



Ministry of Information and Communications Technology

Office of the Minister

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**Statement by Hon. Timothy Masiu, MP
On the Occasion of International Day for Universal Access to Information
Thursday, 28th September 2023**

Today, on the 28th of September, Papua New Guinea proudly joins the global celebration of Universal Access to Information Day. This day holds special significance as it reinforces our unwavering commitment to the principles of openness, transparency, and the right of every citizen to access public information.

Universal access to information means that each and every one of us has the inherent right to seek, receive, and share public information. It is a cornerstone of our democracy, ensuring that the voices of our people are heard, and that the actions of our government are transparent and accountable.

In Papua New Guinea, our journey towards the realization of this fundamental right began long ago, enshrined in our Constitution since our independence in 1975. Article 51 of Papua New Guinea's Constitution unequivocally guarantees the right to information for every citizen, reflecting our deep commitment to upholding democratic values.

Over the years, we have witnessed significant developments aimed at ensuring that the right to access public information is not merely a constitutional provision but a practical reality. In 2015, Papua New Guinea proudly became a member of the Open Government Partnership (OGP), a platform that has played a pivotal role in promoting transparency, accountability, and responsiveness to the needs of our citizens.

Through the OGP, we have fostered collaboration between government, civil society, and the private sector, all working together as champions of reforms that enhance citizen participation in decision-making processes. This has been a significant stride towards inclusiveness and effective governance. Furthermore, the Department of ICT has been diligently working, with support from the UNDP through the EU-funded PNG Anti-Corruption Project, to develop a comprehensive draft National Right to Information Policy. In the coming months, we will engage in public consultations to finalize this policy, which will lay the foundation for the formulation of access to information legislative guidelines.

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Additionally, our commitment to transparency and the use of technology to bridge the information divide is reflected in the comprehensive Digital Government Plan (2022 – 2027).

This plan is supported by the endorsement of the Digital Government Act 2022, a landmark achievement. One of the pivotal commitments under this plan, in line with both OGP principles and the United Nations Convention Against Corruption, is the establishment of an e-Government Portal and digital platform.

This platform will facilitate access to public documents, laws, government actions, and all relevant documentation and information.

In parallel, we are actively working on the development of Access to Information legislation, complementing the establishment of the E-Government Portal.

These efforts are geared towards promoting a government that is accountable and transparent. Our goal is to ensure that every Papua New Guinean citizen is guaranteed the right to access public information, not just as a legal obligation, but as a fundamental human right and as a foundational pillar of our open and democratic government, consistent with the values enshrined in the PNG National Constitution.

This Government is also giving an equal attention to the media, as we recognize the significant role of media to disseminate information to our citizens in supporting our goal on open government. I will soon introduce a National Media Policy to Cabinet. The Policy will ensure quality journalism, protection and welfare of reports among other provisions.

On this Access to Information Day, let us reaffirm our commitment to the principles of openness and accountability. Together, we will continue to build a Papua New Guinea that is more transparent, responsive to its citizens, and committed to the ideals of democracy.

Thank you, and may we together achieve a future where universal access to information is a reality for every citizen of Papua New Guinea.


Hon. Timothy Masiu, MP
Minister for Information and Communications Technology; and
Member for South Bougainville

