

PRESS RELEASE



United Nations Development Programme

PNG Government committed to developing National Anti-Corruption Strategy

Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea

3 September 2009

PNG Govt officials have discussed the development of a National Anti-Corruption Strategy. The Government is committed to finalising the Strategy before the end of 2009, which, once approved, will be an important component of the National Strategic Plan 2010-2050.

The Strategy was initially directed by the NEC in its decision of May 2006. It will meet PNG's obligations under the UN Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC), to develop a coordinated policy to tackle corruption in the country. PNG was the first country in the region to ratify UNCAC in July 2007. UNCAC is considered a groundbreaking international agreement which establishes a framework for national and international cooperation to fight the scourge of corruption.

The meeting for discussions was opened by the Acting Chief Secretary to Government, Mr Manasupe Zurenuoc. In his opening statement he noted: "Let me stress that fighting corruption is everybody's business because corruption is born in the individual heart. We all have a responsibility to ensure that our children and their children are not denied their rights to a better tomorrow. We have codes of work ethics that should guide our professional conduct in doing business within our public offices. Yet many of us fall short in observing these codes. I want the public service machinery to change and oversee correct and morally right practices", said.

At the opening of the meeting, Mr Jan-Jilles van der Hoeven, UNDP Acting Resident Representative in Papua New Guinea emphasized the negative impact of corruption saying it hurts the poor disproportionately and hinders economic development. "It is my understanding that it is the very nexus, between corruption and development which has spurred your government on to develop a National Anti-Corruption Strategy. UNCAC highlights the importance of bringing all arms of government into the fight against corruption. I understand that although this current meeting involves mainly representatives from the bureaucracy, consideration will also be given to how parliamentarians and members of the judiciary can be supported to act as strong partners in the fight against corruption. Likewise, this Strategy will benefit from the inputs of NGOs, the churches, the media and the public. More attention also needs to be paid to how the government interacts with private businesses, to ensure it is fair, transparent and clean", he said.

Building on this, the Chief Secretary called on representatives from the Government Departments attending the meeting to work closely together to ensure that corruption is minimized in the public service. "Successful strategies for addressing corruption should not be piecemeal and focus solely on a single sector such as the public sector agencies. A national anti-corruption strategy must address itself to all sectors of society, including the public sector, private sector, faith based organisations, civil society organisation, schools, families and individuals", said Mr Zurenuoc.

PNG is ranked amongst some of the most corrupt nations in the world.

Notes to editors:

UNDP is the UN's global development network, advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life. We are on the ground in 166 countries, working with them on their own solutions to global and national development challenges. As they develop local capacity, they draw on the people of UNDP and our wide range of partners.