



Demolition of the Historical A-Wing Building
PNGIPA School of Government

Address by Ms Deborah Stokes
Australian High Commissioner
19 March 2015

Acknowledgements

Prime Minister, The Honourable Peter O'Neill
Minister Sir Dr Puka Temu
Minister James Marape
Departmental Heads
PNGIPA Director and IPA Council members
University of PNG Vice-Chancellor Mellam
Ladies and gentlemen.

It is a great pleasure to be here today for this very
significant event and in the distinguished company of

the Prime Minister and Ministers of the PNG Government.

Today we recognise the past and the future.

This site is the historic venue for the famous political discussion group, the *Bully Beef Club* – a group of civic-minded Papua New Guineans who gathered together to chart the future of the Independent state of PNG.

And they also helped to shape a uniquely PNG national identity.

This history we honour today.

And we honour the role of the individuals who played major roles in that formative era including Grand Chief Sir Michael Somare.

Today we also look to the future.

To help the transformation of PNG's public service, Australia and PNG Ministers committed in December to the creation of the Pacific Leadership and Governance Precinct.

This will support the revitalisation of PNG's Institute of Public Administration and the transformation of the School of Business Administration at the University of PNG into the School of Business and Public Policy.

We share a vision for the Precinct to build PNG's next generation of ethical and high performing public sector leaders at all levels of government and be a centre for discussion and debate on issues of national importance.

Transforming this historic building into a new modern facility marks a new era for the IPA as it becomes the Papua New Guinea School of Government (PNGSoG).

But the building is not as important as the training and the discussions that will be fostered within it.

Just like the Bully Beef Club before it, we envisage the new facility will bring Papua New Guineans together who are committed to service for their country.

As PNG's economy grows, and becomes more integrated in the global economy, it needs a public service that strengthens and reinforces PNG's international competitiveness.

We are very pleased with the progress we are already seeing at the IPA supported by its new leadership.

New courses supported by the Australian Public Service Commission and the Canberra Institute of Technology are now running at PNGIPA for over 150 Papua New Guinean Public servants. These will lead to diploma level qualifications.

I wish to recognise the particular contributions of the Secretary of the Department of Personnel Management, Mr John Kali, and the PNGIPA Director, Mr Wewerang, under the leadership of the Minister for Public Service and the Prime Minister.

The Precinct program is not simply two, parallel institutional strengthening programs.

We hope to see links created between the two institutions and to see these extended to other institutions in the country dedicated to excellence in public service.

The Precinct we hope will become the 'centre of gravity' for national efforts to improve leadership and governance.

We also hope the Precinct will play a wider role in the Pacific region and become a regional centre of excellence for leadership and governance.

This event today marks a new chapter for the PNGIPA.

Australia is very pleased to be a part of this, especially at this location which is so rich in history that is shared between Australia and PNG.

I wish the IPA well as it helps to build a stronger public service that matches the aspirations of the women and men of PNG.

Thank you.