

Date: 28th June 2021

**FIVE REGIONAL ELECTORATES FOR WOMEN IN PARLIAMENT.
(Temporary Special Measure)**

A SUBMISSION;

To: The Special Parliamentary Committee on Gender Based Violence.

From: A Coalition of Concerned Women Leaders.

As concerned women leaders, we make this submission to highlight the importance of separating the agenda of **increasing women's representation** in Parliament from **gender-based violence**. We recognize that these are two critical and inter-related issues, and deserve the attention of government, as each affect the well-being of our nation. However, each agenda warrants a **separate stream of activities to identify opportunities and strategies for redress**.

- We wish to emphasize that the agenda of women's representation in Parliament must not be **narrowed down or submerged** under issues around Gender-Based Violence.

We envisage and understand women's representation in Parliament to be of **much broader scope**, encompassing all other areas of policy and law-making, and implementation.

We support TSM, and in particular, the implementation of the **Equality and Participation Law 2011** (constitutional amendment No.32), certified by the acting Speaker on 28th December, 2011, as a law **"MADE by the National Parliament to come into operation on the issue of writs for the 2012 General Elections"**.

- It is clear that **this government and the previous government have been in breach of women's right, and the Constitution itself**.

Equality and Participation Law: **section 101 (d)** "a number of women elected from a number of **single-member women's electorates** as defined under an Organic Law".

- **We demand that the Equality and Participation Law be complied with, by revisiting amendment to the Organic Law on Provincial and Local Level Government and the Organic Law on National and Local Government Elections.**

This is to ensure that the TSM adopted lead towards achieving a more meaningful and substantive changes to the current situation of zero women in Parliament. The global critical mass is 30% but we are humbly requesting a substantive number.

We believe that a TSM approach that guarantees **having a critical mass of women MPs is more meaningful** compared to having only 5 women regional MPs. Females (women and girls) comprise 50% of PNG's population.

- **We, therefore, demand for 22 reserved electorates for women in Parliament.**

- In addition, we **strongly oppose the proposal to divide Papua or Southern Region into two parts:** East Papua and West Papua. The latter clearly conflicts with the existing Indonesian Province of West Papua.