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PAC and Parliament must pick up the pace

Transparency International PNG is concerned at the inability of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) to table any reports to parliament since April 2007.

The PAC has not tabled any report to Parliament for more than twenty months despite supposedly conducting investigations into the Government Trust Accounts, the Office of the Attorney-General, and two investigations into the use of public accounts during 2004-05 by the Finance Department.

TIPNG is also concerned that accusations of gross incompetence levelled against Government department heads last September by the PAC Chairman Timothy Bonga have not been addressed by the PAC or by Parliament.

These concerns are raised in light of the recent revelations before the Commission of Inquiry into the Finance Department during the past fortnight alleging that millions of kina in public money was incorrectly paid out to individuals and companies.

TIPNG believes continued failure by both the PAC and the Parliament to take action on these revelations has already contributed immensely to the widespread deterioration of the Public Service and to the abuse of the Finance Management Act.

Chairman of TI Peter Aitsi said "The Parliament has failed to do anything whatsoever since the PAC's 2007 report, and the current PAC activities are crawling so slowly it's ridiculous."

Mr Aitsi added "I am concerned the hard-earned public confidence in the PAC may be eroded given the PAC's present lack of diligence. Papua New Guineans deserve better."

TIPNG urges the PAC to act swiftly and strongly given its unique mandate in monitoring public finances and the performance of government departments

TIPNG supports the work of the PAC but urges it to fast track outstanding investigations and table its findings in Parliament so that instances of negligence and incompetence in the public service can be addressed.