



## Office of the Minister

*Department of BPA Implementation*

*"Achieving Peaceful and Sustainable Outcomes"*

### Media Release

#### **ABG Welcomes Confirmation of Meeting of Joint Supervisory Body**

ABG Minister for Peace Agreement Implementation, the Hon. Albert Punghau MHR today welcomed confirmation that a meeting of the Joint Supervisory Body (JSB) will be held in Port Moresby from 14 to 15 December 2017.

"This will be the first meeting of the JSB to be held since mid 2016 and the Autonomous Bougainville Government welcomes the National Government's commitment to honour its obligations under the Bougainville Peace Agreement", Minister Punghau said.

The meeting will provide both Governments with the opportunity to consider practical steps in implementing the Bougainville Peace Agreement. Critical amongst these are unresolved issues around funding and the need to confirm arrangements for the Independence Referendum, which has a target date of 15 June 2019.

"The ABG welcomes the opportunity to discuss these important issues further. With the target date for the referendum approaching fast, there is no time to waste, and it is essential that our two government's reach agreement on a way forward without any further delays", Minister Punghau said.

Minister Punghau noted that whilst the JSB was an important high level forum, there is also a need for ABG and National Government Ministers and Officials to engage in continued dialogue regarding the peace process. Minister Punghau noted that he has recently held constructive meetings with the National Government Minister for Bougainville Affairs, and encouraged all ABG Ministers and Officials to continue to actively engage with National Government partners in the lead up to the JSB.

Under the Bougainville Peace Agreement, the Joint Supervisory Body is the key consultation mechanism in relation to autonomy and is chaired by the President of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville and the Prime Minister of PNG.

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