



# THE *PAPUA NEW GUINEA* ECO-FORESTRY FORUM

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## Media Release

### Forum backs call for PM's resignation

**The PNG Eco-Forestry Forum is supporting recent calls made by the affiliated PNG Workers Union and other groups around the country for Prime Minister Sir Michael Somare to step down over his handling of the Julian Moti issue.**

In supporting the call, the Forum says that the whole issue has brought about shame and disorder within the top public service echelon which otherwise should have been a straight forward commission of inquiry proceeding had the Prime Minister allowed it to proceed normally. "It is an international embarrassment for PNG to have the Prime Minister allegedly hijack the duly appointed judicial proceeding of the PNG Defence Force Board of Inquiry over the Moti affair for the reasons only known to himself as most countries within the region have been also closely observing the issue", says the Forum.

While making the call, the Forum said that it is in the best interest of the country that the Prime Minister has to step aside and allow the commission of inquiry to fully complete its findings and table the outcome publicly. Sir Michael's continuous outbursts against the Defence Force Board of Inquiry team and the media including the recent removal of Defence Minister only raises suspicion over why he continues to do that. "If he is innocent as he claims to be then let the inquiry fully complete its findings and prove his innocence. His relentless outbursts and throwing mud at the inquiry team defeats the spirit of democracy and good governance which he normally preaches about," says the Forum.

The Forum is also worried that the actions of the Prime Minister over the issue might also sever the already turbulent relationship between PNG and Australia, which has been apparent since Sir Michael took office as Prime Minister in 2002. Not only will it affect our bilateral relationship with Australia but also with our other neighbouring Pacific Island countries. We continue to share with our fellow Pacific Island countries ideas and experiences on matters of common interests pertinent to upholding democratic principles such as transparency, good governance, independent judiciary, and freedom of press. And the very actions of the Prime Minister only leave much to be desired, says the Forum.

*For more information, contact the Forum on Telephone (675) 323 9050 or on email: [teff@global.net.pg](mailto:teff@global.net.pg)*

**PNG Eco-Forestry Forum**

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