

**Public Statement by
Rt Hon Sir Mekere Morauta
Port Moresby, 19 July 2016**

Former PMs join in call for PM to resign



I have joined with my fellow Prime Ministers Sir Michael Somare and Sir Julius Chan, with a message of support from former PM Paias Wingti, to call on Peter O'Neill to resign immediately and submit himself to the due processes of the law.

He should do this before Parliament sits on Friday to vote on a motion of no confidence.

If Mr O'Neill does not resign, we call on all Members of Parliament to put the nation first by supporting an alternative Prime Minister.

Mr O'Neill is not a fit and proper person to hold the office of Prime Minister.

We have based our decision on the direct consequences of his Prime Ministership:

- Social discord and national disunity
- Waste, corruption and mismanagement, which have led to a crisis in the economy and government finances
- Destruction and misuse of government systems and processes
- Abuse of the Office of Prime Minister
- Attacks on the Constitution, the laws of Papua New Guinea and the rights of citizens
- Undermining of parliamentary democracy and the rights and duties of Members of Parliament
- Attacks on the media

(More details of these failings of Mr O'Neill are provided in a separate statement attached to this media release)

As former Prime Ministers we can no longer remain silent in the face of the overwhelming evidence that a change of leadership is urgently needed.

Mr O'Neill, in his five years in office, has brought Papua New Guinea to its knees.

The future of the nation hangs in the balance.

Either Papua New Guinea chooses a new leader and a new future, or we plunge further into ruin and despair under Mr O'Neill.

Papua New Guineans are worse off in almost every way under Mr O'Neill.

We are poorer, and fewer of us have jobs. Prices are rising, particularly for essential imported products including food, clothing and medicine.

National development has stalled. Delivery of essential services, especially in critical areas such as health, education and transport, has declined.

The business sector has been crippled.

Our rights enshrined in the Constitution have been trampled on, especially the right to freedom of expression and the right to gather together for legitimate purposes.

The machinery of government has been crippled and the management of the nation has come to a standstill.

The Public Service has been bypassed and rendered ineffective and State-Owned Enterprises have been raided to the point of bankruptcy.

Parliament and National Executive Council have become rubber stamps for increasingly dictatorial decisions made by the Prime Minister and his cronies alone.

Decisions are made on the basis of self-interest, not the national interest. The beneficiaries of such decisions are the Prime Minister's cronies and businesses associates – even the Prime Minister's own companies.

Papua New Guinea cannot take any more of this Prime Minister.

It is time for change. Change to save the nation and to protect our future.