General Election – Another Disaster Looming!

Wednesday 18th December 2024, Port Moresby – This December 2024 marks the midway point between the 2022 and the 2027 National General Election, Transparency International PNG (TIPNG) is sounding the alarm over the lack of any real action to address the failings of the 2022 National General Election and the many problems experienced in past elections. TIPNG has observed the election process over 2 decades and the verdict is the management and conduct of our elections is severely flawed. We have witnessed significant failures in all stages of the election process from preparation, conduct, delivery, and declaration.

Key issues identified by TIPNG in 2022 included glaring inaccuracies and anomalies in the electoral roll, a lack of enforcement against election offenses, non-adherence with constitutional requirements, constant disruptions during ballot counting, chaos during the declaration of certain seats, widespread election-related violence and the proliferation of guns.

Parliament established the Special Parliamentary Committee on the 2022 General Elections (SPCGE) to investigate and report its findings to improve the conduct of elections. The Committee's report, which was presented by Chairman Governor Allan Bird to Parliament in December 2023, outlined 70 recommendations which still need to be debated and adopted in Parliament by all sitting Members of Parliament.

“There is a five-year electoral planning cycle, and it must be adequately supported year on year. The issues of 2022 cannot be resolved with last minute fixes, we are now 2 years away from 2027, what are we doing to protect and rebuild this crucial democratic pillar?” questioned Peter Aitsi, TIPNG Board Chair.

“What is the Electoral Commissioner and the Government going to do? The numerous problems we faced in 2022 elections and past elections should be a wake-up call for our nation's leaders and administrators, we need genuine and serious action now”, added Mr. Aitsi.

As an indication of the apparent lack of priority, the recently approved 2025 national budget, two years before the 2027 National General Election, the PNGEC's allocated funding is only K15.6 million. This underscores TI's concern: the Electoral Commission is still not being allocated the essential resources it needs in non-election years to adequately prepare for the upcoming election. This lack of funding will undermine the Electoral Commission's preparations and presents a serious threat to the integrity and effectiveness of the 2027 elections.

TIPNG calls on all Members of Parliament to prioritise the immediate adoption of the recommendations in the Special Parliamentary Report on the 2022 National General Elections and to ensure the allocation of appropriate levels of funding as per the electoral cycle to enable required preparations and any reforms to be carried out in time.

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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.