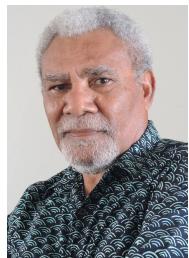


Public Statement
by Rt Hon Sir Mekere Morauta
Former Prime Minister and Member for Moresby North-West
Port Moresby, 12 September 2017

Move by Basil is disappointing: Sir Mekere



The former Prime Minister and Member for Moresby North-West, Sir Mekere Morauta, said today that Sam Basil's decision to move to Peter O'Neill's Government, along with other MPs from the Alliance, was extremely disappointing.

"This was the last thing I thought would happen when I asked my colleague Independent MPs to join Pangu Pati," Sir Mekere said.

"Of course I respect the decision by the individual Members to move as they see fit. But I do not agree with the move."

Sir Mekere said the O'Neill Government had wrecked Papua New Guinea during the last five years – wrecked important oversight institutions, interfered with law enforcement agencies, allowed corruption to flourish, grossly mismanaged public finances and forced the economy into recession.

"Why join a Prime Minister with such a reputation," he asked.

Sir Mekere said he did not support the view that Members had to be in Government to receive DSIP or other development funds.

"Every Member, whether in Government or Opposition, represents Papua New Guineans who have an equal right to share in the nation's wealth and opportunities. It is unfair and immoral for the Prime Minister to use development funds as toys for his own political survival.

"I am urging all Members of Parliament on both sides to fight to save the country. The last thing MPs should be doing is giving Mr O'Neill more political oxygen to continue the train wreck of damage.

"Rather than entrenching the mismanagement and destruction, leaders should be fighting to stop it – which obviously means not joining his government or strengthening his position as Prime Minister.

"We have a responsibility to protect Papua New Guinea's future."