

**Statement by Sir Puka Temu KBE, CMG, MP
On the occasion of the Fund Raising Dinner
for Coalition for Change PNG Inc.**

Theme: *Leadership and Partnership for Change.*

Salutation:

- Lady Winifred Kamit CBE, Chairperson
- Dr Cecilia Nembou, Vice Chairperson
- Goini Loko Hon Treasurer
- Members
- Advisory Panel
- Our guests and entertainers, the Laughing Samoans from New Zealand
- Friends of Coalition for Change

Lady Bernadette and i are greatly honoured to be your guests tonight, on this occasion of the Blue Hawaii Nite to raise funds for the ongoing work of Coalition for Change PNG Inc. Both of us were also guests at the Launching early in the year. It is most heartening to see the progress you are making as the years go by since 2008. Such is the type of Leadership that is wanting today in our Land, leadership that is focussed, dedicated and capable of identifying issues and clearly and convincingly articulating solutions and getting the job done with the minimum of fuss. I urge you to continue the fight you have begun, of-course you are only starting, particularly on an issue that is widespread, evil and fairly well entrenched in our young country. In this fight, Strong Leadership and Effective Partnership is of essence.

This i believe is, one effective way of forging national concensus on such a crucial national development issue. Government alone, we know, will not solve this issue. Leadership and effective Partnerships with recognition of the key and increasing role NGO's, women's groups, men's groups, youth groups, foundations, public-private partnerships, other non-state stakeholders and not forgetting the important role the media must play. To me getting this networking right must be top of the priority listing we must have. This is then followed by our collective fight to re-orient policies, introduce new laws and re-write outdated legislation, followed by institutional allignments and effective monitoring of implementation.

The development of evidence based policy, supported by strongly enforced legislation and effective institutional arrangements with committed and voluntary community support will allow PNG to minimise this scourge on our innocent girls and women and on some occassions boys and men. As can be deducted, iam alluding to the fact that action is the only option for all of us. Some four years ago i spoke at the National Council of Women's conference in UPNG and suggested to take action only on the most effective ways to get the women's issues to the government's attention. I did say, marching on the streets to make the government to act was one in-effective means deployed by women. There i suggested getting some legal brains together and draft a bill to legitimise women to be elected representatives in Parliament. That bill is now before Parliament which i will mobilise support for, in the November sitting.

On violence against girls and women, vigorus advocacy, education and awareness will always maintain their important role. However at the same time, tasking a handpicked group of

individuals to review all laws with the single aim of strengthening legal and judicial measures to protect our girls and women is an urgent must. This together with effective and sustained advocacy across the country and at all levels should in my opinion help to arrest the decay. Kofi-Annan, former UN Secretary General, once campaigned under the theme; **Unite to end violence against women**. He was able to mobilized 50 countries world-wide, with large numbers of UN agencies, as well as regional commissions, including the establishment of Men Leaders to play another key role. As a result this is now a major International program across the globe. I am of the strong opinion that this is the path PNG must take.

At the awareness level apart from scaling up our efforts, for the long term, one measure would be to use the Education system to undertake a compulsory acculturation and education program beginning at the elementary level to college and university level. Christian and good traditional and cultural values together with values of love, respect, honor, discipline and patriotism should be systematically taught to every child until adulthood. So by the time they turn 17 or 20, they have developed a good understanding of human value, rights of others, respect for fellow citizens and respect for authority.

Our own PNG Vision 2050 envisions for a Smart, Wise, Fair and Happy society by 2050. Seven Pillars were identified, amongst which include Human Capital development, Gender, Youth and People empowerment being the first amongst them. Only two days ago our people celebrated our 35th Independence anniversary. On Wednesday last week at a small gathering in NRI, I launched the Report on our performance as a Nation from 1975 to 2008. Our poor performance as a Nation amongst others of our neighbours is least to say, shameful. But I think with such resolve as demonstrated by Coalition for Change PNG Incorporated and many other organizations with similar resolves and under PNG Vision 2050 with 34 years of Nation Building experience, supported by our trusted development partners, we will get there.

Tonight with such Leadership and Partnerships, our women in PNG can be rest assured that there are people and organizations out there and their government who care. We will not solve such an issue overnight. Rest assured the fight has started and together we shall inch our way and will win the war in the end. I call upon every citizen, in particular my male counterparts who are in positions of influence to join me and other men here and around the globe. PNG is obligated to report on her performance on the 8 MDG's by 2015. Goal 3: Promoting Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women to my mind lies at the heart of nations ability to achieve MDG's. On the occasion of the International Womens Day in 2003, the then UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan said and I quote, " there is no time to loose if we are to reach the MDG's by the target date of 2015. He emphasized that only by investing in the worlds women, can we expect to get there. when women thrive, all of society benefits, and succeeding generations are given a better start in life". end of quote.

Let us take the cue from Kofi Annan, we owe it to our girls, to our women and we owe it to our country. Keep up the good fight Coalition for Change, maintain the leadership and forge the Coalition. Those of us who are here tonight have done the right thing by coming. Our support tonight and into the future will go a long way in our collective fight against violence of all types on our girls and women. Thank you and God bless you all.