

**Public statement
by Rt Hon Sir Mekere Morauta
Port Moresby, 30 May 2017**

Reply to Malabag



Sir Mekere Morauta today responded to twisted statements made by the sitting Member for Moresby North-West and Minister for Health at a rally in Port Moresby last weekend.

“Michael Malabag, are you deaf and blind? For the fourth time of correcting you, your Prime Minister and the Prime Minister’s Office, here are the simple facts of PNGSDP:

“PNGSDP is a private company, not a government department, government institution or state-owned enterprise.

“It follows therefore that I am not a public servant or a public employee.

“So the rules that you refer to regarding resignation of directors or employees after nominating to contest the election do NOT apply to PNGSDP, nor to me. Understand now?

“Unlike others who break laws, I am following strictly the rules that govern PNGSDP.”

Sir Mekere said that he was only required to resign from PNGSDP after he had been sworn in as a Member of Parliament. “Obviously, that time has not yet arrived.”

Sir Mekere said that it was astonishing that his status as a director should be an election issue.

“People of Papua New Guinea are more interested in why health centres are closed – for example, 16 in Rigo district; why there are no drugs in hospitals or health centres; why the national budget for health has been cut by K500 million between 2015 and 2017, and a further cut of K350 million is planned for coming years.

“That is the election issue. That is what you Mr Health Minister should be explaining to the people of North-West and Papua New Guinea.

“It would seem that Mr Malabag has sight and hearing problems that cannot be fixed by the ailing Health Department. Ailing due to the way it has been run under Mr Malabag and the O’Neill Government.”