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## PRESS STATEMENT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Constitutional Mandate Ignored: TIPNG Report Reveals Alarming Decline in Government Responsiveness to Civil Society**

*Port Moresby, Friday 5 June 2026* – Transparency International Papua New Guinea (TIPNG) is calling for a clear position from government on their support for the work of Civil Society following the release of the EU System for an Enabling Environment (SEE) 2025 PNG Country Focus Report. The report reveals that PNG's civic space is under increasing pressure with an alarming lack of transparency and meaningful citizen participation in decision-making.

The findings indicate a disconnect between policy discussions and the genuine exchange of views required under Section 255 of the National Constitution.

"Equal participation is a prerequisite for a healthy democracy and nation-building is a shared responsibility," said TIPNG CEO, Ms. Arianne Kassman. "Section 255 of our Constitution is clear: consultation must be meaningful and allow for a genuine consideration of views. It is not a box to be ticked. When the State demonstrates genuine commitment to openness, it strengthens our democracy; but when civil society input is ignored, public trust erodes and the result is ill-informed national policies that cause confusion and result in poor development outcomes".

While government consultations are often conducted to satisfy symbolic requirements, there is little evidence that civil society's input meaningfully influences government policy or actions. The 2025 PNG Country Focus Report presents a comprehensive, year-long assessment of the state of civic space in Papua New Guinea across six principles, drawing on expert analysis and consultations with civil society actors across the country. For 2025, Papua New Guinea's ratings across these principles fall largely between scores of 1.8 and 3, indicating a partially enabling but fragile environment for civil society engagement.

"The delayed adoption of the 2022 Election reforms is a prime example of disingenuous consultation," said Ms. Kassman. "Civil society provided recommendations, yet they have largely been ignored as we approach the 2027 National General Elections".

TIPNG urges all heads of public agencies to move beyond 'laws on paper' and create clear feedback mechanisms to ensure stakeholder input actually shapes national policy and address the broader challenges revealed in the report. The challenges include increasing restrictions on the freedoms of

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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.

expression, assembly, and association, alongside growing regulatory burdens that particularly impact smaller organizations.

To protect civic space and improve governance, TIPNG specifically urges the Government to pass the Right to Information (RTI) Law. The RTI legislation is more than a transparency tool; it is a vital reform for government efficiency. By making data accessible, the State:

- Is empowered to make better-informed, data-driven decisions.
- Reduces the administrative cost and time of information management.
- Builds a legacy of trust that is the hallmark of a responsive and modern administration.

The 2025 PNG Country Focus Report is part of a global monitoring initiative supported by the European Union, tracking 86 countries. TIPNG serves as the national partner for this effort.

TIPNG encourages government agencies, development partners, civil society organisations, and the public to engage with the report's recommendations to secure a transparent and accountable future for all Papua New Guineans. The report is available online here: [Papua New Guinea Country Focus Report – Eu SEE](#)

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