

## **FIRST DAY**

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**Tuesday 9 August 2022**

## **DRAFT HANSARD**

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## **PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**

### **CORRECTIONS TO DAILY DRAFT HANSARD**

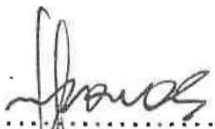
The Draft Hansard is uncorrected. It is also privileged. Members have one week from the date of this issue of Draft Hansard in which to make corrections to their speeches. Until the expiration of this one-week period, Draft Hansard must not be quoted as final and accurate report of the debates of the National Parliament.

Corrections maybe marked on a photocopy of the Daily Draft Hansard and lodged at the Office of the Principal Parliamentary Reporter, A1 -23 (next to the Security Control Room).

Corrections should be authorized by signature and contain the name, office and telephone number of the person transmitting/making corrections.

Amendments cannot be accepted over the phone.

Corrections should relate only to inaccuracies. New matters may not be introduced,



.....  
HARRY MOMOS

**Principal Parliamentary Reporter**

## **FIRST DAY**

**Tuesday 9 August 2022**

The National Parliament met at 1.30 p.m. pursuant to the Notice of His Excellency the **Governor-General, Sir Bob Dadae**, which was published in the *National Gazette*.

*(The Clerk read the notice.)*

**Mr Peter O'Neill** – Point of Order! Could you clarify when the Governor-General signed the Gazettal Notice and if the gazettal is supposed to be after the Return of Writs or before the Return of Writs.

**Mr Clerk** – I do not have the powers; you can ask the Speaker after his election.

*The Serjeant-At-Arms conducts His Honor, the Chief justice of Papua New Guinea Sir Gibuna Gibbs Salika to the Speaker's Chair.*

**02/01**

### **COMMISSION TO ADMINISTER DECLARATIONS – CHIEF JUSTICE**

*(The Honourable Chief Justice of Papua New Guinea, **Chief Sir Gibuma Gibss Salika**, having been ushered into the Chamber and conducted by the Serjeant-At-Arms to the Chair, handed to the Clerk at the Table a Commission from His Excellency, the Governor-General of Papua New Guinea, appointing him, to administer the Declarations of Office and Declarations of Loyalty to the Members of the Parliament.)*

## **PRAYERS**

**Reverend Bernard Siai**, Moderator of the United Church of Papua New Guinea representing the Council of Churches to say Prayers:

‘God of the universe, creator and sustainer of all things. We stand in your presence and we honour and praise you. You are the God of Abraham, Issacc, Jacob and God of our

Forefathers. We thank you Father, that today you are still our God and you will continue to be the God of Papua New Guinea in the future. We thank you for this session, we thank you for this special day. We come humbly before your throne and we acknowledge your presence in the midst of us. We thank you Father, for these men and woman whom you have appointed through your people and have come into this building, this Parliament. Father we pray in the Name of Jesus, that you will bless every one of them, lead, direct and inspire them with your wisdom as they take up leadership roles from today and onwards. We thank you Father and we commit this session into your mighty hands. As our leaders come to elect the Prime Minister and the Speaker, we pray for the wisdom of the Holy Spirit to be in the midst of your people, the leaders. We pray Father, in the Name of Jesus, for our people who are listening through the radios or watching on television. We pray Father, that they will continue to focus on you as the only God that we serve and the God of Papua New Guinea. We ask you Father to bless this gathering and bless us all. In Jesus mighty name, we pray. Amen.’

## **TABLING OF RETURNED WRITS**

*The Clerk laid on the Table Return of 105 Writs for the 2022 National General Elections held from Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> April to Friday, 29 July and extended to Friday, 5 August 2022. The said Returns showed that for the electorates the following members were elected:*

### **03/01**

*Tabling of Returned Writs in progress*

### **04/01**

#### **Electorates**

#### **Bougainville Provincial**

Central Bougainville

South Bougainville

#### **Members**

Mr Peter Tsiamalili

Mr Simon Dumarinu

Mr Timothy Masiu

#### **Central Provincial**

Abau

Goilala

Ms Rufina Peter

Sir Puka Temu

Mr Casmiro Aia

### **05/01**

Hiri-Koiari

Kairuku

Mr Keith Iduhu

Mr Peter Isoaimo

Rigo

Mr Ano Pala

**East New Britain Provincial**

Mr Michael Marum

Gazelle

Mr Jelta Wong

Kokopo

Mr Ereman Tobaining Junior

Pomio

Mr Elias Kapavore

Rabaul

Mr Graham Piniau Rumet

**East Sepik Provincial**

Mr Allan Bird

Ambunti-Drekikir

Mr Johnson Wapunai

Angoram

Mr Salio Waipo

**06/01**

Yangoru-Saussia

Mr Richard Maru

Maprik

Mr Gabriel Kapris

Wewak

Mr Kevin Isifu (Absent)

Wosera-Gawi

Mr Joseph Yopyyopy

**Eastern Highlands Provincial**

*Vacant*

Daulo

Mr Ekime Mek Gorosahu

Goroka

Mr Aiye Tambua

Kainantu

Mr William Hagahuno

Lufa

Mr Simo Kilepa

Obura-Wonenara

Mr John Boito

Okapa

Mr Saki Hacky Soloma

**07/01**

Ungai Bena Open

Mr Ginoka Teo

**Chimbu Provincial**

*Vacant*

Chuave Open

Mr James Nomane,

Gumine Open

Mr Lucas Dawa Dekena,

Karamui Nomane

Mr Francis Alua,

Kundiawa Open

Mr Mugawa Dilu,

Sinasina-Yongomugl

Mr Kerenga Kua,

**Enga Provincial**

Kandep

Sir Peter Ipatas,

Mr Don Polye

Kompiani-Ambum

Sir John Pundari

**08/01**

Porgera-Paiela

Mr Maso Karipe

Wabag

Dr Lino Tom

Wapenamanda

Mr Miki Kaeok

**Gulf Provincial**

Kerema

Mr Chris Havieta

Mr Thomas Opa

Kikori

Mr Soro Eoe

**Hela Provincial**

Mr Philip Undial

**09/01**

Komo-Hulia

Mr Daniel Tindipu

Margarima

Mr Manasseh Makiba

Koroba Lake Kopiago

Mr William Bando

Tari-Pori

Mr James Marape

**Jiwaka Provincial**

Mr Simon Kaiwi

Anglimp-South Waghi

Mr Joe Kuli

**10/01**

Jimi

Mr Wake Goi

North Waghi

Mr Benjamin Mul

Bogia

Mr Robert Naguri

Madang

Mr Bryan Kramer

Middle Ramu

Mr Kansol Harwai Kamdaru

Sumkar  
Usino Bundi

Mr Alexander Suguman Orme  
Mr Jimmy Uguro

**Manus Provincial**  
Manus

Mr Charlie Benjamin  
Mr Job Pomat

**Milne Bay Provincial**  
Alotau  
Esa'ala

Mr Gordon Wesley  
Mr Ricky Morris  
Mr Jimmy Maladina

**11/01**

Kiriwina-Goodenough  
Samarai-Murua

Mr Douglas Tomuriesa  
Mr Isi Henry Leonard

**Morobe Provincial**  
Bulolo  
Finschaffien  
Huon-Gulf  
Kabwum  
Lae  
Markham  
Menyamya  
Nawae

Mr Luther Wenge  
Mr Sam Basil Junior  
Mr Rainbo Paita  
Mr Jason Peter  
Mr Patrick Basa (Absent)  
Mr John Rosso  
Mr Koni Iguan (Absent)  
Mr Solen Loifa  
Mr Theo Pelgen

**12/01**

Tewai-Siassi  
Wau-Waria

Mr Kobby Bomareo  
Mr Marsh Narawec

Moresby-South

Mr Justin Tkatchenko

**New Ireland Provincial**  
Kavieng  
Namatanai

Sir Julius Chan  
Mr Ian-Ling Stuckey  
Mr Walter Schnaubelt

**Northern Provincial**

Ijivitari

Popondetta

Mr Garry Juffa

Mr David Arore

Mr Richard Masere

**13/01**

Sohe

Mr Henry Amuli

Ialibu-Pangia

Mr Peter O'Neill

Imbonggu

Mr Pila Niningi

Kagua-Erave

Mr Maino Pano

Mendi

Mr Raphael Tonpi

Nipa-Kutubu

Dr Billy Joseph

**14/01****West New Britain Provincial**

Mr Sasindran Muthuvel

Kandrian-Gloucester

Mr Joseph Lelang

Nakanai

Mr Francis Galia Maneke

Talasea

Mr Freddie Reu Kumai

**West Sepik Provincial**

Mr Tony Wouwou

Aitape-Lumi

Mr Anderson Mise

Nuku

Mr Joe Sungi

Telefomin

Mr Solan Mirisim

Vanimo-Green

Mr Belden Namah

**15/01****Western Provincial**

Mr Taboi Yoto

Delta Fly

Mr Haganai Gamai

Middle Fly

Mr Maso Hewabi

North Fly

Mr James Donald

South Fly

Mr Sekie Agisa



**Western Highlands Provincial**

Dei

Hagen

Mul-Baiyer

Mr Wai Rapa

Mr Steven Pim

Mr William Duma

Mr Jacob Maki

**16/01**

Tambul-Nebilyer

Mr Win Daki

**THE CLERK** – Honourable Members, this completes the signing of the declarations. His Honour the Chief Justice will now take his leave. Will all Honourable members please rise in your places.

*(Chief Justice takes his leave)*

**17-01**

*(Members standing in their places)*

### **ELECTION OF THE SPEAKER**

**THE CLERK** – You may resume your seats. so Honourable Members, the next item of business is the election of the Speaker, by Exhaustive Secret Ballot. The nomination form is set out in Attachment A, whilst the detailed procedure for this election is set out in Attachment B on your program.

Before I call for nominations, I wish to inform the Parliament that Members nominated must inform the Parliament whether or not they accept the nomination.

In accordance with Standing Orders, I now call for nominations.

**Mr CHRIS HAIVETA** – Mr Clerk, in the interest of good order and stability of the Eleventh Parliament, it is my honor and privilege on behalf of those of us on this side, propose to Parliament Honourable Job Pomat, Member for Manus, as its Speaker, and move –

That he takes the Chair of Parliament as Speaker.

**THE CLERK** – Honourable Job Pomat?

**Mr JOB POMAT** (Manus) – I accept the nomination.

**The CLERK** – Are there any further nominations?

**Mr BRYAN KRAMER** (Madang) – Mr Clerk I move –  
That nominations be closed.

**The CLERK** – Honourable Members, I now declare that the Member for Manus Open, Honourable Job Pomat, has been elected unopposed as Mr Speaker.

*(Members clapping)*

*(Mr Speaker escorted to the Chair amidst Kundu drum beats)*

**Mr SPEAKER** – Honourable Members, I take this time to say thank you to Parliament, in giving me this honour as the Speaker of this Eleventh Parliament.

**The CLERK** – Since there are no further nominations, Honourable Members, the mace which has been laid under the table has been raised to the top of the table after the sound of the garamut which signifies the Eleventh National Parliament is in session with the Speaker-elect presiding.

**18/01**

**Mr JAMES MARAPE** – Mr Speaker, on behalf of the Parliament, more so, those of us on the Government side and knowing that you received the absolute mandate from the Parliament, we would like to offer our fullest congratulation to you of your ascension again to this number one Chair in the Parliament and we know and trust that your stewardship of this Parliament will ensure business for our people as delivered and expected by our people.

I want to ask, Mr Speaker, with your indulgence and in the interest of time that further commendation until we come back for business in the other half of the Parliament this afternoon.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**PRESENTATION OF THE SPEAKER  
TO THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL – STATEMENT BY SPEAKER-ELECT**

**Mr SPEAKER** – Honourable Members, it has been ascertained that it will be His Excellency's pleasure to receive me at the Government House forthwith.

The Parliament is suspended until the ringing of the Bells.

*(The Speaker precedes by the Serjeant-At-Arms and the Clerks leave the Chamber through the Speaker's door. The Serjeant-At-Arms to usher the Speaker to his car at the front entrance of the National Parliament and proceed to Government House.)*

*(Members clapping)*

**19/01**

**TABLING OF COMMISSION TO ADMINISTER DECLARATIONS OF OFFICE  
AND DECLARATIONS OF LOYALTY – STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER**

**Mr SPEAKER** – Honourable Members, I have to report that I, this day, presented myself to His Excellency the Governor-General as the choice of the Parliament, and His Excellency was kind enough to congratulate me on my election as the Speaker whereupon I made my declaration of Office as Speaker. His Excellency also presented to me a Commission authorizing me to administer to new Members the Declaration of Loyalty and the Declaration of Office. The Commission reads as follows:

To: The Speaker of the National Parliament

Greetings!

Whereas the Constitution of Papua New Guinea, by Section 249, provides for, amongst other things, that every Member of the National Parliament shall, before entering upon the duties or exercising any powers of his Office make the Declaration of Loyalty before a person appointed for the purposes by the Head of State in the forms set out in Schedule 3 and Section 6 respectively of the Constitution.

Now therefore, I Grand Chief Sir Bob Dadae, Grand Chief of Logohu, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Knight of the Order of Saint John, Governor-General, by virtue of the powers conferred hereby appoint you to

administer, from time to time, the Declarations to those Members who have not already made their Declarations since their election to the Eleventh National Parliament.

Dated at Port Moresby this fifteenth day of July 2022.

(Signed) Sir BOB DADAE Governor-General

I now lay the Commission on the Table.

Honorable Members the next item of business is the election of the Prime Minister and under *section 63, sub section 1* of the *Organic Law on the Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates*. His Excellency the Governor general is required to invite the registered political party or parties with the highest number of members elected in a General Election to form a government. And in accordance with that requirement the Governor General has advised me that he has invited the Pangu Pati to form the Government.

His Excellency's invitation which was gazetted on Tuesday 9 August 2022 Gazette No. G628 reads and I quote;

I Grand Chief Sir Bob Dadae, Grand Chief of Logohu, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Knight of the Order of Saint John, Governor-General, by virtue of the powers conferred by section 63 of the Organic Law on the integrity of Political Parties and Candidates and all other powers enabling, acting with, and in accordance with the advice of the Electoral Commission hereby invite the Pangu Party incorporated being a registered political party which endorsed the greatest number of candidates declared elected in the 2022 General elections to form the Government; dated this 8<sup>th</sup> day of August 2022.

I now lay the invitation on the table.

In accordance with this advice and the requirements on the *Organic Law on the Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates* and the provisions of the *Standing Orders* I now call upon the Pangu Pati to nominate a candidate for election as Prime Minister.

**20/01**

**Mr ALLAN BIRD** (East Sepik) – Mr Speaker, on behalf of all the Leaders on the Government side of the House, representing some 86 electorates, including the people of East Sepik, following on from the Governor-General's invitation to PANGU Party; it is my honour and privilege to nominate the member representing the people of Tari-Pori in this 11<sup>th</sup> Parliament, the Honourable James Marape, as Prime Minister of our country.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr BRYAN KRAMER** (Madang) – Point of Order! Mr Speaker, while I note the nomination put forward by the Governor, the provisions of *sections 63* and *64*, actually state that the invitation must be made to the party with the largest returned members and in this case as you have rightfully said is PANGU Pati.

So, in compliance with that provision, to avoid any technical issues being raised later, I would suggest that PANGU Pati themselves, nominate or put forward their nominations to the House.

Thank you.

**Mr CHARLIE BENJAMIN** (Manus) – Mr Speaker, I second the motion.

**Mr SPEAKER** – Honourable Members, I have received advice from the Clerk that the Honourable Member for Madang’s point of order is in order. I will ask the PANGU Pati members to do the nominations.

**Mr ALLAN BIRD** (East Sepik) – With that advice, I withdraw my nomination.

**Mr CHARLIE BENJAMIN** (Manus) – Mr Speaker, on behalf of PANGU Party, I nominate Mr James Marape as the candidate for Prime Minister.

**Mr RAINBO PAITA** (Finschhafen) – Mr Speaker, I second this nomination. Thank you.

**Mr SPEAKER** – Honourable Member of Tari-Pori, do you accept this nomination?

**Mr JAMES MARAPE** (Tari-Pori) – Mr Speaker, I am happy and privileged to accept this nomination.

**Mr TABOI AWI YOTO** (Western) – I move –

That the nominations be closed.

The Parliament voted (the Speaker, **Mr Job Pomat** in the Chair) -

**21/01**

**Mr SPEAKER** – Honourable Members, the Parliament is in session so reserve your congratulatory message for later. All of you can resume your seats. Thank you.

**22/01**

*Voting in progress*

**23/01**

*Voting in progress*

**24/01**

**Mr SPEAKER** – Honorable Members, the result of the vote is -

**AYES – 97**

**NOES – 0**

*(Mr James Marape, Member for Tari-Pori is declared Prime Minister-Elect of the Independent State of Papua New Guinea)*

**Mr SPEAKER** – As the Speaker of the Eleventh National Parliament of Papua New Guinea, I want to congratulate you. In this House today, Papua New Guineans have chosen you through their mandated leaders. All 97 members present have voted in favour of you without any dispute, electing you to be Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea.

I once again congratulate you on your appointment.

**PRESENTATION OF PRIME MINISTER-ELECT  
TO THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL – STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER**

**Mr SPEAKER** – Honourable Members, I have ascertained that it will be His Excellency's pleasure to receive the Prime Minister-elect at Government House forthwith.

The Parliament is suspended until the ringing of the Bells.

25/01

### MOTION BY LEAVE

**Mr RAINBO PAITA** (Finschhafen)– I ask leave of the Parliament to move a motion without notice.

Leave granted.

### SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS – REARRANGEMENT OF BUSINESS

Motion (by **Mr Rainbo Paita**) agreed to –

That so much of the *Standing Orders* be suspended as would prevent:

- (a) The Parliament Sitting beyond 8 p.m., and;
- (b) The Parliament adjourning on a motion moved by a Minister at any time.

**Mr JAMES MARAPE** (Tari-Pori – Prime Minister) – I am happy and honoured to be standing here before you in this Parliament, representing our people as the Prime Minister-elect. It is by the people of this nation's mandate that brought you leaders here today, and now you have elected me to lead this country. We are owners of 800 square kilometres of land, with 600 plus low-lying islands, including the mainland.

Mr Speaker, a big congratulation to you on your election as the Speaker. The people have put their trust in you by electing you to represent them. There were no major hiccups in Manus, the people were happy and followed all election processes to elect you. Once again congratulations for being elected unopposed,

I also want to sincerely congratulate everyone present here today, all Members of this Parliament for winning their respective seats. I am encouraged to see senior faces, continuing Members who bring experience to the business of Parliament. And I also see freshness in the first-time members who are here today. It encourages me to see a great deal of skill, expertise and experience that we all bring to this House. All our MPs, those who are sitting directly opposite me, and those who are with me, it does not matter which side of the House you are on, what is more important is, we are leaders of our people. We were elected to serve them, represent them, and collectively, we are one; one people, one country, one nation.

I appreciate the fact that today, the Parliament came in total unison, there was no dissenting view and opposing view on two important Parliament business that precedes any new Parliament; the election of the Speaker and the election of the Prime Minister.

**26/01**

For that, let me appreciate all the leaders who are present here today doing our people's business.

Mr Speaker, having said this, let me pay tribute to the generation before us, the founding fathers and mothers of our nation. Some of whom have gone before us while some still remain. One who remains is none other than His Right Honourable Sir Julius Chan.

Let me pay a special tribute to him. He is the 'last man standing' insofar as the class of leadership that fought for our country's Independence, and that defined and designed our national sovereignty. Sir Julius still stands today amongst us, better known as the 'last man standing'.

Today, on behalf of all parliamentarians on both sides, I just want to say thank you very much. I want to wish him long life and good health as he begins yet again, another term of Parliament, the Eleventh Parliament with all of us.

I want to also place on record and in the *Hansard*, a sincere thank you for his long distinguished service to the National Parliament and to our country in many capacities. Capacities as a former Prime Minister, as a state minister and as a Member of parliament representing his beloved Namatanai and as the Governor of his beloved New Ireland Province.

Mr Speaker, having said these, I want to appreciate some who have gone before us. This government is not a new government. Although, it is a new term of Parliament, this government is a continuing government. We started this journey in 2019.

I just want to thank some who are not here with us. They were the impetus, the core, the foundation of a movement that have said enough of succumbing to personal interest, corporate greed and interest and foreign interest. It is time we take back our own destiny and try to do it right for our country, our nation, especially our contemporary recent past that is littered with many mistakes.

I just want to thank some who are not here with us. They have left in this concluded election and some who are also here with us. I just want to sincerely thank you on behalf of my wife, my children and my people of Tari and Pori.



In 2019, I was amongst the many, least in terms of ranking and the most unpopular. However, amongst a house of equals and in a class that was littered with many equally capable, if not more capable than me. I was entrusted the leadership role in 2019.

Today, three years on, I want to take this time to appreciate the Members who stood with me that time. Most of them formed into a nucleus of becoming PANGU Party Members of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, in case many do not understand the rationale of the choice of PANGU Party. Let me state from affront, PANGU Party was chosen by myself and by the leaders who were part of the 2019 movement to make a statement that it was about time this country got back on the road that the fathers who went before us at 1968 and 1975.

**27/01**

The road that leads to equal opportunity for all. It doesn't matter which part of the country you come from, Highlands or Lowlands, Southern or Northern Islands, small or big, it doesn't matter. Despite our diversity, 1975's aims and focus was for a total union of one people, one nation and one country.

Today, three years on, the statements we made in 2019 was not a James Marape statement. The statement and the focus we said, we will embark upon in 2019 was not just something that was loosely picked. The overwhelming mandate this country has given to PANGU Party, almost 40 Members of Parliament returned under the PANGU Party network. Those who were endorsed properly are 36 MPs and this is the second highest through the record of 53 MPs from 1982 is a testament that the country undisputedly affirms the cry of fighting for their rights, the cry to empower ordinary Papua New Guineans who are left in the out corners of our country must be connected with enabling roads and infrastructures and the overwhelming evidence that PANGU Pati is timeless. It is not about James Marape, but about the values and the core beliefs that PANGU Pati and some of the foundation parties of our country envisioned in 1975.

Today, we are here, PANGU at 2022 Elections overwhelmingly back at the driver's seat and I want to take some time to thank everyone who voted today. PANGU is you, you are PANGU because PANGU is Papua New Guinea. PANGU stands for Papua and New Guinea Union. PANGU stands for leaving no one behind, leaving no place behind and making everyone wealthier, healthier, more educated and grow together in a country of abundance.

Mr Speaker, before I go further into my conversation, I have to remind all of us of my statement on 30 May 2019. I said 'Papua New Guinea must be the 'richest black Christian

Nation on earth'. I said Papua New Guinea must become an economy that has peaked past K200 billion by the turn of this decade'. I said 'Papua New Guinea must be a country that takes back more from our resources and blows back into our domestic economy and enable all parts of our country to benefit from whatever resource this country has by the blessings of God, the Creator.

Mr Speaker, this is not a conversation that is strictly mine and mine alone. Those were the conversations in 1975 when the fathers of our country gave us political independence. They envisioned a country that is totally and economically independent, free, wealthy and everyone has a positive engagement in life. They drafted legislation, they built institutions, they wrote policies, they established relationships within and abroad so that we can gain that independence that they sought after.

Mr Speaker, they laid the cornerstone and foundations. However, today's generation, my generation, you with me in this Parliament, the baton has been passed on to us. The task is before us, however, big it may be. That is why when PANGU went to the elections we said, with political independence, this generation must give economic independence to Papua New Guinea.

The investors, bilateral partners, opposition voices out there, not just in Parliament but out there in society, if you doubt that this was not contemporary, the election results show that these conversations are totally necessary to ensure Papua New Guinea paves into a society that blesses not just Papua New Guineans but our investors and our partners within our shores and those who have relationships with us.

**28/01**

Those conversations we made in 2019 and we are speaking today, Mr Speaker, is not absolutely new, the Vision 2050 that Grand Chief Somare launched and placed for this nation in 2010 talks about a nation that by the end of 2050. A nation that must be smart, wise, fair, healthy and a happy society. A nation must be in the top 50 insofar as rating is concerned by HEI standards closed up. This was the vision set by the then NA Government in 2010.

In this decade it talks about making the economy link so that we can be totally, economically sound and strong. That is why I told the departmental heads, and the people that we have no time to waste. We must fast track for time and luxury of time is now something that we have in abundance.

Papua New Guineans are born into a society today where unemployment is few, educational opportunity is scarce, health facilities are totally neglected. We went to the

elections to fight to get more from our natural resources and getting more from them, we will make sure we will blow it back into the key enabling investments in the health, education and infrastructure, and our people can grow from it.

Mr Speaker, the road to recovery was started three years ago. Three years ago it was totally bad when we took office. We were coming out from a pronounced recession in 2018 and then went straight into Covid-19 induced tough domestic and global economic times; and then the politics of 2020 and 2021.

However, by God's grace and by the help and hand of our treasury, our planning, our finance, our own government, our state owned enterprises and the reforms that was done at the place by our developing partners those who have been loyal friends to Papua New Guinea since 1975 we were able to sail through and today we have arrived at this juncture.

Today I just want to remind us that our core principles are anchored in our *Constitution*. Our democratic values are anchored in our *Constitution*. If any one of you doubted us, this nation will survive as a constitutional democracy. Far from it, Pangu Pati three years away from our nation celebrating 50 years of Independence is now back in the driver's seat. It just shows that this nation is a strong robust democracy. Some of our necessary policies that has kept us going is relevant today however, we must look into what needs to be done.

Mr Speaker, in 1975 PANGU gave the Legislator, in 1975 Pangu gave Judiciary, in 1975 Pangu gave the Executive arm of Government, in 1975 key foreign policies, like friends to all enemies to none were put in place. And by the way in the midst of all these geo-politics that goes in and out around us. Your enemy is not my enemy, we are friends to all and enemies to none. We'll treat all international partners fairly and we will honor all relationships that we have held with most of our nations since 1975.

Today as we navigate through, I just want to appeal to this House that we are three years from turning 50 years. 50 years and celebration in the 50<sup>th</sup> year of any organization or country for that matter is often labelled as Golden Jubilee. What is golden that our generation can offer to our nation in the midst of many challenges that we face.

The forefathers of our country when they gave us Independence, as I said earlier, they looked into Papua New Guinea, and they saw a land with an abundance of resources, agriculture resources; marine resources, mineral resources, forestry resources, tourism resources and the potential we had, yet we are still not getting enough from these resources.

**29/01**

Mr Speaker, we must begin our work by strengthening the democratic processes, building a resilient economy, building economic infrastructure, addressing natural resources, address business and investment confidence, addressing law and order, working on education and health, and strengthening the institutions of State. These are fundamental areas of focus that must drive our government's work for the next five years. It will not be easy but it is absolutely necessary.

Mr Speaker, this House called Papua New Guinea, built by our forefathers led at 75 by Pangu Pati is now a House that is almost 47 years old.

If there is a house that is not maintained for 47 years, you would expect leaks, hinges and doors would be falling apart, roofs and walls that would need maintenance to be done.

So, Mr Speaker, I would like to propose to this House that in the three years of our Nation reaching 50 years' old we need to do major renovation. The fundamentals remain strong but maybe it has eroded over time, so we all need to get to work.

Mr Speaker, one major renovation we would like to do is the strengthening of the democratic processes.

We must reform our Electoral Process and it is evident that maintaining the status quo on this is no longer an option as we have all seen what has happened in the 2022 National General Election and we know about what happened in the 2017 National General Election where counting was still going on in some electorates.

For today's occasion I ask these honest questions, the Treasurer released over K600 million to the Electoral Commission, the Police and the Defence Force, so where did these monies go? Someone needs to explain where these monies have gone. How were we unable to deliver a healthy election process?

That is why, I propose, based on common advised coming from our Caucus that a review must take place to reform the electoral processes to ensure that one citizen gets one vote and we must aspire to give an improved electoral system a gift to the country on the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our beloved Papua New Guinea. A better improved voting process and system.

We must build a strong governance oversight arrangement for the Electoral Commission. We must adopt a systemized way of updating our common roll and deploy every means necessary to have reliable identification systems. We must seriously discuss biometric identification system and electronic voting and counting system. I would also want to commit to our country that the National Population Census associated with the electoral reform will be

conducted as early as 2023, starting with the Supplementary Budget Allocation for these activities to take place in 2023.

Mr Speaker, there will be a number of nationwide consultations we have to conduct.

First and foremost, if I may propose the need for us to consult our people on whether a Prime Minister ought to be elected directly by the people or through the current process and pathway. This question that is possibly foundational for the value of National Leadership which cannot be held to ransom by many vested interests that are played in the current system.

**30/01**

There are many voices coming through and it is about time we look at how a Prime Minister is elected and one greater voice emerging is whether the people can elect the Prime Minister directly at the polls. But that can only be arrived at if we tidy the voting process; one person one vote. I just want to give commitment to our nation, that we as the government will get to work in these areas of strengthening the democratic process.

Secondly, we have to build a resilient economy. As I said earlier, when we took office, the economy was in recession. In 2019 we went to work and did due diligences in our national status and health of our economy. In that time the Treasurer passed the 2019 Supplementary Budget where in the 2018 to 2022, Medium Fiscal Strategy and the Medium Revenue Strategy was set as a baseline for economy and management of our economy going forward.

We became transparent and we were accountable in our budgeting processes. All stakeholders had a look into what we were doing. We embarked on a fiscal consolidation pathway that aimed for us to return into a surplus budget in the not too distant future, especially our focus as given by the Treasurer in his 2022 Budget for us to return back to surplus as early as 2027. If we travelled this path and this trajectory, we will be seeing a total national debt eradication by 2033.

Mr Speaker, the disciplined approach is the reason why, despite imported inflation due to the war in Ukraine; despite the planet facing severe issues that are dealing with inflation and the economy being hit; the interventions we have made recently has stabilized the economy.

Despite the increase in price, let me assure our country for instance, before we went out for the elections, the Treasurer handed down a K610 million support and subsidy to ordinary Papua New Guineans. Now you will pay less for essential food and household items. You will pay less at the fuel station. Those who were earning salaries below K17 500, the security guards and the lower income earners, will no longer be paying any special income tax.

Those were things that we started to do when the going was tough last year and earlier this year. This sort of support will carry on down the path in an effort to build a resilient economy.

Mr Speaker, we are trying our very best to build the economic infrastructure; ‘Connect PNG’, to all parts of our country; we will carry on roads which will have to lead down into jetties, ports and must link to airports, and must have power lines and ICT connectivity so that our economy is sustained by enabling infrastructure for us now, and going forward into the future.

Mr Speaker, we embarked upon State-Owned Enterprise reforms and I want to pay special mention to Honourable William Duma, then Minister for State-Owned Enterprises. We have embarked upon special reforms and ADB and IMF has given ticks to these reforms. And we are receiving direct support from these credible international lenders as a sign of confidence to the work we are doing to build back better and to make sure our State-owned enterprises are not always depending on cash from our national budget.

In the future these enterprises are able to stand on their own to serve our country better in their functions as State-Owned Enterprises, especially in the essential areas of telecommunication, power and water. We cannot risk inefficiencies in these places.

And I want to put on notice those Papua New Guineans that we have tried by giving work as leaders in these key State-Owned Enterprises, you must rise up now. You must prove your worth and find solutions. The Government gives you policy directions and you must make these State-Owned Enterprises work.

**31/01**

If you cannot make these State-Owned Enterprises work, find another job as you are probably in the wrong place.

I want to also address something that is close to me, the natural resources sector. In a country that is blessed with oil, gas, mining, fisheries and all other resources we can imagine of, especially my generation and my ethnicity who come from places that are abundant with resources, yet development is almost nil.

Mr Speaker, people like us come from a place rich in marine resources and agriculture to name a few, but when you look around, there are no road networks, existing roads are not sealed, aid posts are empty, et cetera. These raises questions on our minds. As the Prime Minister, I like to assist people with the above burning questions.

In 2022, I told all our investors, especially in the mining and gas sector that by 2025 we will be going into a new regime insofar as resource laws are concerned without harming your close up rate of return on your investment. Your bottom line or profit margin will be maintained but Papua New Guinea too must get a little bit more, not just the Government but more importantly, the landowners who own the resources.

Today, I want to put on notice that the Fisheries Department and Forestry are doing good, do continue, you will see the goodness of it. In forestry, we want to see an end to round log export by 2025. I appreciate those who hold licenses to those areas, Wafi-Golpu, P'nyang, Pasca, Papua and Porgera, we will work with you as earliest as possible and to ensure it is progressed. And Porgera being the lowest hanging fruit, I want to appeal to all stakeholders; the land owners, Enga Provincial Government, Barrick, MRA, we must get to work and make Pogera come back to life. The National Government has shown commitment by putting substantial funding aside to make Pogera come to work at the very earliest. But other projects, like Papua, P'nyang, Pasca and Wafi-Golpu and Freda Mine, if you want to enjoy the benefits of the existing regime, get to work and progress the license requirements that you have.

When we go past 2025 we might be shifting into a new regime and you have been placed on notice and you are also asked again to work with us. If a big gold miner in the world, like Barrick can come and talk to the Government and progress this sort of deals that is better for Papua New Guinea, I want to also appreciate ExxonMobil who has also given us a good response in P'nyang and also Total who has progressed Papua into pre-FEED and FEED now.

Other mining, oil and gas companies who are in our country, let us get to work, so that you win and I can also win. I take back more for my people, my provinces and for the country.

Mr Speaker, talking about all our resources, let me also say in agriculture, forestry fisheries; this government and our generation will start the serious progress towards downstream processing. No more, must we export raw timber, fish and raw agricultural commodities. This coming Parliament will take the leap and this decade we must migrate into this space so that in the 2030s, Papua New Guinea must be an exporter of processed produce that God has placed in our country. Our fish, our timber and our oil, gas and gold, this can be done but it must be done properly so that our investors get and the residual must remain within to grow the economy to the way it is supposed to be. And this is a conversation that Papua New Guineans have endorsed at the elections.

**32/01**

Their vote for PANGU Pati and the campaign philosophies that we ran in the last election and the big number we secured. Not just the 36 or 38 of us who came first, but we had 70 plus of our candidates of the 81 who came second and third.

This is an overwhelming endorsement by our people that our conversation on getting back more from our resources is something that is truly of national concern.

Mr Speaker, whilst we get back more, at this juncture I want to inform our country on our coalition of leaders in our retreat at Loloata, have agreed that we must not delay the conversation on Sovereign Wealth Fund. Something must be set up, without harming our intention to support our budget. The Sovereign Wealth Fund must be set up at the earliest. This is something that we proposed also to do.

Key issues to support our primary industry to go the next mile are; price support, commodities support and commodity freight subsidy so that our people can get engaged. I just want to, at this juncture, appeal to our people, your government is doing everything possible to ensure that you harness benefits that God has placed in your land.

Do not go to church on Saturdays and Sunday if you are lazy. Do not bring your proposals to Hilton and the Crowne Hotel. Go back and tend your land. The Government has imposed price support and freight subsidy. What more do you want? Many wants to talk about helping SME's. When they were in the government, they never supported it.

For the past three years, since we started, we have allocated K200 million every year. We are doing this so that the economy of Papua New Guinea can be diversified, be bigger and can grow so that everyone has a role to play in this.

I call our ordinary citizens right across the length and the breadth of our country, we will be working with provincial governments and the districts to ensure wherever you are in the country, our special economic zones are established and we tap into the potentials of business that you have.

We will also impose restrictions and review the restricted business lease. People who are not supposed to be doing businesses at a certain area, will not do so. Papua New Guineans will get into the front seat of doing businesses yourselves. Our government is pro in ensuring that we set up businesses, do business and go forward.

Mr Speaker, I am talking about it because we cannot be the economy we want to be, if Papua New Guineans are not in the space of doing business. 'Take back PNG' is all about Papua New Guineans in the space of doing business.



Our Government will move big in this space in the next five years and going forward in the next ten years. Whilst doing this, Mr Speaker, we know that to ensure Papua New Guineans going into the space of business, law and order must be a very important enabler of businesses.

Mr Speaker, I am seriously thinking of combining the police and the CS into an internal security ministry. A minister will be responsible for the internal security of our country. Any law breaker, you are an enemy to the country. When you talk about taking and getting back more, growing and building our economy that is totally redundant or useless, if our law and order environment is not conducive.

Our strong focus of our government would be in the law and justice sector. We will ensure that our law enforcement agencies are given greater and full support. Police and Correctional Services will no longer be side ministries, but core ministries going forward. Law breakers will be seen and pronounced as enemies to our country.

We want to also work with the judiciaries and our magisterial services. All appropriate pathways for dispute resolutions must be established. So that Village, District, National and Supreme Courts can have a holistic approach to law and justice sector works.

When this works, our economy will be strong and our services will get better. I want to at this juncture, say thank you very much to all members of police, defence and CS, all magistrates, village court officials, peace officers and our judges all the way to our Chief Justice, you have held our country together in the last 46 years.

### **33/01**

I look forward to working with my leaders who are here with me in this Parliament to ensure we work better and give you support so that you too can work better in protecting the law and order environment in our country.

Mr Speaker, in my passing remarks here, I want to introduce a concept for Correctional Service Institution. It will no longer be a prison. It must be a place of correctly building our citizens to become better Papua New Guineans. We are looking at Prison industry's concept that the National Alliance Government introduced in 2009 but was left on the shelves. The Correctional Service will become a holistic place of building better citizens, linking them with better trade, skills, SMEs, and to work for our country. For instance, children who are parentless, roaming and loitering in our cities would be picked up and put into juvenile centres and trained in school and make them become better citizens. Correctional Services, you have a bigger role to play in this government going forward.

We cannot talk about law and order without talking about corruption. Hello, Papua New Guinea, corruption has permeated our society and it has been relentless. I want to place on record my word of thanks, to Members of last Parliament who stood behind us especially, in the last three years when we delivered the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) and was passed. We are now looking for those who will work not from within but from outside to come so that they have independence of functionality. We have amended the *Proceeds of Crimes Act* and we have also passed the *Whistle Blowers Act*. Fighting corruption is not just a law and order issue, it's an economic issue as well because there is no point getting back more from our resources, if these resources are continually wasted through corrupted avenues. If those leakages continue, no matter how big the resources we get, there will be an even a bigger portion being wasted on fighting corruption. It is a great concern in ensuring that our economy is healthier going forward.

Mr Speaker, we will make sure ICAC is functional. We will make sure we put in place systems and establish process and procedures that is totally independent to ensure corruption is tackled and those who practice corrupt practices are held accountable. This will work especially in partnership with the amended *Undisclosed Wealth Provision* into the proceeds of *Crime Act*. I want to encourage public officials, elected public officials; or appointed public officials to live within your means. There is no more time to accumulate wealth through corrupt practices. We will get to work in this space and the work has started and we will carry on.

Mr Speaker, talk about corruption, some enquiries have been made and those inquiries will no longer collect dust at the shelves. Those inquiries will be brought out, not just the recent UBS inquiry for instance, but every other inquiry will be looked at so that this country must be seen as a country that addresses properly competent, sanctioned inquiries that that achieved restitutions and correct courses be taken as recommended by those enquiries.

Mr Speaker, on the health and education sector, they remain our number one. In summary, our government aims to leave no child behind. Our policy will come out where every Papua New Guinean child leaves school at grade 12. Right now, with no space for grade 9, 10 and 11, we will expand the Flexible Open Distance Education pathway.

Mr Speaker, in case you do not know, in the past three years we brought in over 50, 000 children back into second chance learning through the FODE system. I will be working very closely with the provincial governments to ensure FODE is embraced in a big way in the next 10 years and beyond.

We want to convert all high schools into secondary schools. We must provide education. It is their right and I propose that this Parliament make it our serious business that we do not leave kids at grade 8 or grade 10. Every child must complete grade 12.

**34/01**

We want to create 20, 000 spaces in the higher education sector. That work must start. We will find a program that supports expanding the higher education sector because Mr Speaker, today we only have 10, 000 spaces. There are 30, 000 grade 12 graduates, 20, 000 of them are left in the society with no continued pathway for them. Education and creating space for education in our country is an urgent task and must be attended to as soon as possible.

But Mr Speaker, not just education on Mathematics, Science, English and Social Science. I am proposing that our school system teaches about business. So that every child who goes into our school system learns about how to do business in the environment they are born into or in the environment they will come out of. And this will continue, we want our education system to be a place that teaches holistic and wholesome education to our children and our citizens.

Those who leave grade 12, there's a program coming, our Defence Force and National Volunteer Services will partner and will start to pick up those children who are not in a placement after Grade 12. We'll try our best to link them to National Volunteer Services and work in partnership with the Defence Force to see if we can bring all our youths back into a formal productive engagement. Especially, linking them into the SME space that my Government continues to talk about. And at this juncture, let me thank Australian Government for creating many education opportunities right now under the present labor government. We started this conversation when Labor Government was in place.

Today, I want to place on record my appreciation to the present Labor Government, Prime Minister Albanese, for his pro-Pacific outlook to get more Pacific Islanders into school and employment in Australia.

Mr Speaker, may it be known and said that, Papua New Guinea is 90 per cent of the Pacific by landmass and population size. Papua New Guinea is the only country that Australia had a free independent relationship with. And so, I bid my claim, that a greater part of the labour mobility and the greater part of the education opportunities, we are preparing grade 12 dropouts to go into employment and education in partnership with the Australian Labor Mobility and Education schemes that is currently being discussed.

I just want to also thank Indonesia, President Joko Widodo, in my last visit has offered over 2000 technical vocational school spaces in the colleges and universities in Indonesia to fit into the SME sector and SME space. This will be areas where we will look into and expand upon.

In the health sector, Mr Speaker, we want to make health sector accessible, it is our people's right. I made a statement when I launched the last health plan. Every health facility must be one hour by walking distance, one hour boat, one hour by plane or one hour by vehicle or truck. It simply means, it must be accessible to our people. Health is their right, it means that aid posts must be available in all villages, health centres must be available in all LLGs. District hospitals must be available in all districts, provincial hospitals must be available in all provinces and a specialist hospital must be in our country within reach of our people.

We are setting a very aggressive target here, whoever becomes the planning minister or treasurer, it is a call to find a program to make a big intervention in the health sector because Covid-19 exposed us totally naked Mr speaker. When Covid-19 descended, I went and found out that in a nation of eight million people, we had only 200 ICU beds, of the 200 ICU beds, we had only 40 that had oxygen ventilation attached. This is pathetic, this is useless. This is totally not good for a country of abundance.

Our people deserve better and so I have proposed to my colleagues here with me to agree that as a good gift to the Nation at our 50<sup>th</sup> Independence Anniversary would be a refurbished health system for our country. For you and I, can sound like a macho man today, but when we are ill, I do not want as leaders of our country to be medevacked to Australia or Singapore.

**35/01**

Instead, I want to go straight into a hospital in our own country and it is incumbent upon us to work in this sector. Health is our people's right.

In case people are thinking that I am just talking, we have started a journey when we came into Government in 2019. We have worked to ensure that Port Moresby and Lae Hospitals become our Nation's Specialist Hospitals by the end of this year or in September. We have been working with Kumul Petroleum for the Port Moresby Heart Facility to be modernized and there will be no more need for Papua New Guineans to travel overseas to receive heart operations. We will have that by the end of this year.

We have been working on the Lae Cancer facility and it should be completed by the end of this year. We will build facilities for kidney and other illnesses right across the country. I want to encourage all those who work in the Health Department to stop thinking small. We

have to give health care to our people at the very earliest and this Government must rise to the occasion, insofar as health is concerned.

Mr Speaker, one of our priorities is working closely with our provincial governments. I want to ask all provincial governors to join us so that we can work together whether in the health sector or other sectors; my Government will give great support to the provincial government system.

All 21 provinces and in case someone says it should be 22 provinces, let me place on record, Bougainville is not a provincial Government but a special region. Whenever we deal with them, we do so at arm's length, they are an Autonomous Region.

The 21 provinces, we will work with them to ensure that they are empowered in things like health, education, economy and infrastructure and provincial government functions. The meeting in Wewak in the later part of this month will clearly differentiate what are the district, provincial and national government functions and responsibilities. We will work to ensure that this gets done.

Part of this reform includes the public sector reform for the public servants and we want you to rise up to the occasion and think beyond your fortnights salaries and welfare. Public servants have a task to the country and I give commitment to the country that merit-based appointment processes will take precedence. We will ensure that all public servants are appointed on merit.

Today, I place all public servants who are presently employed on notice, your performance will mean whether you stay or move on. This is not just for one or two departments but right across the country. Currently, every fortnight, we have to look for K230 million to pay our public servants so it is high time we take responsibility. We have been labelling the need for Government to embark upon efficiency and effectiveness over the public service and it has become a common catch phrase.

Mr Speaker, let me inform this House that a Special Parliamentary Committee on Public Sector Reform has started its work already. It has looked into what needs to be done and will be considered seriously by our Government. I would like to thank Governor Juffa and those others that have worked in this space. This reform will be looked at in the very earliest so that we make our public service robust, effective and efficient. All our public servants are responsible for good service delivery for our country so that we all can make our country better. There are too many Public Servants in Port Moresby. I made a statement on 30 May 2019 and I will repeat it again today, "Mr Secretary for PM and NEC, Madam Secretary for DPM, look

into the bloated head at Waigani and shift it elsewhere to the provinces and district so that they can work in those spaces.”

**36/01**

Some other vital reforms as Caucus has advised are land reform to ensure that land reform and only three per cent of our land today are State land and we will look into the area of land reform to ensure that our people’s ownership of land is given great attention and their land can be considered as a resource base to improve their own life going forward.

Mr Speaker, in conclusion let me comment on Bougainville, Bougainville is a special place and a greater challenge that faces us. They have voted for independence and 97.7 percent of Bougainvilleans who participated in their referendum voted for independence.

They demand a political settlement to a political question and we have already agreed, and to our citizens in Bougainville, we love you very much and you are part of us. As high as Mount Wilhelm is, your result of 97.7 per cent will remain fixed in our nation’s history. But this is a Constitutional question, no Member for Tari on his own can decide on the sovereignty of our total union. I want to assure our friends and citizens in Bougainville that this matter will be put to the country. President Toroama and Bougainvilleans will join me and we will go hand in hand, some critical question will be asked as we consult our country in a constitutional consultation.

And earlier conversation I made was on the method of prime ministers’ election, these are some of the key questions that will be asked together with the Bougainville issue. And when the nation is consulted the path way for us, as we said in Wabag, in that 2024 the matter for Bougainville comes to our National Parliament for deliberations. And I want to thank all Bougainvilleans who have understood that the journey is still long ahead and it is not easy. We are union as a nation and it is a political question and it infringes on our national unity and touches on sovereignty which is a huge constitutional burden on us and our union together was placed together by constitutional definition in 1975, it will only take a constitutional amendment to unbundle this union.

And I want to ask Bougainvilleans to fear not Papua New Guineans and take this journey together and we find a political solution to this political question which our people in Bougainville every day demands an answer for.

Today as we come to this question, like Bougainville, is a test to our national union. And I just want to appeal to all citizens of our country, let us believe that we can rise to the occasion

and our country can become a better place despite all the challenges that we are going through, we can get better from where we are today.

I want to thank all our development partners who have stayed with us, multilateral communities have been a great part of us and some of my conversations on economic sector, please find me partners that we can work together. I thank all who have supported us in those economics areas; companies like ExxonMobil, Total, Santos, Barrick, Newcrest, Harmony and companies in the agriculture sector for instance; New Britain Palm Oil and all the other companies in the Forestry sector join us in the next phase of our nations journey as you make the turn from just be raw exporters into processing our natural produces into finished product to export out there. I asked in the first instance to all the investors in our country, why don't you join me and my colleague leaders as we make this turn.

In concluding my speech, much work remains for us and it cannot be done by Prime Minister alone. It's for us all to sit together and work and I ask every citizen that I and my colleague's leaders will try our best to rise up as a magic 50-year mark approaches us, ask not what your country can do for you but why don't you and me as citizens of our country.

### **37/01**

And as I conclude look after law and order wherever we come from. To all public servants look beyond your fortnightly income. To all citizens of this country try your best to try your hands at an economic activity, your government will find ways to assist you to move into a space to assist you to move into the space of SME. And if you do not know what to do, go back to your land, till it, to students who are in school we are looking opportunities to ensure you remain in school and come out as a productive citizen. The next three years is a three year that is important for us. And I want to conclude by saying I give you all our total commitment.

For me coming out from a simple rural Papua New Guinea and today I drove down into the Government House and saw ordinary Papua New Guineans coming out and waving. To embrace the formation of the new government for the 11<sup>th</sup> Parliament it made me commit myself to serve our people better. And I ask my members of Parliament my colleagues, in a house of equals you have picked me up to be the chief servant of our country. We are a nation that is abundant in natural resources. I want all of us to come together, let us put Papua New Guinea first. *Putim Papua Niugini igo pas, Papua Niugini atoaguna.*

If we do that I'm sure our country will be a better place, I look forward to serving each and every one of you as the chief servant of our country, utilizing the Christian values and the

Melanesian principles that has governed us for so long. Thank you Mr Speaker and I sincerely appreciate the role that this Parliament has given me under your watch and I look forward to serving not just one part of our country not just my political party but the whole country and all our people together as the chief servant of our country. Thank you.

**Sir JULIUS CHAN** (New Ireland) – Mr Speaker, I would like to firstly, congratulate all the new members to this Parliament and to welcome back all the old Members.

Mr Speaker, I would also like to congratulate you but you do not need my congratulations, it was unanimous on both sides, there was total silence so my congratulations would mean nothing, you should feel very proud. When you were counting votes for who voted for the Prime Minister, for some reason, someone has been branding me as the last man standing and actually you counted me last.

Now I have been in the politics of this country for more years than the country's existence and you may have already heard from the Prime Minister's speech. I do not know how to thank you Prime Minister, but when you were talking I pinched myself to feel if I was still alive, as those kinds of words or praise are rarely made during your lifetime. They are made when you are already somewhere else. Prime Minister, you are a very humble man and I thank you very much for visiting me and my home when I was recovering and the Ministers who accompanied you and I also want to join with the Governor-General in welcoming you and on behalf, I can't speak on your behalf and no because I am the last man standing but I would like to on behalf of some of the oldies, including the governor next to me to congratulate you, Mr Prime Minister, for such a great victory of being voted unanimously on both sides, I think today it signified the kind of co-operation we are going to have in this 11<sup>th</sup> Parliament.

**38/01**

And your presentation right now, of course, gives us the bird's eye view of what your government will want to do. And I'm sure when the Governor-General open this Parliament, you will have something bigger and a more visionary statement prepared by you to give to this House, of what you want to do for the next five years.

I have seen times of crisis, danger and peril but in my more than 50 years of politics, I have never seen this kind of hostility. We should not hide these things. We must learn from our mistakes and we must not fear to make mistakes. America's President Roosevelt once said, 'the greatest fear is fear itself'.



Every country in the world has made mistakes. America is over 240 plus years old. China has almost 7,000 years of civilization but only in the last 40 years, have they come forward and advanced.

So, we should not hide those mistakes, we should accept it. The only stupid people are the ones who do not learn from it. So, I say to you, the only fear is fear itself. You are now in government and have such a great majority, you can transform this country. Do not be afraid, you can do it.

For 50 years in politics I have never seen this kind of hostility. Maybe because people are probably living in a computer era now and expect everything to be correct all the time. But we are still human. I have never seen the kind of hostility, division and hatred in the past weeks.

We expect too much sometimes, but without knowing that we are only human. We are no different than those countries that have been going on for thousands of years.

One of the great poet and writer Tom Harkslly once said; 'there is no sea more dangerous than the sea of politics. And it is when the waves rise to the highest that there are the greatest years of experienced captain, a good crew and of a single unfaltering purpose.'

Prime Minister, you can do it. Get the right crew with you and do not be afraid to do it. Something is right, no amount of accusation can make it wrong. Some things come from the heart for the good of the nation, you should not be afraid to be criticised. The end justifies the means.

Mr Speaker, the waves of this court, anger and violence have risen to the highest in our history. We must not hide it. We got to ride over and conquer it now and move on. This happened in the history of this last election but do not keep it. We just got to move on. Just imagine some of the civil war in some of the top countries in the world. In America, they have civil wars. They fought over it.

In our country, people have died and we criticised it. But that is something we will learn from. only stupid people who cannot learn from it and repeat the same mistakes.

**39/01**

I am sure with the genuine heart you and your crew can lead us forward altogether and transform this country. Take it for the next 40 years or take it for the next thousand years.

So, I think we need a good captain and I think we got a good captain. I don't have to say because the numbers have already made it there. My word is just a passing shadow. Aimunda the numbers, the vote in Parliament today said it all. So my congratulation to the Prime Minister. What a victory!

When you pay tribute to me, I pinch myself a little bit and said am I still really alive? and the kind of words come from a very humble person who came to visit me. He is a big thinker and I will take him to the time when I go but not yet.

Mr Speaker, our people are attacking and killing each other and our people have divided as they have not been really divided in the past. Though I am ashamed to say it, there are those amongst us as leaders who have encouraged this behaviour and we must change that. We are sometimes the cause of these behaviours. Don't just live with it, we got to correct ourselves and leave those things behind. I'm not here to cast blame on anyone. There has been too much of that already. It is time to move beyond blaming each other. Let's move beyond. It's time to heal.

When you get sick you don't wait for anything to happen. You go to a doctor and drink medicine. We are just coming out of the hospital now. The election is over. Let's cure these ills and move this nation forward and we can do it. If we don't, then who else will. Now you have been elected to talk on behalf of our people and show the path to the future and Prime Minister, today this Parliament has shown great confidence in you. You are young but you can lead.

We all make mistakes and we shouldn't be afraid as I say what I said earlier 'the greatest fear is fear itself'. I remember, I heard a lot and I hear my friend here, the Member for North Fly who talk about Lee Kuan Yew, the great, leader who once said "as we solve one problem, big ones emerged". This kind of problem is inhuman on this planet and it's not in Heaven where everything is sanctified and you don't think you have that kind of problem. So as we solve one problem, big and larger ones emerge so we have to have the guts to overcome it.

So, Prime Minister, go ahead if you think that this is the right thing to do. You have to support the Members who are here. I don't know how many but you have to support others who are not here as well because we voted you on their behalf already.

I don't want to take too much of anybody's time; Mr Speaker, I now want to congratulate you again. You are the right man. As an old politician, I've gone through a lot of Speakers and have seen a lot been just bulldozed and made wrong Standing Orders on this Parliament, but you have been so well informed and I've been watching. So, Mr Speaker, congratulation once again. On the Floor of this Parliament, you are the boss. The leader of the Government Business is the one who will steer us and the Prime Minister of course, is the king of the system that we have.

**40/01**

So once again on behalf of myself, I cannot speak on behalf of all of you but I sincerely hope that you will join me in this moment of praise for yourself, Speaker and most of all the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, the Honorable James Marape. Thank you

**Mr ELIAS KAPAVORE** – Thank you Mr Speaker

**Mr Luther Wenge** - Point of Order! – There was a question being put; has that been decided or not decided and now you have asked Member for Pomio to talk? So please make that clear if the maiden speeches will continue because I want to talk too.

**Mr SPEAKER** – Honorable Governor for Morobe, your point of order is in order, following the Standing Orders, the speaker must entertain the question put but since we are still congratulating the Prime Minister and as the Government is concerned, we have been here for a long day and I have chosen Sir Julius on the Government side to talk and I have welcomed the Member for Pomio to make his speech from the Opposition side. so I will ask the member for Pomio to take the Floor

**Mr ELIAS KAPAVORE** (Pomio) – Thank you Mr Speaker, in representing the Opposition side and as a senior leader of the Opposition, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate our new Prime Minister, Honourable James Marape. Today we have all voted for him and we also congratulate you Chair, on your appointment as Speaker.

Mr Speaker I would like to make a few remarks on behalf of the Pomio District and the others that are represented on this side as well. Mr Speaker, this parliament is a critical parliament as we approach the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our country's Independence in 2025 which is actually three years away. I also pay tribute to the late Grand Chief Somare for taking us through to our political Independence. Mr Speaker, Sir Julius Chan is still here today and we are privileged to share this Floor of Parliament with him and we acknowledge his tremendous support and his input to this Parliament.

Mr Speaker, our constitutional fathers, imagined the life of our people that included good health, good education and economic prosperity for all. The integral human development specified in the National Goals and directive principles declares for every person to be free from any forms of domination or a person to develop as a whole person.

Mr Speaker yet after 46 years of hard work and funding from many sources, PNG still figure low on the United Nations Development Index and the Corruption Perception Index Ranking. The Vision of the National Goals and Directive Principles compelled post-independence governments, this including the 11<sup>th</sup> Parliament to deliver social economic and political development and consideration to equality, economic and social self-reliance and national sovereignty and the protection of the natural environment.

Mr Speaker, my view is that we have three fundamental issues that continues to have negative impact on our society. They are firstly corruption, unequal distribution of our nation's wealth and political interference in state institutions.

**41/01**

Mr Speaker, my view is that we still have three fundamental issues that continues to have negative impacts on our society which are corruption, unequal distribution of our Nation's wealth and political interferences in State institutions.

Mr Speaker, the past 11 years of implementing the 2050 Vision has been very challenging to us. The decline in the Human Development Index is perceived in the context of weakened and deteriorated national institutions responsible for overall governance and oversight as expressed recently by the PNGNRI Director, Dr Osborne Sanida.

Mr Speaker, learning from the past valuable lessons, we all can make these commitments to be ethical and professional in our duties with legal and moral integrity areas of our calling to make our country smart, wise, fair, healthy and wealthy for all.

Mr Speaker, every citizen of PNG has 19 distinct rights or identified rights under the *Constitution*: For example, *Rights of Freedom, Rights to Life, Freedom from Inhuman Treatment, Protection of Law* et cetera. But I wish to stress on the *Rights to Equality* under *section 55* of the *Constitution*. Every citizen has the same rights, privileges, obligations and duties, irrespective of race, tribe, place of origin, political opinion, color, creed, religion or sex.

Mr Speaker, PNG and our citizens must be our main agenda. I support what the Prime Minister has said going forward. All Members of Parliament and our people have equal rights under the same *Constitution*. There must be fairness in the distribution of our resources despite which side of the House we are seated on.

Mr Speaker, let us put aside our differences and the blame games and unite as leaders to address the common issues of concern to our people. Let there be a spirit of unity and forgiveness as we go forward and chart the course for our nation.

Mr Speaker, we have this opportunity now to make this happen. Our people are watching and taking notes, they are not blind and we all know that PNG needs critical resolve to redirect our country to restore confidence amongst our citizens and many of our development partners and investors.

How much evidence do we need to see and hear the suffering of our people that are going through every day? Considering the ever-increasing cost of living, unemployment, law and order issues and the level of corruption that is infiltrating our State institutions. We must find a resolve to bring back PNG on track towards the aspiration of Vision 2050 or we will continue to ignore the cries of our people who voted us to this Parliament to represent them. Papua New Guinea must remain in the next thousands of years to come.

Mr Speaker, corruption is a death sentence that is destroying the fabric of our societies and we need action now to address that, not next month or next year but today.

Papua New Guinea is at the crossroad, hence needs leaders who have the passion and are driven by conviction with moral and ethical standing to put PNG and our citizen's interests before our own. All these must happen now, we must act in the interest of our people who are depending on us, if we do not, we will allow the birth of greed and selfishness to sow the greed of corruption and destruction.

Mr Speaker, the leaders of this Parliament must make the decision to restore pride and make Papua New Guinea one of the greatest nation in the Pacific. Our people need us now, more than ever to be their voices that will bring peace, harmony and restoration in all sectors of our society. We can only do this with the guidance of our Lord. We need leaders who have the voice with ambition and action to address the needs of our country. The Prime Minister has this opportunity to put the best team of Ministers who will put PNG's interest first in their discussions.

I wish the Honourable Prime Minister, Mr James Marape all the blessings of God as he leads the Executive Arm of Government as the Prime Minister of our Eleventh Parliament.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Motion – That the question be now put – proposed

**Mr SPEAKER** – I understand that we have already moved that the question be moved but I will be fair and allow the Governor of Morobe Province, Mr Luther Wenge to make his short speech.

Thank you.

**Mr LUTHER AKISAWA WENGE** (Morobe) – Thank you, Mr Speaker for giving me this opportunity to speak in Parliament on the inauguration of the Prime Minister today.

**42/01**

I congratulate you on your election as the Speaker of the Eleventh National Parliament, which we all voted you in unopposed. I believe and know that you will be fair and strict in accordance with the *Standing Orders* in conducting the Meetings.

Secondly, I congratulate the Prime Minister elect, the honourable Member for Tari-Pori as the Prime Minister of this country. On behalf of the people of Morobe who are watching the live telecast today on television, listening on the radio or whichever means of communication possible, I want to congratulate you as the Prime Minister of this country.

With that I thank the PANGU Pati, who have worked very hard in this election period in making sure most of their candidates won their seats in their respective electorates. As a result, the Governor-General in accordance with the *Constitution* of this country under the *Organic Law on Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates* invited PANGU Pati to form the Government by electing a Prime Minister within the party, which we all supported today. We did so not for the sake of support but because of their performance for which Prime Minister has shown to this country. You have the potential to perform more that is why all the elected members of Parliament have given their full support today in electing you as the Prime Minister.

I once again congratulate you on behalf of the people of Morobe Province. Mr Prime Minister, when I listened to your speech, I find it interesting because it has deep connotations basing on your experience as the former Prime Minister of this country.

And also, it's in line with the plans implemented and carried out by the then first Prime Minister, late Grand Chief Sir Michael Thomas Somare, who once mentioned that one day, this country will be considered wise, wealthy and rich in terms of natural resources. Your speech coincides with this and your leadership will make sure this policy or plan, when implemented will bear fruit in the near future so I thank you, Prime Minister.

With that I also want to thank one of the Founding Fathers and former Prime Minister and Senior Statesman of this country, Sir Julius Chan, you are still very strong today and in power. Everyone acknowledges late Somare, but you are also one of the Founding Fathers of this country and still the last man standing. You will still remain in power as long as you can and only God knows. But my belief is very solid on this point.

Mr Speaker, the Prime Minister's speech was well articulated. I was off for ten years whilst most of you continued. I was actually on vacation, the people of Morobe sent me on a retreat, thinking they were smart, but instead brought suffering upon themselves. And that is why they have re-elected me into office.

Whilst on vacation, I have witnessed a lot of problems affecting this country which I will pinpoint for the Prime Minister to hear. Firstly, our country is carrying a burden with a huge debt today and no one will deny that.

When I came to Parliament in 1997, country had a debt of K10 billion but it was repaid within the given period and the kina gained its strength again. During the then late former Prime Minister Mekere's reign, we improved it.

But, now Mr Prime Minister and respective Members of Parliament the country has a huge debt of over K40 billion. It's a very bad impression for us and we cannot continue down this path.

**43/01**

We must find a way to overcome this debt. I have belief in the leadership of the Prime Minister and trust in his vision for this country to be a rich Christian nation. This theme once entrusted upon and worked on will become fruitful. This way we can work towards decreasing our debts but I have the uttermost confidence in your leadership in selecting your Treasurer. Whatever we do, I would really want this nation to decrease our debts to restore the good name of this country, so that our international community will believe in us again.

Prime Minister, we need to address this, let's just not talk, we must take action. Another important issue is our dependence on foreign aid especially from Australia. We asked for Independence from Australia and still we are depending on them, it is a shameful thing. We must work hard to prove our Independence. We are already independent. We cannot continue to get loans and donations from our foreign friends because they kill our potentials to work hard. We have to stand together and sacrifice as was echoed by Sir Julius Chan. We have to work hard together for our country. I hope the Prime Minister takes note of my point, let us work hard, let us not rely on foreign aid.

The law in our country gives more power to foreigners to exploit our resources –

**Mr Bryan Kramer** – Point of Order! Thank you, Mr Speaker, while I note the speech or the statement, the Governor of Morobe is not actually making a congratulatory speech to the Prime Minister, which you afforded him the opportunity, and you also reminded him that it

should be short, he is instead giving a statement on the state of the economy and issues concerning the nation. I would ask that he stick to a congratulatory speech so we can adjourn and go home.

**Mr SPEAKER** – Honourable Governor, point of order for the Member for Madang is in order. Can you limit it to a congratulatory message and I will allow you to make your statement in the coming meeting?

**Mr LUTHER WENGE** – With due respect Mr Speaker, I take what you are saying and with due respect to what the honourable Member for Madang is saying; however, if you refer to the *Standing Orders*, there are no strict guideline specifying the type of statement or briefs one should make in a maiden speech; unless you point out where in the *Standing Orders* this is mentioned. if you are not going to point me to the specifics, then I am entitled to say what I have to say, do you get me?

Mr Speaker, I have already mentioned the first challenge, and I will limit my statement for the *Grievance Debate*. But I would like clarification on this point. Which part of the *Standing Order* restricts me to only give a congratulatory message because everything is guided by the *Standing Orders*.

**Mr SPEAKER** – Today we are not here for the opening of the Eleventh Parliament for us to make our maiden speeches, today was purposely to elect the Speaker and the Prime Minister and it is rightfully for congratulatory messages. And due to the fact that it has been a long day and it is already dark, we must make it short so that the Parliament can adjourn and return on a given time and date it sets.

**44/01**

**Mr LUTHER WENGE** – I will reserve my rights to talk on some points, I want to talk about when you give us the time to do so.

On behalf of my people from Morobe, I want to congratulate the Prime Minister on his election. We the people of Morobe have confidence that your leadership will be firm and you will work together with the Morobean leaders. I am not going to talk about all the issues of Papua New Guinea, that is something that other leaders will talk about later.

My people of Morobe will work closely with you on some issues affecting our province. An example would be the Walfi- Golpu Mine. This is something we will support you on. Our



country's reputation depends on our leaders' conduct which will also affect the international community's perception of us in terms of confidence and trust.

If our leaders misbehave, the people and the international community will lose their trust in them and we will face disasters. Prime Minister, I have confidence in you.

I was vocal about Hela Province on this Floor and it became a province of its own. I am proud that you are a son of Hela Province and is a two-time Prime Minister. I am happy and hope that you will continue the good work you have started since your last term as Prime Minister.

To conclude, I would want to congratulate the other Members of Parliament who have been elected and are here today. On behalf of the people of Morobe, congratulations to you all. May the peace and wisdom of our Lord be with us all as we work on our electorates so that the glory will go back to our Heavenly Father. Thank you.

Motion – That the question now be put – agreed to

**Mr JAMES MARAPE** (Tari-Pori–Prime Minister) – I wish to also inform the Parliament that it will be His Excellency's pleasure to deliver an address on Tuesday, 30 August 2022 at 10 a.m., to formally open the Eleventh National Parliament.

### **SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT**

Motion (by **Mr James Marape**) agreed to –

That the Parliament at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, 30 August 2022 at 10 a.m.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion (by **Mr James Marape**) agreed to –

That the Parliament do now adjourn.

**Mr SPEAKER** – Honourable Members, I wish to inform the Parliament that there will be an induction program to be held here at the Parliament precinct from the 22 to 26<sup>th</sup> August 2022. The induction program will involve the Parliamentary Services in partnership with major

stakeholders and government departments, PNG Business Council, PNG Chamber of Mines and Petroleum, including the Diplomatic Corps.

This is an initiative of the Clerk of Parliament and is part of the activities of every new Parliament. All members are invited to attend.

The Parliament adjourned at 7.30 p.m.