



BOUGAINVILLE FINAL POSITION ON SELF- GOVERNMENT AND INDEPENDENCE

Purpose

This Position Paper sets out the considered and final position of the Autonomous Bougainville Government regarding the orderly and constitutional progression of Bougainville's independence.

The Autonomous Bougainville Government affirms that progress towards Independence for Bougainville must proceed in a manner that preserves peace, promotes stability and provides certainty for both governments.

Bougainville Final Position

The Autonomous Bougainville Government states, in clear and unequivocal terms, that:

- I. Present - 1 September 2027: Preparation for self-government; and
- II. 1 September 2027 to 2030: Self-Government
- III. 2030: Independence - An independent nation state with sovereign powers and laws, recognized under international law and by other sovereign states to be an independent state, separate from the state of Papua New Guinea.

Phase One: Present to 1 September 2027

Preparation for Self-Government

The period from the present until 1 September 2027 shall constitute the period of preparation for self-government.

During this phase, the Autonomous Bougainville Government shall focus on the strengthening of institutions, enhancement of governance capacity, consolidation of peace and security, development of the economic and fiscal foundations of government, and the completion of all legislative, administrative and policy measures necessary for the assumption of expanded responsibilities. The details of these are to be finalized and captured in the Melanesian Framework currently being drafted by the Joint Technical Team.

This period shall be directed towards ensuring that Bougainville is fully prepared to enter into self-government on 1 September 2027.

The Melanesian Framework is the **Exit Strategy** that provides for the transitional period, defined as Self-Government by the ABG, provided for under Part XIV.

Phase Two: 1 September 2027 to 2030

Self-Government

The period commencing on 1 September 2027 and concluding in 2030 shall constitute the period of self-government.

For the avoidance of doubt, Self-Government is defined as:

The existing autonomous arrangements together with the assumption and exercise of all additional powers, subject to consultation and agreement with the National Government, available under Section 289 of the Constitution of Papua New Guinea.

Accordingly, self-government shall comprise:

- the continuation of Bougainville's autonomous status under Part XIV of the Constitution;
- the progressive delegated and/or shared transfer, assumption and exercise of additional powers available under Section 289 of the Constitution; and
- the practical expression of Bougainville's right to govern its own affairs through institutions established by law and exercised in accordance with constitutional processes.

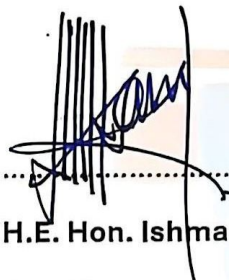
The Autonomous Bougainville Government considers this period to represent the fullest practical and constitutional expression of self-government available under the existing constitutional framework. At the end of this period and on a specified date in 2030, Bougainville will declare independence and assume all sovereign functions and powers.

Principles Guiding the Transition

The progression to self-government shall be guided by the following principles:

- Respect for the Bougainville Peace Agreement and Part XIV of the Constitution of Papua New Guinea;
- Commitment to peaceful, orderly and constitutional processes;
- Mutual respect and cooperation between the National Government and the Autonomous Bougainville Government;
- Progressive transfer and exercise of powers in accordance with 289 – 299 of the national Constitution;
- Preservation of peace, security and political stability; and
- Promotion of economic sustainability and effective governance.

Endorsed by:

A blue ink signature of H.E. Hon. Ishmael Toroama, consisting of several vertical strokes followed by a horizontal flourish.

H.E. Hon. Ishmael Toroama, MHR
President

A blue ink signature of Hon. Ezekiel Masatt, featuring a large, stylized 'E' and 'M'.

Hon. Ezekiel Masatt, MHR
Vice President

Date: 23 June 2026

Attachment 1: Features of the Final Bougainville Position

Featured items	Overview	ABG Position
a) BPA and Part XIV of National Constitution.	Part XIV was crafted from the BPA. The final ABG position is firmly grounded in the BPA and Part XIV	We have consistently complied with the BPA and Part XIV.
b) Independence Definition and Referendum results	Independence: An independent nation state with sovereign powers and laws, recognized under international law and by other sovereign states to be an independent state, separate from the state of Papua New Guinea. Referendum Results: - Independence = 97.7% - Greater Autonomy = 1.69%	ABG is giving effect to the jointly agreed definition. ABG is committed to honouring the outcome of the referendum results based on the jointly crafted independence definition.
c) Good faith: Joint Communique – January 11, 2021	Joint Communique outlines the process for the joint consultations as per S342 (1). The ABG has consistently implemented this Joint Communique in good faith.	ABG commitment in joint consultation is made in good faith according to the letter of the law and the spirit of the peace agreement.
d) Agreed roadmap and timeframe (In the process of the joint post-referendum consultation, both governments agreed to self-government, independence, adoption of the Bougainville constitution	- Part XIV, BPA - Joint Communique - Kokopo Joint Statement - Wabag Joint Statement - APEC Joint Statement - Era Kone Covenant - Melanesian Agreement	Era Kone Covenant, the Wabag roadmap is the basis of ABG exit within the agreed timeframe of no earlier than 2025 and no earlier than 2027. The autonomy arrangement is transitional to independence. Referendum options included a constitutionally-

		guaranteed choice of separate independence.
e) Melanesian Agreement, Melanesian Framework, JSB December 2025	The Melanesian Agreement came about as a result on the impasse on the voting threshold.	ABG in good faith has remained in full compliance to the process.
f) Violations	Melanesian Agreement (Clause 1.5), JSB resolution of December 2025 (Resolution 2.1.2), provide for the joint consultation between the two Speakers on the crafting of the sessional order.	The unilateral act constitutes a direct violation of the Melanesian agreement and disrespects the spirit of the Bougainville Peace Agreement and Part XIV. The violation to the agreed consultative process now creates a dispute warranting JSB to resolve the matter.
g) Exit	Bougainville Peace Agreement and Part XIV provides for the exit based on the independence definition and the results of the referendum.	The BPA and Part XIV of the National Constitution always intended for the autonomy arrangements to be transitional to Bougainville's political future. As such, the exit (process after consultations per S342) is sufficiently provided for in the legal framework. The Melanesian Framework is the Exit strategy that is provided for under Part XIV.
h) Final Position	Joint consultations outcome documents – EKC, MA, MF in overarching – Part XIV	Self-Government September, 1 2027. (Autonomy plus exercise of S289 powers) Independence to be declared in 2030.