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20/09/2010

## **Press Release for Immediate Release**

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### **RESI funds Investigation**

Transparency International PNG (TIPNG) is strongly calling on police in the National Capital District investigating the fraud case with the New Erima Primary school funds to speed up and make public the findings.

This statement is made following school board Chairman Simon Eyork's public statement during the Transparency International organized public hearing at the Crowne plaza hotel in Port Moresby last week that the investigation was moving at a snail's pace.

TIPNG says Mr Eyork was a whistle blower who made public a well concealed high profile syndicate involving top government officials operating within the National Planning and Finance Departments at Vulupindi Haus in Port Moresby.

Mr Eyork uncovered this syndicate when tracing school funds from the RESI funds trust account that were to be released to the New Erima Primary School were held back by certain individuals at the Vulupindi Haus. They were requesting to be paid over K30, 000.00 in cash before releasing the school funds.

TIPNG says the revelation of the syndicate was the result of a valiant individual who wanted to see transparency prevail and the pace in which the police were handling this case was not so encouraging.

This investigation is very important to the public and the police should not take it lightly. It will determine whether we flush out corrupt individuals who continuously rob the people of this country or leave the funds to be siphoned and sucked dry by few individuals.

This investigation will also determine the credibility of the police force and its willingness to carry out its responsibility to reduce bribery, corruption and all evil deeds within the public sector.

According to Chairman Simon Eyork the New Erima school funds that have been the centre of controversy have not been released to date depriving the 1700 students at the school of basic education.

During his presentation at the public hearing Mr Eyork displayed copies of instructions from the Chief Secretary Manasupe Zurenouce's office instructing National Planning Secretary Mr Joseph Lelang to release the stated funds to the school. But even the Chief Secretary's instructions have fallen on deaf ears.

The copy of a cheque written to the school but confiscated by police as a court exhibit showed that funds to be paid to the school was written from the Hides Petroleum Royalty Trust Account and not from the RESI trust account.

TIPNG says it is incumbent for the education Minister Mr James Marape to explain what has happened to the RESI funds to warrant for funds to be sought from other accounts such as the Hides Petroleum Royalty Trust Account.

The Education Minister and Secretary Joseph Pagelio must tell the parents and students of PNG how many schools applied for RESI funds, how many schools got rejected, how many were approved, how much money was paid to each school and how much money is left in the trust account?