



*Commission of Inquiry Act, 1951 (Chapter 31)*

**ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES  
FOLLOWED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA IN OBTAINING  
THE OFF-SHORE LOAN FROM THE UNION BANK OF SWITZERLAND AND  
RELATED TRANSACTIONS**

**PRESS STATEMENT**

*No 5 of 2019*

Further to this Commission's public statement issued on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2019, the Chairman today announced, as follows:

1. The Commission is still unable to sit today as scheduled for its opening because administrative arrangements to secure the attendance of overseas Commissioner and Counsel and the appointment of a firm of solicitors to assist the Commission and Counsel have still not been completed by the government.
2. As of today, work done so far by the government agencies approached to assist, are the following:
  - (a) Visa approval for overseas Commissioner and Counsel have been secured.
  - (b) Tender for Solicitors' engagement was published on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2019 and closed last Friday, 1<sup>st</sup> November 2019. The National Procurement Commission is yet to advise this Commission on the next steps.
3. Outstanding work include the following:
  - (a) Advice from the State Solicitor on the requirement for work permits for overseas Commissioner and Counsel.
  - (b) Secretary for Department of Justice, State Solicitor and Solicitor General are yet to secure admissions and practicing certificates for overseas counsel from the National Court and the PNG Law Society. Discussions on these matters between overseas

Counsel and the State Solicitor that took place on 24<sup>th</sup> September and 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019 have not been followed up with Counsel by the State Solicitor, Solicitor General and the Secretary for Justice. If the delay continues, this Commission may seek the political indulgence of the Attorney General or the Prime Minister to expedite these matters.

- (c) Further funds approved by the Prime Minister on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2019 are yet to be released to this Commission
  - (d) Foreign exchange clearance of payments for preparatory and preliminary work done by overseas Commissioner and Counsel is being held up at the Central Bank and the Tax Office.
4. Until these and other outstanding administrative arrangements are completed by the government agencies and officers concerned, this Commission is unable to sit today and is unlikely to sit anytime soon.
  5. The Chairman announced that the opening public hearing is deferred to a later date this month, the specific date and time of which is to be advised. If these administrative arrangements are still not completed in November, the matter will be publicly mentioned on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> December 2019 at 9:30 am, for an announcement to be made on the future conduct of the inquiry in early 2020.
  6. This Commission repeats its earlier requests for government agencies and officers responsible to prioritize this Commission's request for assistance to enable this Commission to sit in 2019.
  7. This Commission also repeats its earlier position that the Commission's decision on applications for leave to appear filed by or on behalf of interested persons are being put on hold until a date is confirmed for the opening public opening.

DATED this 4<sup>th</sup> day of November 2019.

  
Chief Sir Salamo Injia Kt GCL  
Chairman, UBS Commission of Inquiry

