



PAPUA NEW GUINEA HIGH COMMISSION

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28 August 2017

Mr William Dihm OBE

Acting Secretary
Department of Foreign Affairs
P O Box 422, **Waigani**,
National Capital District

My dear Acting Secretary,

**SUBJECT : Statement Delivered by Acting High Commissioner Tameo
at the PNG International Business Summit 2017 in Business
on 22-23 August 2017**

As you were aware, the PNG International Business Summit 2017 was held in Brisbane from 22-23 August 2017.

Pursuant to your directive, we were expecting Prime Minister O'Neill to attend the Summit. However, due to the Parliament Seating on the same day, Prime Minister O'Neill was not able to attend the same.

In the afternoon of 21st August, I was advised to make some opening remarks on behalf of Prime Minister O'Neill.

I was not prepared for this important task at the 11th hour, however I managed to prepare the attached Statement which I delivered on 22 August 2017.

Submitted for your information and noting.

Yours Sincerely,

Sakias Tameo
Acting High Commissioner

Attach .../



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STATEMENT BY MR SAKIAS TAMEO, ACTING HIGH COMMISSIONER TO AUSTRALIA AT THE PNG INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS SUMMIT 2017 IN BRISBANE ON 22-23 AUGUST 2017

Thank you, Mr David Conn, Chief Executive Officer, Port Moresby Chamber of Commerce & Industry; Mr Kenneth Dunn, President of the Port Moresby Chamber of Commerce & Industry; Mr Jimmy U Ovia, Acting Consul General, PNG Consulate General in Brisbane; Councillor Angela Owen representing the Mayor of this great City of Brisbane; Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Mr Chairman,

Allow me, at the outset, to thank you for the invitation to attend this auspicious event "Papua New Guinea International Business Summit 2017" and more importantly for the opportunity to address this important Business Summit on behalf of our Prime Minister, Hon. Peter O'Neill CMG, MP.

Prime Minister O'Neill could not attend this important Summit because of the Parliamentary Seating today. Also, Hon. Powes Parkop is not here this morning for the same reason but hopefully he joins us later today.

Mr Chairman,

Allow me to extend my congratulations to the O'Neill/Abel Government for the successful formation of Government. It gives us great confidence that our country is in very good hands and we expect the Government to build on the past achievements and take the country to greater heights in the next 5 years- beginning with the 2018 APEC Leaders' Summit next year.

Mr. Chairman,

Prime Minister O'Neill is no stranger to the PNG/Australia Business Community. He places profound importance in the growth of the private sector and has an open-door policy for regular consultation on policy and other matters with businesses and other relevant stakeholders.

You are all fully aware of the Government's policy agendas and development priorities in the last 5 years and he is fully committed to maintaining and strengthening those policies in all sectors of the economy.

In fact, his re-election will continue to maintain the much-needed political stability in our country that is so vital for maintaining investor confidence for expansion of current businesses and also to bring on-shore other new foreign direct investments into our country.

Mr Chairman,
Trade and investment is the engine of the economic growth of our country. Therefore, the Government is fully committed towards attracting foreign direct investments (FDIs) for the development of other major impact projects in the country. This is very important for generating foreign exchange reserves, create employment, maintain economic growth, and achieve other priorities of Government, particularly the free education policy and free primary health care for our people.

Further, the Government will also prioritise the diversification of our economy to achieve broad-based economic development in the areas of agriculture, tourism, forestry, and fisheries. It will also place emphasis on the downstream processing of our raw products to maximise gains and add significant value to our exports.

We need existing business to diversity in your investments and also reinvest into other sectors of the economy, including the promotion and development of SMEs in the country.

Mr Chairman,
It was Prime Minister O'Neill who personally committed Papua New Guinea to host the 2018 APEC Leaders' Summit. With his re-election to lead the Government as Prime Minister and also as Minister for APEC, we are confident that Prime Minister O'Neill will have direct responsibility and oversight in Papua New Guinea successfully hosting this very important Leaders' Summit in our country.

Mr Chairman,
Now, let me turn to the theme of this International Business Summit "Port Moresby Future City".

At the outset, I wish to pay tribute to my favourite Governor and a very important Leader of Papua New Guinea, Hon. Powes Parkop for his re-election as Governor of the National Capital District at this year's National Election.

As a resident of Port Moresby prior to his election in 2002, I recall how it was like at the Jackson's Domestic and International Airport, walking around Boroko, Town and other places in the City during the day. In the night, Port Moresby was in a lock-down situation- you could hardly find somebody walking around, night life was non-existent, hotels and businesses were suffering, and investor confidence was very low.

However, when Governor Parkop took over the Governorship 10 years ago, Port Moresby City has seen drastic transformation with so much developments, life returned to normalcy, hotels and businesses are booming, streets are clean, mothers and girls are free to walk the streets again and these are all to his credit.

Mr Chairman,
The City has achieved unprecedented infrastructure developments with many road connections in the City, the Overpass connecting Waigani to Jacksons Airport, redevelopment of Jackson's International and Domestic Terminals, the construction of world class sports facilities, and the construction of many world class hotels, to name a few.

Port Moresby is the heart-beat of our country in terms of business and seat of Government. Port Moresby is the eye through which the international community sees the country. Consequently, important development such as these have resulted in the country hosting important international events such as the ACP Leaders' Summit, Pacific Islands Forum, Under 20 Women's World Cup Soccer Tournament, and the South Pacific Games.

All these important events will be capped off with the 2018 APEC Leaders' Summit. There is already talks of Papua New Guinea hosting the Commonwealth Games.

Mr Chairman,
Hosting such important international events therefore reaffirms that infrastructure developments and other investments in NCD does not only benefit the City but they contribute to the overall success and development of the whole country.

I am glad that we are meeting today with Australian leaders, prominent business representatives from PNG, Australians and other distinguished participants to talk about making Port Moresby greater and even better.

Allow me at this juncture to thank the Port Moresby Chamber of Commerce & Industry for organising this important Summit and also for your attendance. This demonstrates the confidence as well as your commitment and partnership to support Governor Parkop in his determination and vision to make Port Moresby a great and robust City in the Asia Pacific Region.

Mr Chairman,
As Papua New Guinea's Acting High Commissioner, I am grateful for the important bilateral relations between our two countries - covering many areas including defence & security, education, sports, trade and investment, and close people-to-people relations.

Our relations goes a long way, even before the colonial era and it continued from Independence to this day and will grow from strength-to-strength in the years to come. Australia has supported PNG in every step of the way in our maturity as a country and they will always be there us for all the time in future.

Mr Chairman,

Papua New Guinea is one of the luckiest developing country in the world to have a developed country next door. We share special bonds and relations with that is truly unique and special. Coupled with these as well as the geographical proximity places Papua New Guinea in a better position to benefit from the economic success and prosperity of Australia.

The level of benefits that Papua New Guinea derives from its relations with Australia depends very much on our active engagements with Australian Government and its people, its relations with State of Queensland and other States, Cities, Counties, State and Federal

Departments and Agencies, academic institutions, charity organizations, private sector and other important stakeholders.

Mr Chairman

Papua New Guinea's exports to Australia is dominated by gold, copper and other minerals but not very much of our agricultural products such as coffee, cocoa, fisheries and other products/commodities are entering the Australian market.

Australia has a huge market next door that could potentially absorb all such exports but yet we are taking our products all the way to Europe and America. I am not an economist and I do not understand the rationale for this.

When I go to Bunnies and Woolworths, I am seeing coconut, cocoa, coffee, ginger, taros, flowers being imported into Australia from other countries in Asia, Africa and other parts of the world. These are products we have so much of in PNG and yet we don't export them to this market.

This situation concerns me greatly and we need to urgently address the market access issues and other supply chain issues so that such products can enter the Australian market. This is vital for the economic development and prosperity of our country'

Mr Chairman,

At this International Business Summit, we will talk about making Port Moresby better and greater. We will talk about the next LNG project, attracting Foreign Direct Investors, looking at how creating conducive environment for FDIs, and other investments in the country. Other eminent experts will talk on different policy, legal and other processes and systems to do things better in PNG.

This is one of the many meetings in Australia between Papua New Guineans and Australians as well as amongst Australians to talk/discuss about trade and investment in Papua New Guinea.

Perhaps, we could consider organising a similar Summit in future and talk about how Papua New Guinea can take advantage and benefit economic prosperity and success of Australia. This will give us the opportunity to harness the potentials Australia offers to Papua New Guinea with respect to trade, investment, education and capacity building and other areas of national interests.

Mr Chairman,

With these few words, I am excited to participate at this important Business Summit with imminent business, political leaders, business and academic leaders to discuss topics of vital importance in the growth and development of my country.

I wish every success for this important PNG International Business Summit 2017 and declare it officially open.

Thank you, Mr Chairman