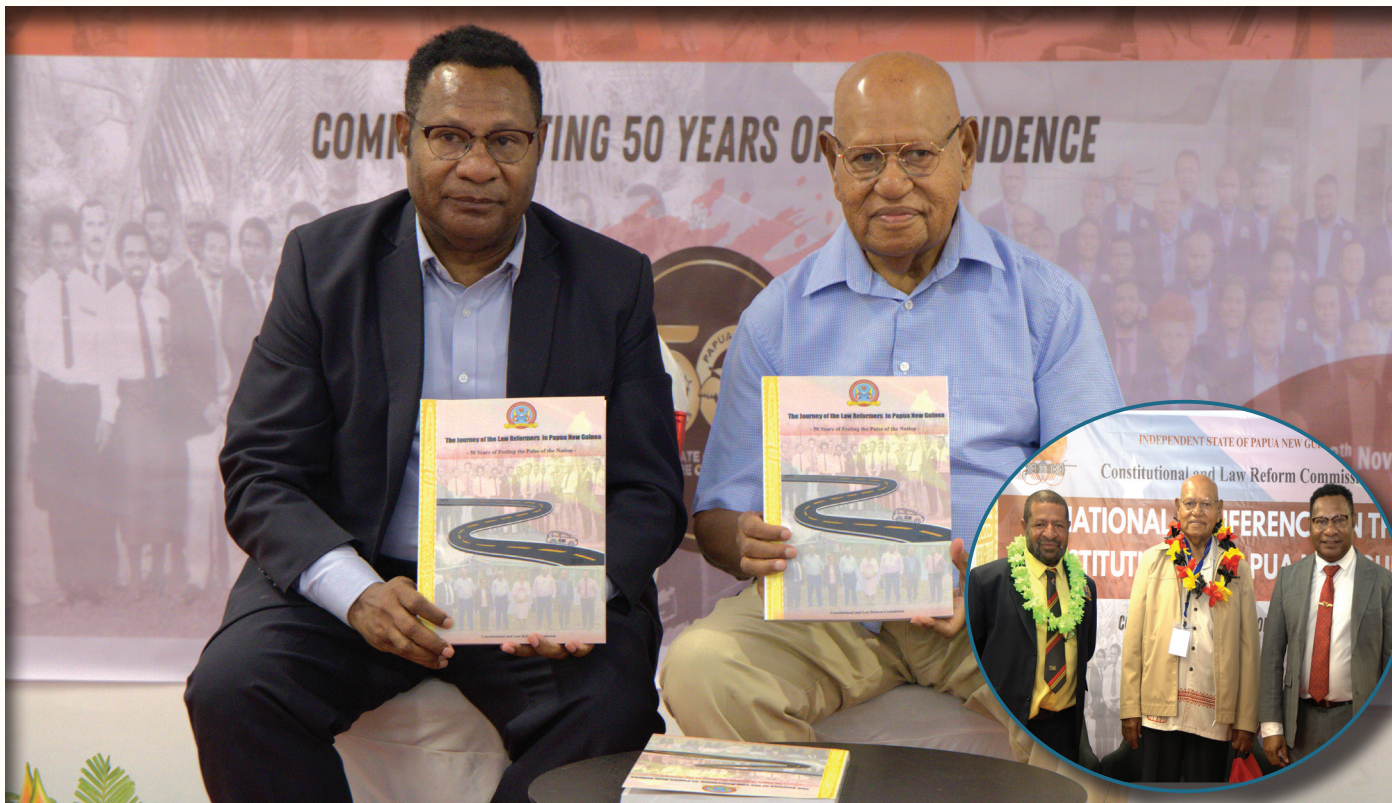


Chief Dr. Momis Signs CLRC 50th Publication



L-R: CLRC Secretary Dr. Mange Matui and Chief Dr. John Momis showcasing the CLRC 50th Anniversary Publication, last year at APEC Haus.

Insert: (L-R) CLRC Chairman Hon. Saki Soloma, Chief Dr. John Momis and CLRC Secretary Dr. Mange Matui.

A historic milestone was marked during the closing dinner of the inaugural Constitutional and Law Reform Commission (CLRC) National Conference on the Constitution, as Constitutional Father and former member of the Constitutional Planning Committee (CPC), Chief Dr. John Momis officially signed the Commission’s 50th Anniversary publication.

Titled “Journey of the Law Reformers in Papua New Guinea: 50 Years of Feeling the Pulse of the Nation,” the publication chronicles the evolution of law reform in Papua New Guinea, highlighting the vision, challenges, and achievements that have shaped the nation’s legal and constitutional landscape over the past five decades.

The ceremonial signing by Chief Dr. Momis - one of the principal architects of Papua New Guinea’s Constitution - served as a profound and symbolic moment, bridging the founding ideals of the nation with the ongoing mandate of the CLRC. It reaffirmed the enduring relevance of the Constitution and the continued responsibility of the Commission to review, reform, and strengthen the laws of Papua New Guinea in line with the aspirations of its people.

This moment not only honoured the legacy of the nation’s founding fathers, but also underscored CLRC’s commitment to carrying forward that vision - ensuring that the spirit of the Constitution remains responsive, dynamic, and reflective of the needs of present and future generations.

What to expect in this Issue:

- Key highlights from CLRC’s presentation of Constitutional Directive No. 4 (CD4) in Parliament
- Updates on ongoing law reform initiatives
- Meet our officers in this edition’s Employee Spotlight
- A glimpse into life at CLRC Beyond the Desk

Learn more about CLRC’s journey inside!

Report on Form and System of Government Presented in Parliament

The Constitutional and Law Reform Commission (CLRC), through the Prime Minister formally presented its Report on Constitutional Directive No. 4: The Review of the Form and System of Government - for Second Reading in Parliament, marking a significant milestone in the country's ongoing efforts to strengthen governance and

“One important message coming out clearly from this report is that people want government to work better for them,”

improve service delivery.

CLRC Chairman, Hon. Saki Soloma, MP, led the presentation and expressed appreciation to the Government for its leadership and support in initiating the national review.

“Reforming the way our country is governed is not an easy task. It requires political will, patience, and a genuine concern for the future of our nation,” he said.

The Report addresses seven key areas, including the levels of government, the role of the Head of State, the election of the Prime Minister, the electoral process, women's representation, the political party system, and the parliamentary structure. These areas were identified as central to improving the effectiveness and responsiveness of Papua New Guinea's system of government.

According to the Chairman, the review was shaped by extensive consultations across the country, capturing the views of leaders and citizens alike.

“One important message coming out clearly from this report is that people want government to work better for them,” Hon. Soloma stated.

He noted that citizens are less concerned with complex governance structures and more focused on practical

outcomes, such as improved access to basic services including education, healthcare, and infrastructure.

The Report highlights key challenges within the current system, including overlapping responsibilities between different levels of government, delays in service delivery, and inefficiencies in project implementation. In response, the Commission has proposed reforms aimed at simplifying governance structures, improving clarity in roles and responsibilities, and enhancing decision-making processes.

Among the notable recommendations are proposals to streamline the system of government to improve efficiency, strengthen political stability through clearer leadership mandates, and introduce mechanisms to enhance legislative scrutiny and accountability.

The Chairman also emphasised the importance of strengthening democratic institutions, including improving women's representation in Parliament, reforming the electoral system to ensure transparency and credibility, and reinforcing the role of political parties in promoting stable and policy-driven governance.

“The reforms proposed in this Report are not simply about present political arrangements. They are about creating a stronger and more effective system of governance for the future of Papua New Guinea,” he said.

The presentation of the Report for Second Reading marks an important step in the legislative process, as Members of Parliament deliberate on the recommendations aimed at shaping the country's governance framework for the years ahead.

CLRC continues to play a central role in supporting constitutional development and law reform in Papua New Guinea, ensuring that the nation's governance systems remain responsive to the needs and aspirations of its people.



CLRC Chairman Hon. Saki Soloma, MP, delivering his statement during the Parliament Sitting this year. Photo Courtesy of the Papua New Guinea National Parliament.

Review of Laws on Monitoring and Evaluation of Public Funds nears completion

CLRC has commenced its review into the laws relating to the monitoring and evaluation of public funds. This follows the launching of the Issues Paper for Terms of Reference (TOR) 23: Review of Laws on the Monitoring and Evaluation of Public Funds, last year, marking the commencement of another key law reform initiative under its 2025 Work Program.

CLRC Secretary, Dr. Mange Matui, highlighted that the Issues Paper identifies key legal and policy issues requiring public input. He explained that the review will assess whether the current legislative framework adequately supports the effective tracking, monitoring, and evaluation of funds disbursed by the National Government.

“The monitoring and evaluation of public funds is a national issue, and CLRC is now taking a bold step to assess existing legislation and policy frameworks, while also gathering views from citizens and stakeholders to inform possible law reform recommendations,” Dr. Matui said.

He further noted that despite significant annual government expenditure through national projects, service improvement programs, and other fiscal interventions, the link between spending and tangible outcomes often remains unclear.

“Government continues to invest billions of kina each year, yet the connection between expenditure and results is not always evident. This review is therefore critical to strengthening accountability and ensuring value for public spending,” he added.

The review under TOR 23 will examine several key legislations, including National Procurement Act 2018; District Development Authority Act 2014; Fiscal Responsibility Act 2006; Public Money Management Act 2017; Public Finance Management Act 1995; Local-level Government Administration Act 1997; Provincial Government Administration Act 1997; and Organic Law on Provincial Governments and Local-level Governments, along with other related laws.

CLRC Commissioner Hon. Johnson Wapunai, MP, noted

that TOR 23 aligns with Papua New Guinea’s National Goals and Directive Principles (NGDP), particularly those relating to responsible and equitable use of national resources.

“Government continues to invest billions of kina each year, yet the connection between expenditure and results is not always evident. This review is therefore critical to strengthening accountability and ensuring value for public spending.”

“This review carries deep constitutional significance. It reflects the broader spirit of nationhood and the aspirations embodied in our National Goals and Directive Principles, which continue to guide Papua New Guinea’s development and public policy direction,” he said.

He added that TOR 23 reinforces the nation’s commitment to accountability, equitable resource distribution, and responsible governance.

“It strengthens the bond between government and citizens by ensuring that the use of public funds reflects the values, priorities, and aspirations of our people,” Hon. Wapunai stated.

Dr. Matui also acknowledged the support and cooperation of key stakeholders and development partners.

“Your insights and collaboration will be invaluable as we work together to strengthen Papua New Guinea’s accountability systems for the benefit of all citizens. This review is more than a technical exercise—it is part of a broader national effort to restore integrity, improve governance, and ensure meaningful results in public spending,” he said.

CLRC has completed its provincial consultations with key stakeholders in 8 provinces. These provinces are Madang, Morobe, Oro, NCD, ENB, New Ireland, Enga and Eastern Highlands Provinces. The report on TOR 23 is currently in its compilation phase and a seminar is scheduled to have these recommendations vetted.



Courtesy Call with the Enga Provincial Management Team Members and CLRC Team at Malyam Hotel Conference Room in Wabag.

CLRC Advances Review of Laws on Incest Under TOR 22

CLRC continues to make steady progress under Terms of Reference (TOR) 22, which focuses on the review of laws relating to sexual offences, particularly focusing on the offence of incest in Papua New Guinea.

The review was initiated in response to the increasing prevalence of gender-based violence, especially sexual offences committed against women, children, and other vulnerable members of society. Recognising the seriousness of these issues, the Commission undertook a comprehensive study to assess existing legal frameworks and identify areas for reform aimed at promoting safer and more secure communities.

Some of the key issues highlighted include whether the penalty under Section 223 of the Criminal Code should be reinstated to life imprisonment; whether the definition of incest should be expanded to include adopted and step-relatives, given PNG's extended family structures; whether consent should be a factor in sentencing, especially for adult cases; whether compensation (statutory or customary) should be abolished, as it does not serve as a deterrent; the need for compulsory sex education in all schools; and how to regulate sexually suggestive content in music, media, and online spaces.

CLRC Secretary Dr. Matui emphasized on the timely need for this review, "Incest is one of the most serious and disturbing forms of sexual violence. It involves family members - those who are supposed to protect and care for each other. In most cases, the victims are women and children. It is not only a crime; it is a violation of trust and human dignity, with lifelong consequences."

He added, "Additionally, the rise of digital platforms and exposure to foreign content adds complexity to how we understand and respond to incest-related issues."

As part of CLRC's consultation process, CLRC engaged stakeholders across eight provinces, including Bougainville, Milne Bay, Morobe, Oro, East New Britain, Eastern Highlands, West Sepik, and the National Capital District. Feedback from participants strongly emphasized the need to strengthen existing laws, particularly in relation to penalties for incest. Many stakeholders noted that incest is not accepted morally, socially, or culturally, and has significant impacts on victims, including long-term psychological harm and disruption to families and communities.



A stakeholder rep speaking during the TOR 22 Seminar.

Consultations involved key stakeholders from both the law and justice and social sectors, including the Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary, Department of Justice and Attorney General, Office of the Public Solicitor, Office of the Public Prosecutor, Department of Community Development, Youth and Religion, and the Consultative Implementation and Monitoring Council (CIMC).

A stakeholder seminar was held late last year to vet the recommendations put forward by CLRC. The commentaries and views shared by key stakeholders will enable CLRC to consolidate its final report before it is submitted to Parliament, through the National Executive Council for tabling and deliberation.



Stakeholders during the TOR 22 seminar session, in December last year at the Lamana Conference Room.

CLRC Concludes Custom Recording Exercise in Goilala and Hiri-Koiari Districts



Second from left: CLRC Secretary Dr. Mange Matui PhD, Central Province Governor Hon. Rufina Peter and CLRC Chairman Hon. Saki Soloma with the custom recording participants from Goilala and Hiri-Koiari Districts.

CLRC completed a week-long custom recording exercise for the Goilala and Hiri-Koiari districts, marking a significant milestone in the Commission's ongoing efforts to document and preserve Papua New Guinea's customary laws.

The exercise, conducted from 17 to 22 March 2025, was officially opened by the Governor of Central Province, Rufina Peter, in the presence of CLRC Chairman Saki Soloma and CLRC Secretary Mange Matui.

In her opening remarks, Governor Peter emphasised the importance of safeguarding cultural identity and commended CLRC for undertaking the custom recording exercise within her electorate.

"Culture is important. Each and every one of us is shaped and influenced by our ethnic or cultural background," Governor Peter said.

"This custom recording exercise is really an important piece of work, and let me congratulate the Secretary, under the leadership of your Chairman and your staff, for the intensive efforts that will be put into this exercise."

The custom recording initiative is carried out under CLRC's statutory mandate as provided for in the Underlying Law Act 2000 and the Constitutional and Law Reform Commission Act 2004, which task the Commission with monitoring and facilitating the development of Papua New Guinea's Underlying Law. Central to this mandate is the systematic documentation of customs to ensure that laws reflect indigenous values and Melanesian philosophies.

CLRC Secretary Dr. Matui highlighted the practical importance of the exercise, noting that many customs are currently underutilised in the formal justice system due to challenges in identification and documentation.

"Many of our customs are not used in courts because there is difficulty in identifying a particular custom for a specific ethnic group. Hence this exercise," Dr. Matui said.

"We are looking at all aspects of law regarding customs in your area, and our officers will be here to record and properly understand the customary laws that govern you.

Equal collaboration is therefore encouraged."

He further explained that once recorded, the customs would be made accessible to the judiciary.

"The judiciary will now look at the pool of customs that have been recorded and apply them accordingly to the people of Papua New Guinea," he added.

CLRC Chairman Hon. Soloma echoed similar sentiments and acknowledged the continued support of the National Government in enabling the Commission to carry out this work.

"The Marape-Rosso Government has made a commitment of funding towards this project, and that is why CLRC is able to perform this mandate accordingly by consulting provinces and recording their customs. We are indeed grateful for the support," Chairman Soloma said.

Participants for the exercise were identified through extensive research conducted by CLRC, with support from the Central Province Governor's Office. The exercise involved representatives from the Toade, Fuyuge, and Kunimaipa language groups in Goilala, as well as the Mountain Koiari and Grassland Koiari communities within the Hiri-Koiari District.

The custom recording focused on key areas of customary law, including customary administrative and governance systems, family law, land and resource management, and traditional dispute settlement mechanisms.

This exercise concluded CLRC's custom recording work in Central Province, following earlier documentation undertaken in Kairuku, Rigo, and Abau districts since 2022. Once vetted, the documented customs will be submitted to Parliament for further scrutiny before being formally recognised as part of the Underlying Law framework applicable to specific ethnic and language groups.

With Central Province now completed, CLRC plans to extend its custom recording programme to Jiwaka Province, continuing its nationwide effort to strengthen the recognition and application of customary laws within Papua New Guinea's legal system.

Laws on State-Owned Enterprises Reviewed Under TOR 25

The Constitutional and Law Reform Commission (CLRC) held its stakeholder seminar to vet its findings on Terms of Reference (TOR) 25, which focuses on examining and reforming the legal framework governing State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) in Papua New Guinea.

The primary objective of TOR 25 is to assess the adequacy of existing laws regulating SOEs and to identify necessary legislative and policy reforms to address legal, policy, and administrative challenges affecting their operations and

“...we must recommend reforms that enable SOEs to operate as efficient commercial entities comparable to private sector organisations.”

performance. This review is particularly significant given the critical role SOEs play in generating revenue for the Government and delivering essential services to the people at affordable rates.

As part of the review, CLRC considered key pieces of legislations including the Kumul Consolidated Holdings Authorization Act 2002, the Kumul Consolidated Holdings Authorization (Amendment) Act 2021, and the Public Finance (Management) Act 1995, among other related laws. These laws govern the operations of major SOEs such as PNG Power, PNG Ports, Telikom, Post PNG, Water PNG, DataCo, National Development Bank, Motor Vehicle Insurance Limited, Air Niugini, and Kumul Agriculture, all of which operate in essential sectors of the economy under the oversight of Kumul Consolidated Holdings.

In his statement, CLRC Secretary Dr. Mange Matui emphasized on the Commission’s responsibility to ensure such important issues are looked into.

“Our responsibility is to ensure that the legal environment governing SOEs supports good governance, commercial discipline, effective service delivery, and protection of public interest. Where the law is weak, unclear or outdated, we must recommend reforms that enable SOEs to operate as efficient commercial entities comparable to private sector

organisations.”

The review has now reached the draft Final Report stage following the completion of nationwide consultations. At this stage, the views gathered from consultations are being analysed and consolidated into draft recommendations aimed at improving the performance and accountability of SOEs.

Consultations were conducted across four provinces. These includes East New Britain, Morobe, Western Highlands, and the National Capital District - representing each region of the country. In addition, regional study visits were undertaken to draw comparative insights on best practices in SOE governance and management.

Key stakeholders engaged during the consultation process included SOEs, provincial administrations, public servants, Kumul Consolidated Holdings, the Department of Treasury, and other line agencies.

Among other emerging issues, the key issue consistently raised during consultations was the impact of political influence on the operations and corporate governance of SOEs. Many participants expressed concern that such influence undermines efficiency and performance, noting that SOEs should operate as commercially viable entities comparable to those in the private sector. Strengthening legal and policy frameworks to limit undue political interference was identified as a critical area for reform.

Secretary Dr. Matui emphasized the need for such important review.

“I want to emphasise that this review is critical to the future of SOEs and the development of Papua New Guinea. SOEs play a foundational role in the economy and the daily lives of our people. Their success or failure has national consequences.”

The Commission has also observed that many of the challenges identified point back to existing legal provisions, particularly under the Kumul Consolidated Holdings framework, which may require urgent reform to ensure SOEs can operate independently and efficiently.



CLRC Officers with Stakeholders posing after the NCD Consultations for TOR 25.

COMMISSION UPDATES

Secretary Presents CLRC Strategic Update at 2026 First Department and Agency Heads' Meeting

The Secretary of the Constitutional and Law Reform Commission (CLRC), Dr Mange Matui, presented a comprehensive institutional update at the 2026 First Department and Agency Heads' Meeting held at APEC Haus.

The high-level forum, convened by the Office of the Chief Secretary to Government, brought together departmental and agency heads to report on performance, accountability, and implementation of their respective mandates.

In his address, Dr Matui outlined CLRC's strategic progress in advancing constitutional and legislative reform over the past six years. He reported that the Commission has completed and submitted fifteen Terms of Reference (TOR) reports to the National Executive Council (NEC) through the Minister for Justice and Attorney General. These reviews addressed critical national priorities including land and resource compensation, employment law reform, education legislation, urban planning, regulation of State-Owned Enterprises, monitoring of public funds, and reforms relating to sexual offences and vicarious liability.

Dr Matui further confirmed that CLRC has completed and submitted reports on four Constitutional Directives to the NEC. Constitutional Directive No. 3, on the Declaration of Papua New Guinea as a Christian Country, was tabled and approved in Parliament in 2024. Constitutional Directive No. 4, relating to the Form and System of Government, was tabled in Parliament late last year, marking a significant milestone in constitutional reform.

"This particular recommendation (CD No. 3) went through the NEC and was tabled on the floor of Parliament, resulting in amendments to the Preamble and Part I of the Constitution, declaring PNG a Christian country," Dr Matui said.

He added, "In CD No. 4, we examined key issues including the position of the Head of State, the election of the Prime Minister, the political party system, the election of women into Parliament, and aspects of the 1999 Provincial Government System. The report is currently before Parliament."

The Secretary also provided an overview of CLRC's financial performance from 2019 to 2025 under three



CLRC Secretary Dr. Mange Matui presenting during 2026 Head of Department and Agencies Meeting, at the APEC House, Port Moresby.

key program areas: Administrative Expenditure, Legal Mandate Operations, and the Capital Investment Program. He reaffirmed the Commission's commitment to transparent financial management, timely acquittals, and responsible stewardship of public funds.

Updates were also provided on the CLRC Office Complex Project, the Commission's restructuring program, ongoing reviews of domestic and colonial laws, and the development of underlying law through custom recording initiatives, including plans to establish an Underlying Law Centre at the University of Papua New Guinea.

Dr Matui reaffirmed CLRC's commitment to strengthening governance, enhancing institutional accountability, and advancing law reform in line with national development priorities.

"It is important that CLRC is given the opportunity to inform stakeholders on the work of the Commission. We appreciate the platform to present our progress," he said.

The week-long 2026 First Department and Agency Heads' Meeting serves as a strategic platform to ensure coordinated implementation of government mandates and promote transparent and effective public administration.

"It is important that CLRC is given the opportunity to inform stakeholders on the work of the Commission. We appreciate the platform to present our progress."

Dr. Mange Matui, Secretary.

CLRC Hosts Inaugural National Conference on the PNG Constitution

In commemoration of Papua New Guinea's 50th Independence Anniversary, the Constitutional and Law Reform Commission (CLRC) successfully hosted the inaugural National Conference on the Constitution of Papua New Guinea at APEC Haus from 27–28 November 2025.

The two-day conference brought together a broad cross-section of stakeholders, including key government agencies, constitutional offices, public servants, NGOs, researchers, lawyers, judges, policymakers, and law enthusiasts. Notable participants included Constitutional Father Chief Dr. John Momis and Papua New Guinea's Ambassador to the United States, Mr. Arnold Amet.

The forum aimed to strengthen CLRC's core mandate in law review and reform by gathering diverse perspectives, views, and expert commentary on the development and evolution of the Constitution over the past 50 years.

The conference was officially opened by Prime Minister Hon. James Marape, alongside Chief Dr. John Momis and CLRC Chairman Hon. Saki Soloma. This was followed by an opening panel discussion featuring Chief Dr. Momis, Ms. Josephine Kilage, Ms. Winnie Kiap, and Professor Stephen Pokawin, who led discussions on key aspects of the Constitution.

Over the course of the conference, participants presented on various areas of law, identifying critical issues, legislative gaps, and proposing reforms and pathways forward. Key themes covered included the National Goals and Directive Principles, the evolution of the Constitution, decentralization, healthcare delivery, the system of

government, parliamentary processes, human rights, customary land, electoral integrity, and environmental resilience, among others.

These insights are vital in supporting CLRC's work, ensuring that its law reform initiatives are informed, practical, and responsive to the current and emerging needs of Papua New Guinea.

CLRC Chairman Hon. Saki Soloma emphasized the importance of the conference, noting that such a forum is both timely and necessary in fostering a collective national effort toward ensuring laws remain just and equitable.

"As Papua New Guinea approaches 50 years of Independence, this conference provides a timely space to evaluate how our Constitution has shaped the nation, how it continues to influence our development journey, and how we can strengthen it for the next half-century and beyond."

At the conclusion of the presentations, participants were presented with tokens of appreciation in recognition of their valuable contributions. Their insights will play a significant role in informing future Terms of Reference undertaken by the Commission.

As a statutory body established under the CLRC Act 2004, CLRC undertakes legal research, public consultations, and policy analysis to identify legislative gaps and propose reforms that promote justice, good governance, and accountability. The conference served as a critical platform for advancing CLRC's mandate in reviewing and reforming the laws of Papua New Guinea.



Chief Dr. John Momis presenting during the opening panel discussion. Top (L-R): Sir Arnold Amet, Professor Stephen Pokawin and Chief Dr. John Momis

National Conference on the Constitution of Papua New Guinea - Highlights



CLRC Commissioners Officially Sworn In



Reappointed Commissioner Dr. Dora Kuir-Ayius.



Newly appointed Commissioner Hon. Isi Henry Leonard

Two Commissioners of the Constitutional and Law Reform Commission (CLRC), Dr. Dora Kuir-Ayius and Hon. Isi Henry Leonard, MP, were officially sworn in during a ceremony in Port Moresby.

The swearing-in ceremony was officiated by Principal Magistrate Mr. Billy Pidu, formally administering the oath of office to the two Commissioners.

Dr. Kuir-Ayius has been reappointed for her second term as Commissioner, reflecting her continued contribution and expertise in the areas of social research, anthropology and political science. Hon. Isi Henry Leonard, the Member for Samarai–Murua Open, joins the Commission as a newly appointed Commissioner, bringing vast government experience and valuable perspectives to support the Commission’s core mandate in law review and reform.

CLRC Chairman, Hon. Saki Soloma, congratulated both Commissioners on their appointments and reaffirmed the important role Commissioners play in guiding the work of the Commission.

“The Commission relies on the diverse expertise and perspectives of its Commissioners to guide the review and reform of our laws. We are pleased to have Dr. Dora Kuir-Ayius continue her service and to welcome Hon. Isi Henry Leonard to the Commission.”

He added, “(CLRC) Commissioners play a pivotal role in the operations of the Commission. They oversee CLRC reports, participate in national consultations – particularly on important constitutional directives – provide direction on administrative and financial matters, and contribute their specialized knowledge to advance the Commission’s core mandate in law review and reform.”

CLRC Secretary Dr. Mange Matui also welcomed the Commissioners, noting that their experience and professional backgrounds will strengthen the Commission’s efforts in advancing key law review and reform programs.

“The Commission continues to undertake critical reviews

of our constitutional and legal framework. The knowledge, experience and perspectives that Commissioners bring are essential in ensuring our work remains relevant to the needs and aspirations of the people of Papua New Guinea,”

Dr. Matui added, “With the caliber, experience, and leadership of both Commissioners at the Board level, I am confident about the continued progress and future prospects of CLRC.”

CLRC Commissioners serve in a part-time capacity, providing strategic guidance and oversight to the Commission’s law review and reform functions.

Both appointments were made by the Minister for Justice and Attorney General through notice in the National Gazette, in accordance with the governing provisions of the Commission.

Upon swearing in, both Commissioners reaffirmed their commitment and dedication, by pledging to use their specialized knowledge and experience to progress CLRC and the country forward in regards to law review and reform.

“I accept this reappointment, not only as a personal honor alone, but a renewed call to service,” expressed reappointed Commissioner Dr. Dora Kuir-Ayius.

Commissioner Hon. Isi Henry Leonard expressed similar sentiment, “I would like to thank the Government and also the (CLRC) Chairman for appointing me as one of the Commissioners to this very important office that is here. I am truly humbled and honored to be given this opportunity to serve the people of Papua New Guinea, through this office, CLRC.”

The Constitutional and Law Reform Commission continues to play a vital role in strengthening Papua New Guinea’s legal and governance framework, through its core mandate in law review and reform, as stipulated under the CLRC Act 2004.

CLRC Hosts Open Day in Commemoration of PNG's 50th Independence Anniversary

The Constitutional and Law Reform Commission (CLRC) successfully hosted an Open Day as part of activities commemorating Papua New Guinea's 50th Independence Anniversary, under the theme "50 Years of Independence: The Constitution, Law Reform and the Future of PNG."

The Open Day featured a high-level panel discussion comprising Hon. Dr. Allan Marat, Mr. Sumasy Singin, Dr. Eric Kwa, Ms. Martha Kokiva, Dr. Mange Matui, and Ms. Foa Opa. Panellists reflected on Papua New Guinea's independence journey, the evolution of the Constitution, and broader issues relating to the Rule of Law, the National Goals and Directive Principles, and the future direction of law reform.

The discussion highlighted the enduring relevance of the Constitution and reaffirmed CLRC's pivotal role in advancing constitutional development, consistent with the vision set by the Constitutional Planning Committee (1972–1975).

Former CLRC Chairman Dr. Allan Marat shared key reflections on constitutional development, while Deputy Chairperson Ms. Martha Kokiva underscored the significance of the Open Day and panel dialogue.

"The panel provides a platform for prominent Papua New Guineans to reflect on our nation's constitutional journey and the critical role of law reform in shaping our future," Ms. Kokiva said.

"It also offers young people, particularly students, a valuable opportunity to understand how laws and principles have guided our progress since independence, and how they, as future leaders, can advance this vision."

Students from several higher education institutions within the National Capital District actively participated in the program, engaging directly with panelists through questions and discussions. Participating schools included Port Moresby National High School, Tokarara Secondary School, Kopkop College, Sunrise Bethel Christian School, and Caritas Business College.

In addition to the panel discussion, students interacted with CLRC officers at various divisional information booths, gaining practical insight into the Commission's mandate, functions, and ongoing law reform programs.

CLRC Secretary Dr. Mange Matui emphasized the Commission's commitment to public awareness, youth engagement, and inclusive participation in law reform.

"We encourage students and the wider community to interact with CLRC, learn about our projects, and share their perspectives," Dr. Matui said.

"The youth are the future leaders, policymakers, lawyers, administrators, and thinkers who will guide our nation over the next fifty years."

He added that CLRC's work is guided by fundamental questions concerning whether laws serve the people, reflect national values, and prepare the country for the future - questions that require active participation from all Papua New Guineans.

The Open Day was further supported by other Law and Justice Sector agencies, which hosted information booths to engage with students and members of the public, reinforcing inter-agency collaboration and collective responsibility within the sector.



Insert (L-R): Mr. Stephen Mase (NBC Host) and panelists Mr. Sumasy Singin; Dr. Allan Marat; Dr. Mange Matui; Ms. Martha Kokiva; Dr. Eric Kwa; and Ms. Foa Opa.

CLRC Open Day: Highlights in Pictures



Staff Undertakes Financial Acquittal Training

The Constitutional and Law Reform Commission (CLRC) staff and management participated in a Financial Acquittal Training aimed at strengthening financial accountability, transparency, and compliance in the execution of the Commission's activities and projects.

The training was led by the Executive Manager for Finance and Administration, Mr. Newman Saiakali, and Manager Finance, Mrs. Mariena Siega, as part of an initiative undertaken by the Finance and Administration Division. Captured in the CLRC 2026 Annual Work Plan (2026 AWP), the program seeks to reinforce the importance of preparing quality financial acquittal reports and adhering to standardized government procurement and payment procedures. The training ensures that all officers are well-equipped to manage public funds responsibly and remain accountable in the implementation of assigned projects.

The first session focused on the key components of a quality financial acquittal report, covering mandatory documentation requirements, compliance standards, accounting principles, and quality control measures.

Staff and management actively contributed insights to strengthen internal financial procedures, ensuring they remain current, transparent, and effective.

The second session concentrated on Procurement and Payments Procedures. Officers were guided through the procurement process, including expenditure authorization through the Section 32 Officer, the procurement flow process, and supplier performance assessment. The session provided clarity on the necessary steps to ensure transparent and accountable transactions between the Commission and service providers.

In closing, CLRC Deputy Secretary for Legislative Reform, Mrs. Dorothy Mimiko-Kesenga, commended the Finance and Administration Division for facilitating the training. She emphasized that such initiatives reinforce professionalism and uphold the integrity and financial responsibility of the Commission.



Manager Finance, Mrs. Marie Siega, during the financial acquittal program.



Executive Manager Finance, Mr. Newman Saia Kali speaking during the training.



CLRC Staff and Management in attendance during the financial acquittal training.

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Driving Policy Excellence Through Continuous Learning

Mr. Vincent Gigmai receiving his Masters Degree in 2024

“Once again, I am very grateful for CLRC having faith and confidence in me.. in allowing us to attain such knowledge and skills..”

The Constitutional and Law Reform Commission (CLRC) proudly recognises the achievement of Mr. Vincent Gigmai, who recently attained a Master’s Degree in Economic and Public Policy (MEPP) from the University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG).

The MEPP is a two-year postgraduate program undertaken between 2022 and 2023, with graduation in 2024. Delivered in partnership with the Australian National University (ANU) Crawford School, the program combines rigorous coursework, research, and flexible learning to strengthen leadership, enhance evidence-based policy analysis, and support professional development.

Through the program, Mr. Gigmai has been equipped with practical tools to formulate effective policies that improve service delivery and drive economic development. It also provides a broader strategic perspective - enabling leaders to better understand how organisations and the country operate, and how they can be positioned to remain competitive in an increasingly complex environment.

At CLRC, Mr. Gigmai serves as Senior Policy Officer within the Research, Monitoring and Policy Division. The knowledge and skills gained through the program have strengthened his ability to approach his work with a broader perspective, contribute meaningfully to policy discussions, and provide informed advice on public policy and economic issues. He notes that the training has deepened both his understanding of his role and his appreciation for the work of the Commission. Reflecting on this milestone, Mr. Gigmai expressed sincere gratitude to those who supported him throughout

his academic journey. He acknowledged God as the source of strength and guidance, and extended heartfelt thanks to his wife, Helen, and daughter, Va-Gayle, for their patience and understanding during demanding periods of study. He also recognised his MEPP course mates for their friendship, generosity, and support.

He further expressed appreciation to the Commission for its continued support and encouragement, which played a key role in the successful completion of his studies.

Now marking his tenth year with CLRC, Mr. Gigmai described this achievement as both humbling and rewarding. He emphasised that such opportunities reflect the Commission’s commitment to investing in its people and strengthening institutional capacity through professional development.

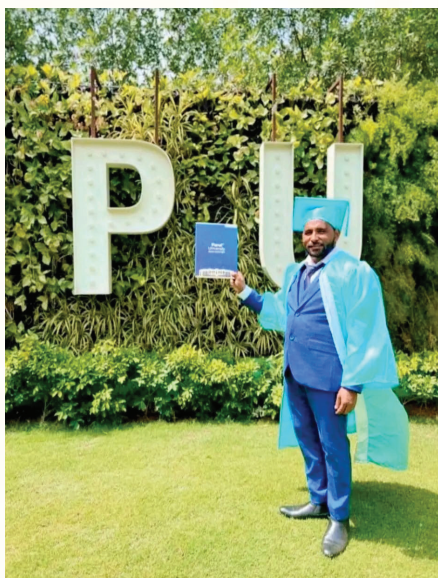
“Gaining such a big paper like this not only makes me humble but am so proud of the Commission. It’s one of the many ways the office rewards its loyal and dedicated officers. This year is my tenth year with the Commission.”

He added, “Once again, I am very grateful for CLRC having faith and confidence in me and my other colleagues in allowing us to attain such knowledge and skills so we can collaborate and serve our organisation and country well.”



Mr. Vincent Gigmai presenting his research on District Development Authorities (DDA) late last year.

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Strengthening Constitutional Law Through Advanced Study

Mr. Biteng Narewec posing with his Masters Degree at Parul University, India.

Mr. Biteng Narewec, Principal Legal Officer with the Constitutional Law Division, recently completed a Master's Degree in Constitutional and Administrative Law from Parul University in Gujarat State, India.

Mr. Narewec undertook the nine-month postgraduate program from August 2024 to May 2025. The program combined both coursework and research, providing in-depth exposure to constitutional principles, administrative law, and comparative legal studies. His decision to pursue further studies was driven by both personal ambition and professional responsibility, as his role within the Commission requires specialised knowledge in constitutional law and legal reform.

Prior to his studies, Mr. Narewec served as a Senior Legal Officer within the Constitutional Law Division, where he was actively involved in reviewing constitutional laws and organic laws, conducting consultations, analysing legal frameworks, and recommending reforms. The opportunity to further his studies aligned directly with the nature of his work and enabled him to deepen his expertise in areas critical to the Commission's mandate. Reflecting on his academic journey,

Mr. Narewec acknowledged the challenges he faced, particularly in managing a demanding study schedule and adapting to a new cultural and linguistic environment. With classes beginning early in the morning and communication barriers within a predominantly Hindi-speaking campus, he relied on discipline, adaptability, and the support of fellow students and lecturers to successfully navigate the experience.

Despite initial setbacks, including disappointment with his first semester results, Mr. Narewec remained determined. Through perseverance, faith, and improved study approaches, he achieved outstanding results in his final semester, ultimately graduating with a first-class Master's Degree.

“I am now better equipped to serve the Commission and contribute to meaningful law reform.”

A key takeaway from his studies was a deeper understanding of the importance of protecting the basic structure of the Constitution. Drawing from comparative legal frameworks, particularly the Indian constitutional doctrine established in *Kesavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala (1973)*, Mr. Narewec highlighted the significance of safeguarding fundamental constitutional principles such as the supremacy of the Constitution, rule of law, separation of powers, and judicial review.

He noted that similar principles are embedded within Papua New Guinea's constitutional framework, including the National Goals and Directive Principles, basic rights, and the role of constitutional offices such as the Ombudsman Commission and the Auditor-General. His studies have reinforced the importance of preserving the independence of these institutions and ensuring that they operate free from external influence.

In addition to expanding his legal perspectives, Mr. Narewec

strengthened his research capabilities through both doctrinal and non-doctrinal research methods. These skills have enhanced his ability to analyse legal issues, conduct comparative studies, and contribute to evidence-based law reform. His academic work has also resulted in the development of several research articles, which are expected to be published.

At CLRC, Mr. Narewec's new qualification has significantly enhanced his role. The knowledge and insights gained will directly support the Commission's constitutional work, including providing legal and research support, contributing to national dialogue on constitutional issues, and assisting in future Supreme Court References to examine the actions of the executive government.

He emphasised that the Commission is increasingly utilising platforms such as conferences and seminars to engage with stakeholders and address constitutional challenges. The recent National Constitution Conference held at APEC Haus in November 2025 is one such example, where key issues and reform recommendations were discussed and documented for further action.

On a personal level, Mr. Narewec described the achievement as a significant milestone in his career development, one that not only enhances his professional standing but also serves as inspiration for others. He expressed gratitude to the Commission for its sponsorship and continued support throughout his studies.

“Because I was sponsored by CLRC. I would say is the organization that supported me throughout my studies and entire journey.”

He added, “From the knowledge, skills and the perspective gained. It now places me in a more better position to contribute meaningfully towards the legal and research work of the Organization.”

BEYOND THE DESK

Cleanathon Initiative

While CLRC’s remains committed to its core mandate in law review and reform, the Commission also values community engagement as an integral part of its role. Through initiatives such as the cleanathon, CLRC demonstrates its commitment to creating a safe, healthy, and hygienic environment that is conducive to both work and community well-being.



Above: CLRC Staff during the cleanathon program around the Commission’s office in Waigani.

CLRC Female Officers Commemorate International Women’s Day



CLRC female officers commemorating International Women’s Day.

The Constitutional and Law Reform Commission (CLRC), in a small yet meaningful gathering, marked International Women’s Day under the theme “Invest in Women, Invest in Progress.”

The program was led by CLRC Deputy Secretary for Legislative Services, Mrs. Dorothy Mimiko-Kesenga, who emphasized the vital role women play in society and acknowledged the challenges women all over the world often face while advancing within their respective

professional and social spaces.

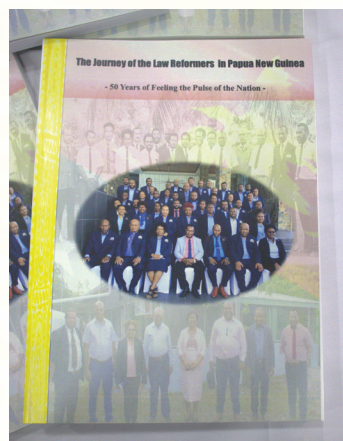
During the session, discussions centred on key themes such as gender equality, women’s empowerment, respect and dignity, inclusion, and advocacy for positive change.

The open discussions also incorporated biblical perspectives on the theme, encouraging female officers to excel in their respective roles with humility and dedication. Officers noted that such values help nurture leadership qualities not only in the workplace but also within families and communities. Other meaningful conversations reiterated on promoting equal participation, health and mental well-being, ending discrimination and violence, celebrating the achievements of women, and highlighting issues that continue to affect women in society.

CLRC continues to uphold the principles of gender equality and inclusive participation, recognizing the important contribution women make in advancing the Commission’s core mandate in law review and reform. This ensures that Papua New Guinea’s laws remain just and reflective of a Melanesian jurisprudence where the voices of women are heard and respected.

The program concluded with a cake-cutting ceremony to commemorate International Women’s Day.

CLRC 50th Independence Anniversary Celebrations - Highlights



Staff undertake GESI Training



CLRC Fitness Program



CLRC Participates in the Pacific Islands Law and Order Network (PILON) Annual Event in 2025



CLRC Lawyers and Principal Legal Officers during the Opening of the 2026 Legal Year



MEET THE TEAM



Office of the Secretary

From L-R: Isaac Mona (Senior Driver); Tony Sii (Executive Officer); Dr. Mange Matui, PhD (Secretary); Samantha Sipo (Senior Executive Assistant) and Roland Dannes (Public Relations Officer) WW



Constitutional Law Division

From L-R: Bernard Apupu (Legal Officer); Biteng Narewec (Principal Legal Officer); Doko Kari (Director); Salome Bamler (Senior Legal Officer) and Athaliah Orea (Executive Assistant).



Advisory and Drafts Division

From L-R: Gideon Sohenaloe (Legal Officer); Kemy Kaipas (Senior Legal Officer); Dorothy Mimiko-Kesenga (Deputy Secretary for Legislative Reform Wing); Maxine Gimolo (Executive Assistant) and Elijah Howard Powe (Principal Legal Officer).



Research, Monitoring and Policy Division

From L-R, front row: Natasha Bellie (Executive Assistant); Vincent Gigmai (Senior Policy Officer); Norman Gulo (Director); Bugia Ghani (Research Officer); Nick Maiwara (Senior Research Officer). Backrow L-R: Lesley Urikai (Research Officer) and Philemon Koni (Policy Officer).



Underlying Law and Colonial Law Division

From L-R: Sandon Kikala (Principal Legal Officer, Colonial Laws); Dorothy Mimiko-Kesenga (Deputy Secretary for Legislative Reform Wing); Betty Yakopya (Principal Legal Officer, Underlying Laws) and Laden Dawa (Legal Officer).



CLRC Corporate Services Wing



Finance and Administration Division

From L-R, front row: Hanky Nagamki (Janitor); Bill Katu (Manager, Administration); Newman Saia Kali (Executive Manager, Finance and Administration); Marieana Siega (Manager, Finance); Julie Kila (Receptionist) and Kerry Joseph (Janitor). From L-R, backrow: Max Kupe (Security Officer); Agena Egusa (Janitor); and Haoda Nua (Certifying Officer).



HRM & ICT Division

From L-R, front row: Anki Zabre (IT Officer); Adrin Manavutah (Senior HRM Officer); Lydia Ekonika (Executive Manager, HRM&ICT); Fo'oa Opa (Manager, HRM); Betty Laimo (GESI Officer) and Thomas Guria (Personnel Officer). From L-R, backrow: Fowe Peka (Librarian), Solomon Kenpale (Driver), and Jerome Moskir (IT Officer)



“Reforming Laws for a Better Papua New Guinea”

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