PRIVATE GAVAMANI KONEKT – 3 (PGK3)

3rd Chief Justice's Business Breakfast

CONSOLIDATED OUTCOMES REPORT

Theme: Justice, Integrity and Innovation: Strengthening Markets and Governance in PNG

Tuesday, 18 August 2026

The Hilton Hotel - Port Moresby, NCD

Table of Contents

CHIEF JUSTICE BREAKFAST & PRIVATE GAVAMANI KONEKT – 3 (PGK3)

3rd Chief Justice's Business Breakfast- PGK 3

Tuesday 18th August, 2026

The Hilton Hotel – Port Moresby, NCD

Theme: "Justice, Integrity and Innovation: Strengthening Markets and Governance in PNG"

In 2022, the Business Council of Papua New Guinea (BCPNG) enacted the Government-to-Business (G2B) 2022–2027 Plan, focused on four key pillars: Meritocracy, Digital Government, Deregulation and Geopolitics, delivered through its Private Gavamani Konekt (PGK) Dialogues and Engagements.

PGK3 was the third Chief Justice's Business Breakfast held under this initiative. This year, BCPNG partnered with UNDP through the EU-funded Preventing and Countering Corruption in Papua New Guinea Project (PNG Anti-Corruption Project), implemented by UNDP and UNODC. The project works with the PNG Government, civil society and the private sector to strengthen national anti-corruption systems and promote business integrity, improved compliance frameworks and reduced corruption risk in areas such as procurement and governance. As part of this collaboration, UNDP partnered with BCPNG to host PGK3 to advance dialogue and strengthen anti-corruption measures across PNG's public and private sectors.

Background

This is the third Chief Justice's Business Breakfast, and the event featured sessions on Financial Crime, AML & Economic Integrity; AI, Digital Evidence & the Future of Justice; Land, Green Economy & Environmental Justice; Judicial Reform, Security & Investor Confidence; and Arbitration, Mediation & Alternative Dispute Resolution.

Partners

This event is proudly brought to you by the Business Council of PNG and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), through the EU-funded Preventing and Countering Corruption in Papua New Guinea Project (PNG Anti-Corruption Project).

3RD CHIEF JUSTICE BREAKFAST

Tuesday 18th August, 2026
0700am – 0900am
The Hilton Hotel – Port Moresby, NCD

WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS

Master of Ceremony: Carmella Gabina, Executive Director, Business Council of PNG

OPENING REMARKS

Mrs. Courtney Boustridge, Treasurer, BCPNG, and Senior Manager Advisory, PwC

Mrs. Boustridge opened the breakfast by reflecting on the outcomes of previous discussions and the importance of strengthening justice, integrity, innovation, markets and governance in Papua New Guinea. She focused on the need to strengthen institutions so that laws, policies and strategies are effectively translated into practical outcomes, explaining that PNG does not necessarily lack laws, strategies or institutions rather, one of the major challenges is implementation and delivery of what already exists, which she described as both a policy challenge and a delivery challenge, since the effectiveness of laws and institutions ultimately depends on whether businesses and citizens can rely on them when needed.

She highlighted several challenges affecting the business environment, including financial crime, illicit finance, artificial intelligence, digital evidence, land and environmental issues, commercial disputes and cybersecurity, noting that as government and business systems become increasingly connected, digital infrastructure has become an important part of economic and market resilience, and that protecting digital systems and maintaining confidence in digital transactions are increasingly important for business protection and market integrity. She also discussed the importance of creating economic opportunities for PNG's young and growing population, explaining that youth employment and participation in the formal economy are not only social issues but also matters of economic resilience, and that a stronger formal economy and greater participation can contribute to stronger communities and a more secure environment for businesses and investment.

On justice and business confidence, she emphasised that businesses require enforceable contracts, investors need confidence that disputes will be resolved fairly and efficiently, and citizens need confidence that laws are applied consistently, noting that the justice system provides an important foundation for expanding the formal economy and strengthening business confidence. She stressed that justice, integrity and innovation cannot be addressed by one institution alone, and that cooperation between the judiciary, government, private sector, civil society and development partners is necessary to identify practical reforms and translate discussions into action.

Mrs. Boustridge's key messages centred on strengthening implementation of existing laws, policies and strategies; improving commercial dispute resolution; strengthening transparency and integrity; addressing land and environmental challenges; expanding mediation and arbitration as alternatives to lengthy litigation; improving cybersecurity and digital systems; supporting young people to participate in the formal economy; and strengthening cooperation between government, judiciary, business and civil society. She concluded by emphasising that the challenge for PNG is not always to create new laws or institutions, but to make existing systems work more effectively stronger implementation, coordination, transparency and institutional capacity can improve confidence in the business environment and encouraged participants to focus not only on policies but also on the outcomes those policies must deliver.

CHIEF JUSTICE REMARKS

The Hon. Sir Gibuna Gibbs Salika, GCL KBE CSM OBE, Chief Justice of the National and Supreme Court of Papua New Guinea

Sir Gibbs Salika is one of Papua New Guinea's distinguished and longest-serving judicial leaders, having served as a State Prosecutor, Ombudsman Commission counsel and magistrate before spending more than three decades on the bench and ultimately becoming Chief Justice of Papua New Guinea. He chairs the PNG Centre for Judicial Excellence and oversees significant judicial reforms, including the operationalisation of the Court of Appeal and strengthening of the Supreme Court's role.

After acknowledging leaders of the business community, civil society representatives, development partners, members of the diplomatic corps and other distinguished guests, the Chief Justice emphasised that the theme of the breakfast Justice, Integrity and Innovation: Strengthening Markets and Governance in Papua New Guinea was timely, and that the three concepts are fundamentally connected: justice creates confidence, integrity creates trust, and innovation creates opportunity. He explained that trust is fundamental to a successful economy investors need confidence that contracts will be enforced, businesses need predictable laws, banks need protected property rights, and entrepreneurs need assurance that disputes can be resolved fairly and efficiently and highlighted the judiciary's efforts to establish business courts and dedicated teams of judges to deal with commercial cases more quickly. He further explained that the judiciary contributes to national development by maintaining confidence in the rule of law, resolving constitutional disputes, protecting democratic processes, dealing with complex commercial conflicts and protecting individual rights and freedoms, all of which contribute to social stability and nation building.

On judicial reform and access to justice, Sir Gibbs highlighted the importance of improved case management, administrative efficiency, professional development and judicial education, emphasising that a modern judiciary must continue learning because judges increasingly deal with financial crime, cybercrime, artificial intelligence, environmental governance, international commerce and complex constitutional issues. He noted that PNG's geography creates significant challenges because many citizens live far from urban centres and courts, so justice must be accessible to all citizens regardless of wealth, influence or location. On integrity, he explained that it goes beyond avoiding corruption to include accountability, transparency, consistency between words and actions, and doing what is right even when nobody is watching, stressing that judicial authority depends on public confidence and that judges must act independently, impartially and fairly and that integrity is a shared national responsibility involving government, business, civil society, citizens and the judiciary, since strong integrity strengthens public confidence, which in turn supports investment, economic opportunities and national development.

On innovation, Sir Gibbs discussed the increasing use of technology in the justice sector, including electronic filing, case management systems, electronic records and legal research tools, noting that technology can improve efficiency, accessibility and transparency, particularly in a country where geography creates barriers to accessing justice. He also addressed artificial intelligence, warning that technology must enhance justice rather than replace it, and that issues such as algorithmic bias, privacy, transparency and accountability must be carefully considered, with human judgment, judicial independence, fairness and wisdom remaining central to the administration of justice. He highlighted PNG's forests, rivers, mountains, reefs and marine ecosystems as important national assets, emphasising the need to balance economic development with environmental stewardship, and highlighted the importance of mediation and arbitration including court-annexed mediation and stronger cross-border arbitration capacity in reducing delays, resolving commercial disputes efficiently, minimising transaction costs and improving commercial certainty.

Sir Gibbs concluded that justice, integrity and innovation are mutually reinforcing principles justice provides the confidence to invest, integrity provides the trust needed for partnerships, and innovation creates opportunities for growth and emphasised that PNG's future prosperity will depend not only on its natural resources but also on the strength of its institutions, the integrity of its leaders, public confidence and commitment to the rule of law.

EUROPEAN UNION AMBASSADOR TO PAPUA NEW GUINEA ADDRESS

Her Excellency Erika Hasznos, Ambassador, European Union Delegation to Papua New Guinea

Ambassador Hasznos took up her posting in September of the previous year and had previously served as Head of Sector Europe at the European External Action Service in Brussels, working on EU security and defence policy operations and missions. She had also served as Deputy Head of Delegation to Moldova and had previously been posted to Bangladesh, and before joining the EEAS spent ten years working in multilateral climate change diplomacy, including as an EU negotiator to the UN Climate Change Conferences. She speaks Hungarian, English, Spanish and French.

After acknowledging the Chief Justice, Mrs. Courtney Boustridge, Mr. Aadil Mansoor, members of the Business Council and other business representatives, Ambassador Hasznos explained that the European Union's support for anti-corruption activities in Papua New Guinea is strongly connected to the need to build trust. She reflected on the EU's efforts to encourage European businesses to invest in PNG, noting that while the country has significant natural resources, biodiversity, minerals and a young population, investors also ask important questions about the business environment, including trust, integrity, predictability, transparency and whether there is a level playing field and emphasised that creating an enabling business environment is a work in progress, to which anti-corruption initiatives contribute.

She explained that the EU has several projects under the broader goal of preventing and countering corruption, with a total value of approximately K47 million, and stressed that combating corruption is a long-term process even countries with strong transparency and procedures continue to experience corruption. She highlighted results achieved through anti-corruption projects implemented with partners such as UNDP and UNODC, including workshops, dialogues, a review of the Code of Judicial Ethics, corruption risk assessments in public institutions, whistleblower mechanisms and capacity building for the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC). Another initiative she highlighted was support for civil society organisations working on public budgeting, worth approximately K3.5 million, aimed at helping citizens understand how public budgeting and government spending work so they can participate in public debate and demand greater transparency.

Ambassador Hasznos identified land, the green economy and environmental justice as particularly important issues for PNG, explaining that environmental justice, resource management and transparency are also important considerations under the EU's Global Gateway investment strategy, which seeks to bring together government contributions, concessional loans, EU grants and private funding for sustainable development projects such as renewable energy and green infrastructure. She emphasised that Global Gateway projects consider not only their business impact but also environmental effects, transparency of processes and whether local communities can benefit fairly from investments. She concluded by emphasising that trust, integrity and transparency are essential for attracting investment and supporting sustainable development, highlighting the EU's commitment to working with PNG on anti-corruption, environmental justice, sustainable economic development and stronger institutions, and encouraged continued dialogue between government, business, civil society and development partners.

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (UNDP) REMARKS

Mr. Aadil Mansoor, UNDP Resident Representative a.i.

Mr. Mansoor was introduced as bringing more than 20 years of international development experience, with expertise in policy analysis, strategic planning, programme management, monitoring and evaluation, governance and resilience.

After thanking the Master of Ceremonies and acknowledging the Chief Justice, the EU Ambassador, Mrs. Courtney Boustridge, members of the judiciary, private sector representatives, development partners and business leaders, Mr. Mansoor described it as a privilege to participate in the Chief Justice's Business Breakfast under the theme Justice, Integrity and Innovation: Strengthening Markets and Governance in Papua New Guinea. He connected the theme to the concept of new institutional economics, particularly the idea of institutions as the "rules of the game," explaining that formal and informal rules need to be applied consistently, fairly and without discrimination, and that bringing together different institutions and perspectives is particularly valuable for the business community because it creates opportunities to address challenges collectively.

On the rule of law and economic development, Mr. Mansoor emphasised that predictable laws and regulations, effective dispute resolution, transparency and institutional confidence all influence the cost of doing business, and stressed that the rule of law and economic development should not be treated as separate agendas because they reinforce one another. He explained that corruption can distort competition, increase business costs, undermine public confidence, discourage investment and negatively affect the natural environment, so preventing and countering corruption is not only a governance issue but also an important part of creating a fair, predictable and competitive economic environment emphasising the importance of cooperation between the public and private sectors, with businesses promoting ethical practices and strengthening internal compliance systems, and public institutions providing transparent and predictable regulatory and justice systems.

He noted that UNDP was pleased to support the anti-corruption agenda through its partnership with the Business Council of PNG and the European Union, explaining that over the previous five years the partnership had worked with government, civil society and the private sector to strengthen national anti-corruption systems and promote integrity, including strengthening business integrity and reducing corruption risks in areas such as procurement and governance. He also discussed the impact of technology on justice, identifying emerging challenges such as deepfakes, digital evidence, cybersecurity risks and the ethical use of artificial intelligence, and stressed that the key challenge is to ensure innovation strengthens rather than undermines fairness. He highlighted land, the green economy and environmental justice as important areas requiring a balance between economic development, customary land rights, environmental sustainability and climate resilience, emphasising that strong, transparent and accountable institutions are essential for investment and sustainable economic growth, and also recognised the importance of arbitration, mediation and preventive dispute resolution in providing efficient and commercially practical ways of resolving disputes while reducing pressure on the courts.

A central message of Mr. Mansoor's presentation was trust in institutions, justice systems, markets and relationships between the public and private sectors and he stressed that building this trust is not the responsibility of one institution alone but requires cooperation among the judiciary, government, private sector, civil society and development partners. He concluded by acknowledging the Business Council of PNG for convening the dialogue, the judiciary and other speakers for their contributions, and the European Union for its continued support, expressing hope that the day's discussions would be open, informative and forward-looking, and would identify practical opportunities for collaboration.

Taken together, the four opening speakers presented complementary perspectives on the theme of Justice, Integrity and Innovation: Strengthening Markets and Governance in Papua New Guinea. Mrs. Boustridge focused on translating policies and laws into practical outcomes and strengthening the business environment; Chief Justice Sir Gibbs Salika emphasised the role of justice, integrity and innovation in creating confidence, trust and opportunity; Ambassador Hasznos highlighted anti-corruption measures, transparency, environmental justice and investor confidence; and Mr. Mansoor emphasised institutional trust, cooperation, anti-corruption, technology, sustainable development and partnerships.

PRAIVET GAVAMANI KONEKT 3 (PGK 3)

Tuesday 18th August, 2026

0900am – 0400Pm

The Hilton Hotel – Port Moresby, NCD

SESSION 1: FINANCIAL CRIME, AML & ECONOMIC INTEGRITY

"Defending Markets Against Illicit Finance"

Session Moderator: Carmella Gabina, Executive Director, Business Council of PNG

Financial crime, anti-money laundering (AML), counter-terrorism financing (CTF) and economic integrity are among the major issues facing the business world today. This session examined how governments, regulators, financial institutions and private-sector stakeholders can work together to build fair, transparent and trustworthy markets, covering financial transparency, beneficial ownership disclosure, banking de-risking, cyber-enabled fraud, and public-private cooperation in enforcement and intelligence-sharing to safeguard economic integrity.

Financial Transparency

Mrs. Delores Elliott, Operations Manager, PNG Credit & Data Bureau

Asked how her work achieves a transparent and fair market, Mrs. Elliott explained that the PNG Credit & Data Bureau (CDB) supports financial transparency through credit reporting, data sharing and consumer protection. CDB manages over half a million active consumer files and carries out approximately 25,000 credit checks each month. She discussed the proposed move from voluntary credit reporting to a formal regulatory framework designed to strengthen trust and address fraud, identity theft and incomplete credit information. A major focus of her presentation was Comprehensive Credit Reporting (CCR), which combines negative information such as defaults with positive information such as timely repayments, giving a fuller picture of creditworthiness and supporting financial inclusion for people with limited credit histories. She stressed that incomplete data sharing among lenders increases financial and lending risk, and that the proposed system would include compulsory data submission, free consumer credit reports, dispute-resolution mechanisms and stronger protection against fraud and identity theft.

On recommendations, Mrs. Elliott called for data-sharing requirements to be strengthened and formalised across CDB, company registration systems, the PPSR, government agencies and financial institutions, with registration and data sharing made mandatory and supported by clear laws, data security and accurate information. She also urged continued preparation for Comprehensive Credit Reporting, improved dispute-resolution systems, and greater consumer education on their rights, alongside encouraging full lender participation in CCR.

When asked what single practical reform would most improve market integrity, Mrs. Elliott pointed to better data sharing and mandatory registration as the most important step particularly linking company registration information with credit providers, and making PPSR registration mandatory and integrated with credit reporting, to improve risk assessment, transparency and lending decisions. She added that stronger cooperation between agencies, free access to credit reports and dispute-resolution mechanisms would build public confidence.

In conclusion, Mrs. Elliott emphasised that better data sharing is central to improving market integrity in PNG. Connecting company and PPSR information with credit reporting, alongside Comprehensive Credit Reporting, consumer protection and full lender participation, would reduce fraud and information gaps and build a more transparent, inclusive and trustworthy financial system.

Beneficial Ownership

Mr. Clarence Hoot, Managing Director, Investment Promotion Authority (IPA)

Mr. Hoot presented on Beneficial Ownership Reform and legal updates in Papua New Guinea, outlining IPA's role under the National Coordinating Committee for the Grey Listing and AML/CTF agenda, with two priorities: establishing the Beneficial Ownership Register and conducting nationwide awareness. He discussed the transition from the 1966 Companies Act to the 2023 Associations and Corporations Act amendments, and explained that the purpose of the Beneficial Ownership Register is to identify the natural persons who ultimately own or benefit from companies and other entities. These reforms are intended to strengthen AML/CTF compliance, corporate governance, transparency and investor confidence, and to support PNG's efforts to address grey-listing requirements, with IPA also working on system readiness, capacity building and provincial awareness activities.

Mr. Hoot's recommendations centred on finalising the proposed legislative amendments and enacting them through Parliament to activate the Beneficial Ownership Register, and requiring companies and associations to disclose their true beneficial owners, including name, nationality, date of birth, residential address and country of residence. He called on business councils and organisations to help raise awareness, particularly in provincial and remote areas, urged businesses to move away from nominee arrangements and structures designed to hide ownership, and recommended stronger cooperation and data-sharing between IPA and law enforcement agencies.

Responding to a question from Mrs. Carmella Gabina on what technical reform could be made to improve the market, Mr. Hoot identified data sharing as the key reform, while Mrs. Vandhna Narayan added that PNG needs practical solutions and a change in approach, rather than simply spending more to exit the grey list.

In conclusion, Mr. Hoot noted that the Beneficial Ownership Reforms are well advanced. Once operational, the Register will legally require the true owners behind companies and associations to identify and register themselves, strengthening transparency, corporate governance and law enforcement support, and helping PNG meet international standards and exit the grey list.

Banking De-Risking

Mrs. Vandhna Narayan, Chief Compliance Officer, Bank of the South Pacific (BSP) Group Limited

Mrs. Narayan explained that banks use risk-based AML measures to identify, monitor and report money laundering and terrorist financing. Under PNG's AML/CTF Act, financial institutions must assess their risks and establish detection and reporting systems. Banks monitor transactions and report suspicious activity to FASU, which assesses and forwards cases for further action; however, PNG faces weaknesses in law enforcement and the justice sector, particularly around prosecution, conviction and asset seizure. She stressed that strong laws are not enough without effective implementation and enforcement capacity. Because banks serve millions of customers, they apply a risk-based approach in which higher-risk transactions receive greater scrutiny. De-risking closing or restricting a customer's account should be a last resort, applied only after investigation, questioning and assessment of the source and purpose of funds, given the disruption it can cause to individuals and businesses. Risk indicators include suspicious ownership structures, links to high-risk or grey-listed countries, sanctions exposure, high-risk industries and transactions involving government funds; she noted that 60–70% of the value of suspicious matters reported by BSP relate to misuse of government funds or corruption.

Mrs. Narayan recommended that AML effectiveness be measured by actual enforcement outcomes rather than simply the number of reports or new laws, and called for the law and justice sectors to be properly resourced to ensure AML laws are effectively implemented. She also urged stronger multi-agency cooperation, political support and real consequences for financial crime, and called for government, private sector and civil society to come together to develop solutions that produce measurable results.

Asked what single practical reform would most improve market integrity, Mrs. Narayan said market integrity should be measured by what happens after suspicious activity is reported and laws are strengthened, not by report or legislation counts. She noted that PNG's repeated grey-listing shows the current approach has not produced sufficient results, and that a different approach is needed, based on real enforcement, consequences, multi-agency cooperation and political support.

In conclusion, Mrs. Narayan said PNG needs to move beyond creating laws and reporting suspicious transactions toward effective enforcement and measurable outcomes, and that strong cooperation between government agencies, financial institutions, law enforcement and politicians is essential to strengthen AML systems and address PNG's grey-listing challenges.

SESSION 2: AI, DIGITAL EVIDENCE & THE FUTURE OF JUSTICE

"Judicial Systems in the Age of Artificial Intelligence"

Session Moderator: Flare Namaliu, Executive Director, City Pharmacy

This session explored how judicial systems, legal practitioners, policymakers and technology experts can adapt to the opportunities and challenges of artificial intelligence in the administration of justice covering AI governance frameworks, the risks posed by deepfakes and synthetic media, ethical considerations, cyber law reform, and the management and admissibility of digital evidence, with a shared view that innovation should strengthen, not undermine, fairness and public trust in the justice system.

Judiciary Initiatives in Addressing AI

Mr. Ian Augerea, Acting Registrar, Supreme and National Courts Registry

Mr. Augerea outlined the judiciary's digital transformation civil cases have been fully digitised since 2018 using a case management system also deployed in parts of Africa and Europe, with criminal justice digitisation, ADR management and sheriff enforcement modules to follow. This foundation positions AI adoption as a deliberate, cautious progression rather than a rushed rollout, with AI kept subordinate to human decision-makers and embedded into existing systems for document classification, intelligence search, anonymisation and workflow support. He described the forthcoming Integrated Criminal Case Systems Database (ICCSD), which will link police, courts, prosecutors, and correctional and juvenile justice agencies for real-time tracking of sensitive case types gender-based violence, fraud, corruption and cybercrime across 32 provincial centres within the year, supported by new solar power infrastructure at pilot sites. This sits within a phased, risk-tiered governance framework with strict access controls and mandatory audits before AI moves into higher-risk functions. Evidentiary rules are being updated to address deepfakes and synthetic media, building on the Cyber Crimes Act, with AI's role in evidence management kept tightly controlled supporting, but never replacing, judicial reasoning on guilt or sentencing. This is paired with investment in staff training, infrastructure and dedicated cybersecurity expertise.

Mr. Augerea recommended embedding AI into existing digitised systems under a phased, risk-tiered governance framework requiring leadership approval before deployment, completing the ICCSD's provincial rollout on schedule with reliable infrastructure including solar power, updating digital-evidence rules to explicitly govern AI-generated and synthetic content while prohibiting automated AI decisions on guilt or sentencing, and expanding AI and cybersecurity training with clearly defined user roles and access controls by function and sensitivity.

Note: *No audience questions with confirmed attribution, or additional closing remarks, were recorded for this segment.*

Judicial Ethics

Dr. Alma Sedlar, Chief Technical Adviser (Anti-Corruption), UNDP

Dr. Sedlar argued that AI does not create new judicial ethics but tests the existing Bangalore Principles of Judicial Conduct independence, impartiality, integrity, propriety, equality, competence and diligence in new ways, and that AI should remain an assistant rather than a decision-maker, drawing on examples from India, Estonia and Singapore where AI supports legal research and translation. She flagged data bias as a threat to impartiality and the 'black box' problem as a threat to explainability, citing a 2024 PNG case in which a lawyer submitted AI-generated fake legal authorities that were caught by the judge before ruling now used globally as a cautionary example that ethical breaches arise from misuse rather than the technology itself. She presented five principles for court AI use, attributed to PNG jurist John Kerry: understand capabilities rather than banning or blindly trusting AI, prioritise cybersecurity, verify every output, disclose reasonably, and build internal systems stressing that ethics and philosophy expertise is increasingly central to responsible AI governance.

Her recommendations were that the Bangalore Principles should apply as the standing ethical baseline for all AI-assisted judicial work, that verification of every AI output against primary sources should be mandatory, that lawyers should be required to disclose AI use in submissions, that reliance on generic public chatbots for legal authority should be prohibited, and that an internal, court-customised AI system should be developed with independent audit and public scrutiny mechanisms.

Note: *No audience questions with confirmed attribution, or additional closing remarks, were recorded for this segment.*

Cyber Law Reform

Mrs. Sarah Kuman, Partner, Allens

Mrs. Kuman highlighted AI's potential to ease document review, legal research, transcription, disclosure and case management in PNG provided modernisation stays practical and proportional to local institutional capacity rather than importing overseas models wholesale, a challenge sharpened by most AI systems being trained on non-PNG data. Judicial AI use ranges from low-risk administrative support through to tools that could influence legal reasoning. She raised unsettled questions around liability for AI-assisted errors, AI-use disclosure obligations, and the risk of uploading confidential client data to public AI tools, alongside the need for protocols to verify the authenticity of AI-generated or synthetic evidence. Citing UK judicial guidance, she stressed that human accountability for AI-assisted work must remain with judges and lawyers. She argued PNG's reform path should be staged starting with digital infrastructure, education and targeted practice directions rather than sweeping legislation while accounting for the constitutional recognition of customary law, which most AI training data does not reflect, and suggested the intersection of AI and custom merits its own dedicated conference.

Mrs. Kuman recommended pursuing practical, proportional AI modernisation matched to PNG's institutional capacity, developing clear rules on liability and disclosure for AI-assisted legal work, prohibiting the upload of confidential data to public AI tools while establishing protocols to verify AI-generated evidence, and taking a staged, capacity-building approach to reform that accounts for PNG's constitutional values and customary law.

SESSION 3: LAND, GREEN ECONOMY & ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

"Balancing Development, Customary Land and Climate Responsibility"

Session Moderator: Ben Leavai, Ben Leavai, Climate Change Adviser, Australia-PNG Economic Partnership (APEP)

This session explored how government, communities, the private sector and legal institutions can balance economic development with environmental sustainability, customary land rights and climate responsibility covering climate litigation trends, the judiciary's Green Bench initiatives, ESG and carbon market frameworks, and the resolution of land disputes and ocean governance issues.

Judiciary's Role in Environmental and Climate Matters

Mr. Nichodimus Mosoro, Secretary, National Judicial Staff Services (NJSS)

Asked what would be the solutions in resolving commercial land disputes in a faster manner, Mr. Mosoro discussed the judiciary's role in environmental and climate matters, highlighting the Resources, Environment and Climate Change (REC) Track established in May 2024 to strengthen the judiciary's ability to handle environmental, natural resource and climate cases. Since its establishment, 111 cases had been registered, with a clearance rate of approximately 63.06%. He stressed the importance of developing PNG-specific environmental jurisprudence and interpreting international environmental obligations within PNG's constitutional framework, and pointed to court digitisation as a way to reduce delays and improve access to justice. On commercial land disputes, he identified mediation and arbitration as important alternatives to lengthy court proceedings, stressing the need for clear dispute-resolution clauses in commercial contracts and highlighting court-annexed mediation. He also discussed developing PNG as a recognised seat of arbitration, which could reduce the cost and delay of resolving commercial disputes overseas.

Mr. Mosoro's recommendations were to continue developing PNG-specific environmental law, improve court efficiency through digitisation, promote mediation and arbitration for commercial disputes, establish PNG as a recognised seat of arbitration, and strengthen cooperation between the judiciary and private sector on environmental sustainability.

Asked how PNG diaspora businesses can connect to customary land and business opportunities in PNG, Mr. Mosoro explained that arbitration and jurisdiction clauses can provide certainty for cross-border business arrangements, and pointed to the New York Convention and reciprocal enforcement of foreign judgments as mechanisms that can support international commercial dealings, reinforcing the importance of developing PNG as a recognised seat of arbitration.

In conclusion, Mr. Mosoro said a stronger, more efficient justice system is needed to support development while protecting the environment, and that ADR, arbitration, court digitisation and the development of PNG-specific environmental law were key measures for faster dispute resolution and sustainable development.

ESG Compliance

Mrs. Ruth Kissam, General Manager, Corporate Affairs, Steamships Limited

Ms. Kissam explained Steamships' "Thrive" ESG strategy, which focuses on climate, waste, water, people and community. The company has committed to science-based net-zero targets by 2050 and aims to embed sustainability across its operations, with initiatives including rooftop solar, EDGE-certified green buildings and the reuse of approximately 2.1 million litres of waste oil as a fuel extender, alongside a developing decarbonisation roadmap. She emphasised that ESG requires leadership and employee participation, with workshops and collaboration helping sustainability become part of everyday operations. On customary land, she highlighted the importance of recognising customary land ownership, cultural governance and community interests in commercial development, and stressed early and continuous consultation with landowners to build relationships, understand concerns and prevent disputes before they arise. Asked what would be the solutions in resolving commercial land disputes in a faster manner, she said speed should not come at the expense of landowner rights early engagement and respect for customary governance can help resolve issues before they escalate, with the aim of outcomes that benefit all stakeholders.

Her recommendations were to maintain early and continuous engagement with customary landowners, include customary land rights within ESG frameworks, strengthen collaboration between government and the private sector, and share private-sector experience to help shape better policy and regulation.

In conclusion, Ms. Kissam said sustainable development requires businesses to weigh environmental, social and customary land responsibilities alongside economic growth, and that faster resolution of commercial land disputes depends on meaningful consultation, respect for customary ownership, and cooperation between businesses, communities and government.

Ms. Rhonda Kopman, Sustainable Development Manager, Steamships Limited

Note: *Ms. Kopman was not separately listed on the official programme but participated as part of the Steamships Limited delegation alongside Mrs. Kissam.*

Ms. Kopman emphasised that sustainability strategies only succeed when employees, leaders and operational teams understand and participate in implementation, highlighting the value of leadership workshops and operational collaboration in embedding sustainability commitments into everyday business practice. She discussed Steamships' emissions-reduction efforts under the "Thrive" ESG strategy and supported the ongoing decarbonisation roadmap guiding the company toward its 2050 net-zero target. She also raised the need for better communication between government and the private sector noting that businesses are not always aware of, or clear on, existing government policy and argued that greater visibility and communication would help businesses align sustainability strategies with national priorities. Sustainable development, she said, requires the private sector to share practical operational experience while government provides clear policy and regulatory support.

Ms. Kopman recommended including employees and operational teams in ESG initiatives, developing clear decarbonisation roadmaps, improving communication between government and businesses, aligning private-sector sustainability strategies with government policy, and strengthening government–private sector collaboration.

In conclusion, she said ESG compliance requires more than environmental targets it requires strong leadership, employee participation, clear policy and collaboration and that sustainable development in PNG depends on better alignment between government, businesses and communities to achieve practical, lasting outcomes.

SESSION 4: JUDICIAL REFORM, SECURITY & INVESTOR CONFIDENCE

"Building Trusted Institutions for Economic Growth"

Session Moderator: Desmond Yaninen, CEO, Pacifund

This session examined how strong, transparent and accountable institutions contribute to economic growth, investor confidence and an enabling business environment covering commercial court reform, regulatory simplification, ease-of-doing-business initiatives, investor protection, and the role of anti-corruption enforcement and public sector accountability in strengthening governance and trust.

Regulatory Simplification, Ease of Doing Business, Investor Protections

Mr. Daroa Peter, Director, Investor Servicing & Promotion Division, IPA

Mr. Peter outlined the governance, structure and operations of the IPA, established by an Act of Parliament under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and operating through a public–private sector Board. The leadership structure runs from the Managing Director through the Registrar of Companies, the Registrar of Intellectual Property Rights, and the Directors of Promotions and of Regulatory & Compliance. He noted that all business registrations are now handled online, with only foreign certifications requiring manual board oversight a three-step process of Entity Registration, the Reserved Activity List (RAL) + Ownership, Management and Control review, and finally Foreign Certification, approved or rejected depending on the activity.
He emphasised that Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is essential for PNG to meet its domestic economic and development objectives, but that policymakers must balance protecting local businesses against attracting foreign investment. Local concerns raised included unfair competition from non-citizen enterprises, while foreign investors raised concerns about costly compliance requirements; Mr. Peter proposed a simplified Annual Status Report System as a solution. On the RAL Review Process implemented under the Investment Promotion Act, passed in 1992 and amended in 2023 he outlined its stages of Preparation, Consultation, Finalisation and Implementation, followed by a further review cycle every three years. Key changes under discussion include clearer definition of IPA's roles and responsibilities, new investment-level requirements, and clearer rules for reserving citizen-owned and operated businesses. He closed by noting that reforming the IPA alone is not sufficient a broader policy and legal review is necessary for PNG to attract and retain the long-term benefits of FDI.

Anti-Corruption Enforcement

Mr. Peter Aitsi, Board Chair, Transparency International PNG (TIPNG)

Mr. Aitsi explained that TIPNG is a civil society organisation, not an enforcement agency, and that its role is to support improved and restored good governance operating through coalitions that empower citizens to understand their civic roles, within an environment built on mutual trust where transactions and contracts are upheld. He explained that TI combats corruption because it hinders service delivery and community wellbeing; restoring good governance creates a level playing field for investors, while weak governance limits job creation, investment and standard of living, particularly for PNG's youth.

He referenced international benchmarks, including the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) where PNG scores between 24 and 25, on a scale where 0 is highly corrupt and 100 is least corrupt, and has remained stagnant for five years and PNG's financial greylisting earlier in the year, both signalling a decline in good governance. On National Integrity Systems, he described TI's work with courts, enforcement agencies, Parliament and regulatory agencies to strengthen their operations and connect them with communities, noting that without visible enforcement, illicit activity goes unpunished and leads to systemic breakdown. He also described the Community Coalition Against Corruption (CCAC), through which TI partners with churches, chambers of commerce, unions, women's groups and youth groups a combined reach of around three million people across PNG to act as a bridge between communities and state institutions, promoting mutual accountability.

Q&A Session

Mr. Desmond Yaninen asked Mr. Daroa Peter how IPA would approach a group from an alluvial gold mine seeking a K1.5 million investment to acquire machinery, with land as their only collateral in what is classified as a resource activity. Mr. Peter responded that IPA does not provide capital funding for start-ups or revenue purchases, but that there are other avenues for citizens to access finance for machinery, and that IPA can direct enquirers to the relevant information.

Mr. Yaninen also asked Mr. Peter Aitsi what the correlation is between PNG's CPI ranking and greylisting, and what two things PNG could do to improve its corruption perception and influence greylisting. Mr. Aitsi answered that the politicisation of government institutions has cast public agencies to serve political rather than public interests, weakening agency capacity and leading to failures in investigating and prosecuting corruption, which creates bureaucratic delays that add cost and difficulty for businesses. He said the fix is to restore independence to enforcement agencies and regulators, and to support them to rebuild capacity and develop effective anti-corruption policy.

Ms. Lanna Assaigo-Kami of Assaigo Consultants/Wokim Stret Mediator asked whether anyone was involved with the IRC, and where the IRC's standing sits, beyond the fact that businesses pay online. Mr. Peter answered that government systems need to be aligned and synchronised so that different administrative agencies can communicate and collaborate, noting that registering a business and then applying for a Tax Identification Number (TIN) at the IRC is currently a complex, disjointed process, and that aligning these operations is vital to simplifying compliance for businesses.

SESSION 5: ARBITRATION, MEDIATION & ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

"Modernizing Commercial Justice in the Pacific"

Session Moderator: Desmond Yaninen, CEO, Pacifund

This session explored the growing role of arbitration, mediation and alternative dispute resolution (ADR) in supporting modern commercial justice across PNG and the Pacific, as the region attracts increasing investment in infrastructure, mining, energy, telecommunications and trade. Discussions examined how arbitration and ADR offer faster, confidential and commercially practical alternatives to litigation, and how PNG can strengthen the frameworks that support effective dispute resolution and position itself within the broader regional shift toward investor-friendly commercial justice.

Modernizing Commercial Justice in the Pacific

Ms. Lanna Assaigo-Kami, Mediator, Assaigo Consultants / Wokim Stret

Ms. Assaigo-Kami argued that mediation should be the first step in resolving disputes, fostering face-to-face communication over adversarial litigation noting that courts are not always the best route to resolving disputes and keeping the peace, whereas mediation is more culturally fitting for PNG and plays a vital peacekeeping role. She noted that litigation cases can be prolonged to the point that parties forget what they were originally disputing, and cautioned against over-reliance on AI and digital tools in litigation, as digital communication can lead to miscommunication and escalation. She also noted that lawyers can sometimes mislead clients about litigation prospects, which mediation counters through direct dialogue bringing parties together to speak honestly, reveal misunderstandings, and reach a win-win outcome.

Modernizing Commercial Justice in the Pacific

Mr. Andrew Kwimberi, Principal Mediator, Mediation Pacific

Noting a 25-year working relationship with Deputy Chief Justice Ambeng Kandakasi in advancing ADR in PNG, Mr. Kwimberi stated that PNG's ADR system is homegrown rather than copied from other jurisdictions, and is regarded as one of the best in the world supported by highly regulated codes of conduct and ethical standards under the ADR Rules, with a formal complaints process to ensure transparency and accountability. Since 2010, a total of 534 people have been trained as mediators. He explained that mediation improves access to justice for rural communities, particularly in resource-sector disputes the firm's specialty where courts order mediation and refer parties, with their lawyers, back to the village committee where the dispute arose, with a team of lawyers and sector officers, such as forestry and mining specialists, travelling to rural communities to plan and conduct these sessions.

Mr. Kwimberi described mediation as a way of bringing judicial services directly to communities, citing a training in a New Ireland district as the first instance of taking the judicial system to district level, preceded by an intake or pre-mediation conference to explain the process and confidentiality rules. He contrasted this with traditional dispute resolution methods such as sanguma, or witchcraft, accusations, where the accused has no opportunity to speak mediation, by contrast, gives every party equal opportunity to be heard, regardless of status or power. Using a logging dispute as an example, he noted that litigation-based restraining orders could halt operations for two to five years, with logs deteriorating and business activity ceasing, whereas mediation taken to the village level allowed parties to agree on land-dispute and boundary resolutions and an action timeline, lifting the restraining order sooner and allowing business to resume.

On standards and regional delivery, he explained that basic mediation skills training runs annually and is open to any interested professional, not only lawyers, judges and magistrates. The curriculum is based on Australian Mediation and Dispute Resolution Accreditation Standards, comprising two days of theory followed by role-play and practice six to seven days in total, including a day as assistant mediator with successful participants eligible for accreditation under Australia's National Mediator Accreditation System. The training is now extending across the Pacific: judges from Solomon Islands, senior court staff from Vanuatu and a lawyer from Samoa have trained in PNG, and PNG trainers, together with Australian and New Zealand counterparts, have delivered training in Kiribati. Mr. Kwimberi recommended expanding mediator training and accreditation, including at community and district level, continuing to formalise referral pathways between courts and village-level mediation, involving village court officers and local peacemakers in mainstream mediation training, and continuing regional capacity-building across the Pacific.

Modernizing Commercial Justice in the Pacific

Mr. Ambeng Kandakasi, GCL, CBE, Deputy Chief Justice, PNG Supreme and National Courts

DCJ Kandakasi outlined judiciary modernisation focused on speed, transparency and reducing case backlogs, centred on a case disposal and electronic management system, with targets to expedite justice delivery within 12 to 24 months. He reported that the National Court's target of 150 cases disposed per judge annually had reached a 141% clearance rate by June, while Supreme Court clearance had reached 98% by June and was expected to reach 100% shortly. Electronic filing eliminates lost files and reduces corruption linked to physical documents, with judges, lawyers and parties tracked digitally via timestamps for accountability. He also noted that judicial leadership and delegation have empowered judges and registrars to monitor and report monthly case management performance, and highlighted the establishment of an environmental and resource dispute track, supported by a dedicated Solicitor General unit, with judicial and legal training on environmental rule of law planned for the following year to align PNG's legal standards with international developments and investor expectations.

He announced new arbitration legislation and the repurposing of the ADR Centre to support both domestic and international arbitration, describing it as among the world's most recent arbitration legislation comprising the International Arbitration Act and the Domestic Arbitration Act designed to facilitate investor-friendly dispute resolution and keep commercial disputes local. The ADR Centre will be repurposed as a Pacific regional hub for mediation and arbitration, with contracting parties encouraged to nominate PNG as an arbitration seat, and future plans for a standalone arbitration centre to strengthen PNG's position in the Asia-Pacific. He noted that PNG has deliberately not yet signed the Singapore Convention, in order to first solidify internal mediation and arbitration practices, develop local mediator capacity and enforcement rules, and pursue legislation covering enforcement of both international and domestic mediated agreements. He also highlighted a shift in terminology from 'alternative' to 'appropriate' dispute resolution to better reflect PNG's context, and linked efficient arbitration to investor trust, legal certainty and PNG's reputation as a stable investment destination. He stressed that strong collaboration among the judiciary, government, legal professionals and communities is vital for lasting reform and public confidence no single institution can reform PNG's justice system alone, and sustainable dispute resolution depends on trust and cooperation between courts, lawyers and communities.

Q&A Session

Mr. Desmond Yaninen asked whether there is a target figure for the number of mediators PNG should have to ensure justice is delivered, and what can be done to meet that goal. With PNG's population at over 10 million, panellists suggested a benchmark of roughly one mediator for every 50 people. Mr. Kwimberi noted that of the 534 people trained since 2010, 161 applied to become mediators, 53 are fully accredited and 108 are provisionally accredited, and that more mediators are needed as caseloads grow, with mediators able to come from inside or outside the referral ADR system and legal qualification not required for training.

Mr. Daroa Peter asked whether, with over 800 languages in PNG, there is consideration of training mediators in the most common local languages. Panellists responded that a pilot programme is being planned in consultation with the Deputy Chief Justice, involving a division of the village court system and focused on how mediators can operate using local languages and remain embedded in their own communities.

Mr. Johnathon O'ata, Managing Director of Stone Ridge Limited, asked whether landowners and local or language-related mediators and peace officers who are not among the 534 already trained should be included through a directive, such as automatic ADR training for peace officers, and whether ADR should set a specific timeframe for land disputes handled separately from normal court proceedings. Panellists again pointed to a ratio of roughly one mediator per 50 people, noting the need for more mediators as case volumes grow, drawing on both internal and external mediators; DCJ Kandakasi noted the goal of training as many mediators as possible for judicial referrals, and that the repurposed ADR Centre is intended to widen access to mediation and arbitration services without the burden of going to court.

Ms. Ruth Kissam of Steamships Limited asked how the gap between village courts and professional mediators can be bridged. Panellists agreed that partnerships, resources and funding are needed to adapt existing training for delivery at community level, including for village court officers, citing a decentralisation effort in Bougainville and the practical barriers faced by community-level trainees. DCJ Kandakasi agreed that such forums influence government policy, noted that many conflicts are resolved at community level, and called for broad consultation with regulators on freeing up customary land without disenfranchising owners.

A participant asked whether ADR and mediation training could be included in police and military recruitment to support community peace and conflict resolution. Panellists noted that the ADR Committee, on which the Registrar sits alongside the security industry council, has observed that existing legislation already requires conflict-resolution training for security-provider licensing, though no providers currently meet it. A proposal was raised for the ADR Committee to seek a moratorium enabling mandatory training, beginning with NJSS security officials and magistrates as an early pilot before extending to the wider security industry.

Summary

Private Gavamani Konekt – 3 (PGK3) and the 2nd Chief Justice's Business Breakfast brought together the judiciary, government, private sector and civil society under the theme "Justice, Integrity and Innovation: Strengthening Markets and Governance in PNG." The discussions focused on strengthening economic integrity, improving justice systems, supporting responsible investment and building greater confidence in PNG's institutions.

Across the five sessions, speakers highlighted the importance of stronger institutional collaboration, effective data sharing, enforcement capacity and practical implementation of existing laws and frameworks. Discussions also emphasised the need for responsible and human-supervised use of AI, stronger environmental and customary land protections, and continued judicial reform to support investment and economic development.

A key outcome was the recognition that improving investor confidence and market integrity requires more than new legislation. It requires effective enforcement, functioning institutions, accessible dispute resolution mechanisms and meaningful engagement with communities and customary landowners. The forum also highlighted the value of arbitration, mediation and alternative dispute resolution in resolving disputes efficiently and fairly.

Overall, PGK3 reinforced the importance of justice, integrity, innovation and collaboration in strengthening PNG's business environment. The discussions provided practical areas for continued engagement between the judiciary, government, private sector and civil society to support stronger governance, economic resilience and investor confidence.

Closing Remarks

Mrs. Gabina closed Private Gavamani Konekt – 3 by thanking the event's partners and speakers, including UNDP, the EU, and the judiciary notably the Chief Justice, the Deputy Chief Justice, the Registrar, and Secretary Mosoro. She noted the forum was established three years earlier to enable direct engagement between BCPNG members and the judiciary.

She reflected on the day's key themes financial integrity and transparent markets, AI and the future of justice, land and environmental responsibility, judicial reform, and what she termed "Appropriate Dispute Resolution" (a reframing of Alternative Dispute Resolution) and emphasised trust, collaboration, investor confidence and strong institutions as key drivers of economic growth in Papua New Guinea. She confirmed that BCPNG will produce an outcomes report to share recommendations and inform future discussions, including advocacy through the Prime Minister's office and other government platforms.

Next Steps

The next steps will include informing the Business Council of PNG's Government to Business Consultative Forum (G2BCF) and contributing to the Business Protection Report. These updates will help ensure that members are informed of upcoming engagements and the progress of key business and policy issues requiring continued attention.