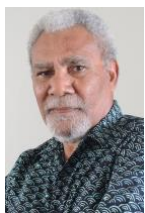


**Public Statement by Rt Hon Sir Mekere Morauta
Former Prime Minister and Member for Moresby North-West
Port Moresby, 14 October 2018**

Sir Mekere supports national stop-work



The Member for Moresby North-West, Sir Mekere Morauta, supports a call for a nation-wide strike this coming Thursday and Friday, in protest at continuing corruption by and within the O'Neill Government.

"Astonishing revelations in the last couple of days about the crooked contract to buy luxury Maserati cars for APEC, and then secretly sell them to private sector cronies, is the last straw," he said this evening.

"People are right to be disgusted by the information that is now coming to light, and they are fully entitled to express their opposition to this blatant fraud."

Sir Mekere also called for an independent inquiry into the Maserati fraud, concocted by the APEC Authority and the O'Neill Government. This latest episode in the O'Neill Government's corruption, waste and mismanagement needs to be investigated and the facts put before all Papua New Guineans, he said.

He said Papua New Guineans, and politicians with a conscience, should join with respected MPs Bryan Kramer, Gary Juffa and Allan Bird to express their disgust by staying home from work on Thursday and Friday.

It is not good enough for the Prime Minister, Mr Peter O'Neill, and the APEC Minister, Mr Justin Tkatchenko, to make statements in social media that are clearly incorrect, contradictory and designed to mask the smell of corruption and wrongdoing.

"The APEC Authority has broken its own laws with the purchase of the Maseratis and the Prime Minister's proposed sale of them," he said. "The Prime Minister and Minister Tkatchenko have connived with the authority and are trying desperately to hide the truth.

"But we are not fools," he said. "This is just another chapter in the monumental abuse of APEC contracts, which I and others have exposed. Look at all the over-priced and unnecessary roads and buildings constructed by PNC cronies to glorify the Prime Minister.

"These projects, and the multi-million-kina Maserati scam, have proceeded at the expense of the health system, the education system, rural infrastructure, law and order, Government finances and the economy, and employment.

"Why are we importing luxury cars for Mr O'Neill and his wantoks to ride around in when children are dying of polio, tuberculosis and other preventable diseases?

"There is no medicine in hospitals and clinics. Schools are closing all over the nation, and teachers are being robbed of their pay by this Government."

Sir Mekere said the O'Neill Government's corruption, waste and mismanagement had brought international shame on Papua New Guinea.

The whole world is looking on and asking why Mr O'Neill, Mr Tkatchenko and others are spending this money when Papua New Guinea cannot look after its own children. We have become an international laughing stock.

"Corruption's time is up."