



## MEDIA RELEASE

### Board set up to oversee Parliamentary strengthening project

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** Authorised by Kala Aufa – Clerk of Parliament

FRIDAY 1.07.2022 | A project board to oversee the five-year Parliamentary Partnership (Twinning) Agreement between the National Parliament of Papua New Guinea and the Bougainville House of Representatives (BHOR) was set up on International Day of Parliamentarianism at Parliament House on June 30th, 2022.

Members of the board include: Kala Aufa, Clerk of the National Parliament, Robert Tapi Clerk of the BHOR, Simon Pentanu, Speaker of BHOR, Koney Samuel, Secretary for National Planning and Monitoring, Dirk Wagener, UNDP Resident Representative and Steve Burns of the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Jointly funded by the UNDP (\$8.7USD) and the Australian Government (\$1.5 AUD), the board will provide oversight on the current agreement which was signed between the two parliaments in Arawa, in 2021

Clerk of Parliament Kala Aufa said the work program for the agreement fosters enhancing and strengthening cooperation between both legislatures for legislative excellence, capacity building and harnessing technology opportunities to improve systems, services, and public engagement.

“This assistance is timely and will go a long way to towards achieving modern, efficient and engaging parliaments in the region,” he said. “We are excited and ready to be partners in this important programme.”

The board has been tasked to implement the following duties and responsibilities in both legislatures as follows:

1. Supporting Members of Parliament (MPs) to use their parliamentary powers to engage in debate and oversight of national development activities, in relation to critical issues such as gender equality, financial inclusion, economic empowerment and climate change, etc through the work of Parliamentary Committees;
2. Strengthening the capacities of Parliamentary Committees to undertake effective oversight of key government sectors, through transparent processes aimed at including the perspectives of communities, particularly women, into their deliberations; and
3. Strengthening the capacities of key parts of the Parliamentary Service to assist MPs to discharge their mandates, in particular;



- a. Committee Secretariat staff who assist Parliamentary Committees to do their work;
- b. Library and research staff who can support MPs to take effective action on key issues by keeping them well-informed;
- c. Public Communications and Outreach staff who can work with MPs and the Committee Secretariat to be more effectively engaged with the public in the work of Parliament; and
- d. ICT infrastructure upgrade to improve process and systems, thus raise the standard of Parliamentary service.

Meanwhile, Mr Pentanu said the BHOR remained open to such projects that strengthened collaboration and good governance and looked forward to being contributing partners in the programme.

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Caption: Parliamentary Service staff join the Clerk of Parliament Kala Aufa and BHOR Speaker Simon Pentanu at the signing of the UNDP Parliamentary Strengthening Project with other Project Board members and representatives from UNDP and the Australian DFAT. ***Photo by Parliamentary Media Services***