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PRESS STATEMENT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Enacting Right to Information Law will Stop Attacks on Media + Pix

Port Moresby, Wednesday, 18th March 2026 – There has been no progress by the Government following credible reports of an assault by Correctional Service (CS) officers on a journalist in February says Transparency International Papua New Guinea (TIPNG). Despite the high-level commitment by the Prime Minister at the time, no substantive action has been taken to either address the matter or provide long term solutions. In response, TIPNG is calling on the CS Commissioner to apply the existing laws of his office to investigate, and for the Government to prioritise enacting the long overdue law for Right to Information.

"When public officials use violence to hide the truth, they are not just attacking a journalist; they are attacking our right to know and enabling corruption. The alleged assault on the press to prevent unfavorable media coverage displays a culture of secrecy that must be stopped," said TIPNG Chairman, Mr. Peter Aitsi.

"State agencies should have a clear process and adequate infrastructure to keep the public informed – a Right to Information Law would enable this and prevent attacks on the journalists and citizens. Furthermore, the PNGCS is a constitutional service, and the CS commissioner has a legal duty to ensure allegations of misconduct are impartially investigated and resolved in a timely manner," said Mr. Aitsi.

Section 37 of the Correctional Service Act (1995), requires Correctional Service officers to ensure the safety, well-being, and human dignity of every person in their custody. To safeguard this mandate, the CS Commissioner should issue an official statement on the matter, clarifying public concerns and reaffirming media personnel have access to report in the public interest, without fear of retribution.

These immediate actions must be supported by a Right to Information legislation, giving effect to Section 51 of PNG's National Constitution. TIPNG has long advocated for the Right to Information (RTI) legislation to provide a clear, legal framework for citizens and the media to access information held by the government.

The Department of Information and Communication Technology (DICT) with support from UNDP has recently concluded national consultation on the draft National Right to Information Policy. This policy must be finalized to meet international standards and endorsed by cabinet as a priority so that a Bill can be drafted and tabled in this term of Parliament prior.

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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.