



THE UNIVERSITY OF GOROKA

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Office of the Chancellor

MEMORANDUM TO ALL STAKEHOLDERS

The University of Goroka (UOG) at its 4th November, 2010 meeting made a decision to recall the sidelined TMT to office in January, 2011.

However, issues regarding whether or not a quorum of voting Council members were present at that time when the Council took the decision was raised. In order to enable all eligible Council members to vote, a special Council meeting was convened for that purpose on the 10th December. At that meeting, the Council sought advice from UOG's lawyers. The Council resolved to recall the sidelined TMT.

The outcome of the voting was a unanimous decision in favour of recalling the TMT. The voting reaffirmed the decision of the Council to have the sidelined TMT commence duty effective on 1st January, 2011. The issues raised by IIC did not constitute financial fraud, misuse or mismanagement by the sidelined TMT that required reviewing or cancelling of their contracts. The Council is satisfied that the TMT have conducted the financial administration of UOG according to proper procedures.

The Council took into account that the Interim Council which endorsed the extension of the sidelined TMT contracts in January 2010 was proper and had legal authority to enter such contracts. These contracts are now legally binding for the new full Council. The Council took into account the findings of the IIC that the students, with the encouragement of some staff, acted illegally in coordinating their strike actions and activities from the start.

In recalling the TMT and in line with the IIC recommendation, the Council will enforce a higher standard of performance criteria and appraisals on the TMT which will form part of their respective contracts so that their performance and contracts are under constant review by the Council. The Council took heed of advice from its lawyers that the University ran the risk of a costly legal litigation which the University was not in a strong position to defend. The Council wants to see continuity and stability in TMT at this stage for UOG's development. It took into account that PNG and UOG do not have the luxury of abundance of Professors and Associate Professors in the academic environment that warrants continuous changes at the top levels of teaching and administration.

The Council also took into account that illegal actions by students and staff have caused enormous irreparable harm and a huge financial cost to the UOG. The costs of these illegal actions have so far amounted to approximately K1.7million. The Government has

refused to reimburse these costs despite UOG's requests to Treasury. It was the Council's strong view that UOG and the Government must not suffer anymore financial loss by accepting the recommendations of the IIC to cancel the contracts of the TMT. Furthermore, the cancellation of their contracts would have cost the UOG another K1m (approx) and likely unwarranted legal litigation from the TMT against the Council and the University.

The message to all of us as stakeholders is quite clear from the Government also that it will not replenish financial costs to Universities as a result of students/staff strikes now and in the future. The Government requires that all of UOG's limited financial resources be invested in the future growth and expansion of the University and not in wasteful and unproductive expenditure such as strikes and boycotts. The Council was satisfied that other issues raised in the IIC report in respect to finance management, governance, and administration are being implemented and assessed, however, financial audit has taken a lot longer and remain incomplete. Nevertheless the Council will continue to evaluate these when they are finalised.

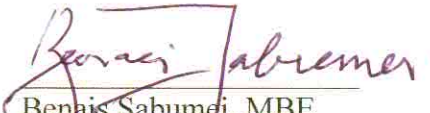
Equally, the Council expects higher performance criteria from all students and staff at the commencement of academic year 2011 when they will be required to sign an oath undertaking for their legal and ethical conduct. Ongoing appraisals will be demanded and enforced by the TMT on all staff.

The Council recognises that much more needs to be done at UOG in addressing the quality and standards of teacher education in PNG. In focusing on these the Council expects the TMT, staff and students to be role models for the community and PNG, setting high standards of conduct within and outside of UOG.

The Council also recognises that UOG has lost much creditability as a result of unwarranted strikes. This has inevitably led to the declining of standards and quality of education as a national institution. Council appeals to all staff and students to dedicate themselves to the pursuit of excellence in higher education over the years which we all as stakeholders take responsibility for and must work harder together to rebuild. It is with these clear objectives in mind that the new Council endeavors to embrace the new academic year with added vigor and determination and not to repeat or dwell on past errors and mistakes.

The past culture of UOG of strikes, boycotts and sit-ins must end and stakeholders must understand and adhere to established, proper legal process under the UOG statutes, laws, and other processes to achieve our individual and collective aspirations. The Council seeks cooperation and understanding from all stakeholders in ensuring our University meets the expectations of the Government and the citizens of PNG.

Let us all work together to build this fine institution for learning for our future generations.


Benais Sabumei, MBE
Chancellor
University of Goroka