MEDIA RELEASE
Friday 6 December 2019

Address by PNG NRI Director, Dr. Osborne Sanida
at the PNG NRI 2019 Christmas Luncheon

6 December 2019, PNG NRI Campus, Waigani, NCD.

Good day to you all gathered here today. Today marks our annual end of year gathering to thank and appreciate our staff and stakeholders who have worked hard over the year to make the work of PNG NRI a success. Firstly, we acknowledge and thank the PNG NRI Council members led by Acting Chairman, Mr Wilson Thompson, for the Council’s oversight in the governance and strategic direction of the Institute, not just this year but the past and future years. We also acknowledge the contribution of our families as they are also a key stakeholder to our success. For example, in the past few weeks, those involved in the management and lecturing during the Economic Policy Analysis Course (EPAC) will have had to put up with the challenge of being involved in the intensive course and the family support is acknowledged during this period.

You, the staff of PNG NRI, have worked hard over the year to achieve the milestones in the work of the three Divisions and the work of Management and Council. Research or Inquiry is our main function as an Institute. As per the NRI Act, the Institute is mandated to conduct applied social and economic research into the PNG economy and society. This mandate is translated into our mission, which is to generate research information that will lead to informed decision-making in order to improve the welfare of our people. I wish to acknowledge and thank our researchers led by the Deputy Director Research (Associate Professor Eugene Ezebilo) and the Program Leaders (of the Research Programs), and the Bougainville Referendum Research Project and the APEC Study Centre. Over the year, the researchers have been actively involved in research, publication, and dissemination of research results to key stakeholders for informed decision-making.

Our Corporate Services Division (CSD) continues to strive to make the functions of human resources, finance, grounds and facilities, executive support, and commercial services work better in order to support the work of research, which is our key mandate. For example, we have updated the Financial Operations Manual in order to conform to the recently passed National Procurement Act. This will contribute to making the process of procurement more efficient for both research projects and non-research projects. In the area of human resource development, we have fine-tuned the annual performance appraisal, which has been used for this year’s staff performance appraisals. There have been improvements in the other areas of CSD. We acknowledge the Acting Deputy Director, Corporate (Dr. Esther Lavu) and the Section Heads of CSD and their staff for the work they have done over the year.

In this age of technological revolution, our Knowledge Management Division (KMD) staff have worked hard to ensure that our Information management systems are up to standard not only to assist the research work and corporate functions of PNG NRI, but also to keep up with new technology coming onto the market. The KMD is also at the forefront of the Institute’s Inform and Influence work together with the Research Division. We thank the oversight of the two Deputy Directors, and the Section...
Managers and Unit Leaders and staff of KMD for their contributions to the work of the Division over the year.

I want to use this occasion to also thank and acknowledge our key external stakeholders who have contributed to the success of our work during the year. Firstly, we thank the Australian Government through DFAT and ABT for providing funding support for our research and related functions, including sponsoring some of the EPAC students. The Institute is grateful to the people of Australia for this support, which has been provided for a number of years now. We also thank our National Government for the annual funding support, although it is mainly for operational funding. Going forward, I appeal to the Government to put more funding into research and development, not just for PNG NRI but also like-minded research institutions and universities. We thank the Departments and Institutions that have collaborated with us over the year. For example, Departments of Treasury, National Planning, and Lands and Physical Planning on the National Land Summit; and others such as Department of Education, Department of Justice and Attorney General, and the Independent Consumer and Competition Commission.

To conclude, let me reiterate the mission of the PNG NRI, which is to generate research information that will lead to informed decision-making in order to improve the welfare of our people. During the course of the year, as an Institute, we have contributed to this mission in one way or another through our Inquire, Inform and Influence work, supported by our key stakeholders, including our families.

As it is the festive season, we thank God for sending his Son Jesus for our salvation, the real reason for Christmas. May you and your families have a Very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year 2020!

Authorized for release by:

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PNG NRI Acting Director