

# CODE OF CONDUCT

**FOR POLITICAL PARTIES, CANDIDATES AND  
PARTY SCRUTINEERS AND SUPPORTERS  
DURING THE 2017 NATIONAL ELECTION**



## Foreword



Electoral Commissioner  
**Patilias Gamato, ML**  
Papua New Guinea  
Electoral Commission

The Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission (PNGEC) is mandated by the Constitution of the Independent State of Papua New Guinea and the Organic Law on National and Local-Level Government Elections to prepare for, conduct and safeguard the 2017 National Election. The responsibility for protecting the integrity of the vote and all electoral processes is shared among all citizens and political and civil stakeholders of the country. Representatives and candidates of political parties, independent candidates, and respective scrutineers and supporters play an essential role as the key participants and beneficiaries of supporting free, fair and safe electoral processes.

The “PNGEC Code of Conduct for Political Parties, Candidates and Party Scrutineers and Supporters during the 2017 National Election” is designed as an agreement between the Commission and political stakeholders to uphold the electoral laws of the country. Together, we all commit ourselves to promoting, encouraging, conducting and participating in an election that is inclusive, peaceful and democratic, while also being free from manipulation, violence and intimidation of any kind towards voters, candidates, electoral officers and security forces.

The political leadership of the provincial and open district electorates is charged with defending our democracy and protecting the integrity of the vote to enable citizens to freely choose their representatives. Violation of electoral practices are offences under the law and will be enforced to safeguard a genuine election on behalf of the people of Papua New Guinea.

**Patilias Gamato, ML**  
Electoral Commissioner

The undersigned political parties and independent candidates have reached an agreement with the Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission (PNGEC) on a series of commitments regarding the activities of their candidates, scrutineers and supporters during the 2017 National Election campaign in Papua New Guinea.

**The aim of this Code of Conduct is to ensure the integrity of the electoral process, foster a peaceful campaign environment and promote the orderly conduct of elections.**

All party representatives and independent candidates that sign this Agreement subscribe to these principles and regard this Agreement as binding on their leaders, candidates, scrutineers and supporters.

The undersigned will publicize and enforce its provisions within their parties. The parties to this Agreement will maintain communication about these commitments and seek to resolve any disputes in a peaceful manner.

## **1. General Principles**

**1.1** This Agreement, the Constitution, Organic Law of Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates (OLLIPAC), the Organic Law on National and Local Level Government Elections, the Electoral Law Regulations 2007 and all other relevant laws and regulations should be respected and followed by political parties, candidates, scrutineers and supporters before, during and after the elections.

**1.2** Parties should use their own disciplinary mechanisms to deter breaches of this Agreement and encourage a free and fair electoral process.

**1.3** Violations of the constitution, electoral laws and regulations and all other relevant laws and regulations should be reported to the appropriate authorities.

**1.4** Party administration should provide information and training to their

party officials and candidates so they can carry out their duties in accordance with the law and this Agreement.

## **2. Nomination Period**

**2.1** Political parties should ensure the inclusiveness of the nomination process by encouraging the participation of women, youths and persons with disabilities.

**2.2** Political parties should strengthen their mechanisms for resolving inter- and intra-party or candidate disputes arising from the nomination process.

## **3. The Election Campaign**

**3.1** The campaign should be conducted in a manner that respects the rights of all candidates and supporters to campaign freely. Harassment of any kind, including disruption of another party's rally, meeting, march or demonstration or seeking to obstruct another person from attending a political rally of another political party is unacceptable.

**3.2** Political parties and candidates should endeavour to reach out to marginalized and vulnerable groups to inform them of the parties' programs.

**3.3** Candidates and political parties should not seek to influence voters unfairly through gifts, gratuities, threats or promises. The following are examples of prohibited activities:

**3.3.1** Giving gifts, money or offers of jobs in return for votes.

**3.3.2** Setting up campaign houses in communities.

**3.3.3** Using government resources, such as cars or trucks, for campaign purposes.

**3.3.4** Obstructing their opponent's campaigns.

**3.3.5** Destroying or defacing campaign materials or campaign headquarters of another party or candidate.

**3.3.6** Using language that incites hatred or violence in any form against any persons, candidates or political parties or issue any poster or propaganda containing materials that incite people to violence.

**3.3.7** Influencing polling officials or staff to favour their candidate in any way.

**3.4** Political parties and candidates should participate in public campaigning based on policy platforms.

**3.5** Candidates running in the same area should communicate to avoid conducting rallies at the same time, which might lead to clashes of candidate supporters.

## **4. Election Day**

**4.1** Parties should help ensure that the electoral process is free and fair.

**4.2** No campaigning should take place during polling day, and none inside or outside the polling place.

**4.3** Political parties, candidates, scrutineers and their supporters should not engage in any form of voter bribery, including the provision of transportation to voters to the polls, and should report to the PNGEC or police authorities any incidents of voter bribery.

**4.4** Political parties, candidates, scrutineers and their supporters should not threaten or intimidate voters or electoral officials or staff in any way.

**4.5** Political parties, candidates, scrutineers and their supporters should not support the practise of block voting and should ensure that the right of an individual to secret voting is upheld.

**4.6** Political parties, candidates, scrutineers and their supporters should not support the practise of grabbing votes or any effort to manipulate the polling process.

**4.7** Political parties, candidates, scrutineers and their supporters should respect the role of domestic and international election observers. Political party scrutineers should not interfere or seek to influence domestic and international observers in any way.

**4.8** The undersigned parties to this Agreement understand and acknowledge the importance of impartial adjudication of election complaints and undertake to submit and pursue complaints through official channels if they observe any irregularities in the electoral process.

## **5. Counting and Tabulation of Results**

**5.1** Political parties, candidates, scrutineers and their supporters should not attempt the following practices:

**5.1.1** Bribe or threaten poll workers or counting staff to influence the election in favour of a certain candidate(s).

**5.1.2** Interfere with or disrupt, unless for obviously valid reasons, the counting and tabulation process or disrupt transportation of election materials in any way.

**5.2** Party or candidate scrutineers at polling and counting centres should follow the procedures and regulations set out by the PNGEC. The parties and candidates will ensure that their scrutineers receive sufficient information and training about electoral law, procedures and regulations to properly carry out their duties.

## 6. Post-Election

**6.1** Losing political parties and candidates will take any disputes to court and not take part in or allow their supporters to take part in any post-election violence.

**6.2** Winning candidates will return to constituent communities to report on their work as a Member of Parliament (MP), regardless of whether the village or community voted for them.

**6.3** Winning candidates will represent the interests of all constituent communities, regardless of whether they voted for them or not, as this is a legal duty.

The below signed parties or candidates agree that during the 2017 National Election their candidates, scrutineers and supporters will follow the code of conduct described above.

The undersigned political parties and independent candidates have reached an agreement with the Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission (PNGEC) on a series of commitments regarding the activities of their candidates, scrutineers and supporters during the 2017 National Election campaign in Papua New Guinea.

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**ELECTORAL  
COMMISSION**  
Papua New Guinea

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