

***TOK STRET BILONG REFERENDUM* / STRAIGHT TALK ON THE REFERENDUM**

**TOPIC 1 “OWN OUR OWN PEACE” Continue the commitment of Bougainville throughout the Peace Process – PEACE IS ACTIVE**

* PEACE – is more than the absence of conflict from 1998 Cease Fire (Burnham 1 Peace Talks: women & all combatants returned from Burnham 1 with this message
* Remember the fruit of this commitment to peace
* *To own our own peace*…held from truce to cease-fire (after 2 previous failed and heartbreaking attempts in 1990 and 1994 C/F)
* *To own our own peace…* held in returning to civil government and made it possible for the PNG government to withdraw the PNGDF
* *To own our own peace…h*eld for International Peace Monitors to trust coming to Bougainville UNARMED – a world first – UN recognised peace process without a PKF
* *To own our own peace*…enabled Bougainville to create the BRG, ABG and now we have united all groups at Panguna to be *Referendum Ready*
* To bring UNITY -trusting Veterans to surrender all weapons in Bougainville.

 For the Referendum to take place Bougainville must stay PEACEFUL; the only way to build:

* TRUST- among our own people (no groups to create panic), Trust with PNG and Peace Process authorities & Trust in Bougainville Referendum Commission. Owning our own Peace will gain respect of International Observers including Peace Monitors who are returning as evidence of our democratic conduct of the Referendum. Do not fear the process, do not fear the strangers who come to observe as their presence guarantees openness and trust.
* PATIENCE – We need to know that the process is not yet over. We have worked for 50 years since 1969 for Bougainville’s Democratic rights to decide on development and governance. We can actively uphold our peace for however long it takes to choose and implement the future that will be determined by the outcome of the vote at the Referendum.
* REMEMBER -
* Referendum will take TIME – months (up until June 26th 2010)
* Post Referendum will take years…this will be determined by negotiations to transition safely into the future governance of Bougainville.
* Writs to be issued 27th September – TOTAL LIQUOR BAN – indefinite timing to last
* Voting will take 2 weeks; 23rd November – 6th December in every ward in Bougainville
* Plans and procedures are fully in place for return of ballot boxes, counting (with scrutineers) and normal voting checks (40 days) to lodge complaints until January
* Allow PNG & ABG Parliaments to finalise in a RATIFICATION PROCESS.

PARTICIPATE PEACEFULLY AT ALL TIMES: pre polling, during polling, post polling and post results. EVERYONE MUST RESPECT the will of voters. Don’t return to violence even if you are happy or upset with any aspect of the process or the results.

***TOK STRET BILONG REFERENDUM page 2***

**TOPIC 2: Vote for what the Referendum really means and not for promises being made (vote buying)**

Referendum is a peaceful process used worldwide for nations or a people to make a national decision. It has been created to avoid conflict. NO WAR = NO NEGATIVE CYCLE.

Referendum protects CIVIL SOCIETY & DEVELOPMENT NO MATTER WHAT THE OUTCOME

Referendum is a PEACEFUL, POSITIVE ACTION TO BUILD BOUGAINVILL’S FUTURE

So what are we voting for? What does referendum mean?

**Dictionary definitions:**

* **‘Referendum’:** a vote by a country’s electorate on single political issue”
* ‘**Autonomy’:** Self Governing
* **‘Independence’**: Free from outside control or influence, self-governing having enough money to support yourself, not connected, separate, able to make up your own mind, not needing or relying on the help of others
* **‘Government’**: the group of people who govern a state, the system by which a state is governed.

**DO NOT VOTE ACCORDING TO PROMISES BEING MADE: N**obody can promise or guarantee the future therefore to believe promises of money or benefits for either way to vote is foolish.

Any blessings or disasters can happen in

* **nature** – emergencies of flooding, draught, guria, tsunami etc can affect a nation’s ability to provide for its people and to fulfil promises made
* **people** – leaders of the world including PNG and Bougainville leaders go through elections and can change or cancel previous commitments–e.g. political alliances and international agreements, economy and currency ups and downs, trade agreements, structural adjustments, IMF, WB and other international monetary agreements – all can change. Nations can plan, but cannot promise benefits into the future.

DON’T VOTE ACCORDING TO PROMISES OF MONEY / ROADS / CARGO/ DEVELOPMENT

VOTE ACCORDING TO THE BEST LONG TERM GOOD GOVERNANCE SYSTEM that you believe is right FOR THE FUTRE GENERATIONS OF BOUGAINVILLE

THIS IS A VOTE/DECISION FOR ALL TIME –it took 50 years to win the right for Referendum and our people only have the one chance to choose. MAKE IT YOUR BUSINESS TO VOTE. It’s the only way we can all know what is the real aspiration of our people, by the people, for the people!

The world is listening to us – they are now waiting and referring to you – “the people”. So much effort over many decades has gone into creating a space of freedom to allow YOU this choice: there must be no coercion or “forcim laik bilong yu long narapla”.

This is the process for everyone to know what all the people of Bougainville want. Say Yes- to open dialogue & discussions, and remember - EITHER WAY – BOTH outcomes WILL PROVIDE SERVICES whether they will come from an Autonomous Bougainville OR an Independent Bougainville Government. The national powers that cannot go to ‘Higher Autonomy’ include International borders, Immigration, Citizenship, currency, defence and foreign affairs. The choice is – WHO do you want to be deciding on these and WHEN & WHAT & HOW these services will be provided and controlled? by a PNG System? or a Bougainville System?

***TOK STRET BILONG REFERENDUM page 3***

**TOPIC 3: WE ONLY HAVE ONE CHANCE ON THIS REFERENDUM**

In the history of a nation, there is recorded the date of UDI: Universal Declaration of Independence. Papua New Guinea had their UDI on 16th September 1975 and has been a nation for 44 years. Bougainville has a parallel colonial history of being run by other nations until the 1975. The conflict that started from 1st September 1975 needs to be finally resolved. The peaceful settlement reached in May 1976 between PNG and Bougainville allowed for the Bougainville Flag remains testimony to this.

Make sure you understand what you are voting on and take personal responsibility to vote with maturity and with a clear conscience. There is no room for mistakes. The outcome will be final. – Dates for voting in Haku as in every ward 23rd November – 6th December

* Must be enrolled for every Bougainvillean 18yrs +

Including the –youth and all men and women of Bougainville

 - disabled and elderly people of Bougainville

 -Bougainvilleans currently overseas who registered in PNG/SI/AUST

* Must check the Referendum Roll – if your name is there up to 26th September
* You can only be on the roll in one place: 1 person = 1 vote (fair and equal)
* HWC will find out details from BRC & keep updating our village assemblies

-Each Community Government will set up Polling Stations in each Ward – and may set up booths for 2 days at a time for each Tsuhana 6am – 6pm daily. Families must provide transport for those who cannot walk to the polling booth **OR** arrange a visit by the polling officer.

* Any names missing from the roll – still go & register & you will be given e receipt when you vote
* Chiefs are requested to watch out for their own people and supervise access to voting
* CAPS will be in attendance for strangers who come to **observe –** International significance of this Referendum. They report back to UN and our own National Bodies.
* The Referendum is NON BINDING – which means PNG Government gets the final say. RATIFICATION PROCESS: after the Referendum, ABG & PNG Governments will continue to negotiate outcomes of all details of powers& timeline for Bougainville’s future.
* International presence is Bougainville’s safest guarantee of seeing we can trust in the final outcome as all the world wants good, responsible and happy people and nations.
* TRANSITION PERIOD is yet to come after Referendum we must remain positive & peaceful while leaders decide how long everything will take.
* It cannot happen overnight – many nations have needed 3 to 5 years to transition into full independence because every

-department

-policy has to pass over into new hands

-budget & finance

* Extra training of qualified leaders, public servants, organisations to cope over the changes need to be implemented.
* Bougainville wants change-either for HIGHER AUTONOMY or IDEPENDANCE both involve positive changes- these need to be done properly.
* WHY VOTE? –until we all vote – no one really knows what the majority of Bougainville wants. Every Bougainville adult alive today has this unique opportunity to do what our forefathers have longed for - to make a vote of free choice for the future of Bougainville.