

**Public Statement  
by Rt Hon Sir Mekere Morauta  
Port Moresby, 13 July 2017**

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**What is PNG coming to?**



Former Prime Minister Sir Mekere Morauta said today that the court action taken by the Electoral Commissioner to restrain comment from well-known blogger Martyn Namorong was ridiculous.

“Is Mr Gamato so thin-skinned? I have never seen anything written by Martyn that could be called offensive. Humorous, yes. To the point, also yes. That’s why Martyn’s tweets and quips are so popular,” Sir Mekere said.

“We would all just be calling Gamato’s action a joke, if it did not signify something far more sinister - another example of attempts to suppress freedom of speech by the O’Neill regime.

“Surely Mr Gamato has more important things to do and better ways of spending state resources – like having a true Electoral Roll, running the election efficiently and on time, paying polling and counting officials, and speeding up the counting process – than using public money running to court like a spoilt child, running crying to Mummy.

“Does the Electoral Commissioner not realize that his action against Martyn will only encourage other people to criticise him? I hope he has time and money to take similar action against the swell of people who are now likely to follow Martyn’s suit. The courts will be inundated and not able to digest Gamato cases.

“Mr Gamato holds a very important public office, and his words, actions and behaviour are subject to public scrutiny and public comment. That is part and parcel of public life.

“If Mr Gamato does not want to be subject to public scrutiny and comment, he should get out of public office and retire to a quiet private life. Maybe growing buai, fruit and vegetables.”