

Public statement on Nomination for Election
by Rt Hon Sir Mekere Morauta
Port Moresby, 25 April 2017

Sir Mekere announces nomination



Former Prime Minister Sir Mekere Morauta today announced that he had nominated as a candidate for the seat of Moresby North-West.

“I nominated this morning as an independent candidate,” he said.

“My decision is based on widespread public support for me to use my experience and knowledge to help put Papua New Guinea back on track and help form a new Government that will act decisively to implement plans to rescue and rebuild the country.

“It appears to me and other like-minded people that there is a strong desire for change in Papua New Guinea and I want to be part of that change. I want my vote in Parliament to be counted. I want to be part of the rescue team to reconstruct and lay the foundation for future growth and development.”

Sir Mekere said if elected he and other independent candidates and small parties will join forces to ensure that the best Government with the best leadership is formed after the election. The characteristics of a new government should include:

- Honest, moral and competent leadership
- Total dedication to weeding out corruption in all its forms
- Accountability and transparency
- Respect for democracy, Parliament and the Office of the Prime Minister
- Proven expertise in economic and financial management
- A commitment to the restoration of the institutions of state
- Reinstatement of proper systems and processes of government
- Loyalty to the people and the nation ahead of personal self-interest
- Compliance with the law, most importantly the Constitution

Sir Mekere said he had been urged to stand for election by many people from all walks of life who were concerned about the direction of the nation during the past five years, and its rapid fall into chaos.

“People are saying that corruption is on a scale never witnessed before,” he said. “A favored few benefit while the rest of the nation suffers.

“People are struggling with rising costs and lack of jobs. They see few opportunities for their children, either in the workforce or in further education such as universities and colleges.

“They are concerned about severe budget cuts to critical sectors such as health and education, leaving health facilities and schools across the nation in tatters.

“Teachers, doctors, health workers, policemen and many other public servants say they are not being paid properly or on time.

“Businesses report that they are not being paid for the work they have done for the Government, and are complaining about the impacts of foreign exchange shortages and the declining value of the kina.

“Many people point to systemic problems and the style of government, the weakening, destruction and politicisation of institutions of state and systems and processes, a lack of respect for the rule of law, and the crushing of dissent.”

Sir Mekere said he would do all in his power, if elected, to undo the damage of the past five years. The 2017 election is the time to act, he said. It is the time for ordinary people to use their voting power to send a clear message and make change happen:

- To rip out the weeds of corruption
- To replant the seeds for future growth and prosperity
- To restore and strengthen our key oversight institutions
- To reconstruct public finances and the economy
- To give all people opportunities for income-earning, for justice and for equity
- To allow people to exercise their democratic rights and freedoms
- To rebuild Papua New Guinea

Sir Mekere appealed to the Chief Electoral Commissioner, Returning Officers and Polling Officers, the Police and other government agencies to respect voters' rights to vote in an environment of peace and good order. In particular he warned against the hijacking of ballot boxes and the rigging of voting and counting.

He also appealed to the Chief Electoral Commissioner not to allow and not to repeat what happened in 2012 when the incumbent Prime Minister's seat was counted and declared before any others, even before voting had taken place in many electorates, giving him and his party an unfair advantage. "Counting should not start until all voting has finished," he said.

Sir Mekere added that the Prime Minister should not use the government jet and other government resources to collect, ferry and house winning candidates. Those costs are not public costs: taxpayers should not pay for them.

"Papua New Guineans want a free and fair election," he said. "The Constitution and Electoral Acts give the Chief Electoral Commissioner the sole power to deliver that."