


Annex 5: Letter from Committee Chair to SRC, dated 12 March 2022

<p>COMMITTEE MEMBERS</p> <p>Hon. Charles Abel Member for Alotau Chairman</p> <p>Hon. Allan Bird MP/Governor ESP Deputy Chair</p> <p>Hon. Powes Parkop, LLB, LLM, MP/Governor NCD Member</p> <p>Hon Aiye Tambua Member for Goroka Member</p> <p>Hon Allan Marat Member for Rabaul Member</p> <p>Hon. Michael Dua MP/Governor Simbu Member</p> <p>Hon. Ginson Saonu MP/Governor Morobe Member</p>	<div data-bbox="798 324 989 481"><p>NATIONAL PARLIAMENT</p></div> <div data-bbox="526 492 1284 526"><h3>SPECIAL PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE</h3></div> <div data-bbox="518 582 941 683"><p>Hon Job Pomat Speaker of Parliament & Chairperson, Salaries & Remuneration Commission Waigani, PNG</p></div> <div data-bbox="1165 672 1300 705"><p>12 March 2022</p></div> <div data-bbox="518 728 590 761"><p>Dear Sir</p></div> <div data-bbox="518 772 1284 828"><p>Subject: Support for Chief Executive Office of National Gender-Based Violence Secretariat (GBV) to be graded as EL-4 to ensure appropriate GBV and management experience</p></div> <div data-bbox="518 840 1300 929"><p>I am writing to you in my role as Chairman of the Special Parliamentary Committee on Gender Based Violence (GBV) in relation to the approval of a new position of Chief Executive Officer of the National GBV Secretariat.</p></div> <div data-bbox="518 940 1300 1075"><p>The National GBV Strategy (2016-2025) is intended to guide the response to gender-based violence across the country. NEC Decision 337/2016 of 15 December 2016 (see Annex 1) officially approved the National GBV Strategy and specifically endorsed the establishment of the National Gender-Based Violence Secretariat (NGBVS), which was to be responsible for coordinating and driving implementation of the Strategy.</p></div> <div data-bbox="518 1086 1300 1220"><p>The Committee is extremely concerned that the Government has not yet established the National GBV Secretariat. In May 2021 we held the first ever parliamentary committee inquiry into GBV. As part of the inquiry we held hearings with government officials. We used those hearings to raise our concerns regarding the non-establishment of the National GBV Secretariat with the head of the Department of PMNEC and multiple Ministers.</p></div> <div data-bbox="518 1232 1300 1299"><p>On 12 August 2021 the Report tabled by the Committee in Parliament, which was endorsed by Parliament. Our Committee specifically noted the following in our Report:</p></div> <div data-bbox="590 1299 1308 1400"><p><i>It is absolutely imperative that the Government urgently address this problem. It is also vital that the NGBVS have strong, dynamic leadership and a cohort of staff with specific GBV and gender expertise. It may be that such leadership must be found outside the public service to ensure the best mix of leadership, skills, and drive.</i></p></div> <div data-bbox="590 1400 1308 1500"><p><i>Recommendation 6: The Government must urgently provide skilled personnel and sufficient financial resources to the NGBVS to ensure they can effectively drive the implementation of the National GBV Strategy with government and non-government partners.</i></p></div> <div data-bbox="518 1512 1308 1680"><p>Our Committee held follow up hearings from 3-4 March 2022. At those hearings we again raised our concerns that the National GBV Secretariat has still not been established. Mr Jerry Ubase, the Secretary of the Department for Community Development and Religion (which is currently where the National GBV Secretariat will be placed) advised the Committee that position descriptions had been developed but not approved, including for a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Secretariat who was graded at an EL-4 level.</p></div>
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When the Committee interviewed the Secretary for the Department of Personnel Management, Ms Taeis Sansan, she advised she would consider the position descriptions immediately. She has since advised that there have been some restrictions placed on the public service in recent years by the National Executive Council regarding the creation of senior management positions.

We are now writing to you to express our support for the proposal that Ms Sansan intends to submit to you, requesting the urgent endorsement of the National GBV Secretariat CEO at an as an EL-4. We note that in the 2022 National Budget, Treasury approved a budget of 7.93 million Kina for the National GBV Secretariat, including funding for staff. This position can now be supported with a portion of that funding.

Our Committee Members have consistently stressed the importance of ensuring that the top management positions in the Secretariat, in particular the CEO, are graded at a very senior level to ensure that they have sufficient standing within the public service to drive coordination across the government at the highest levels and have very high levels of GBV expertise as well as senior management experience.

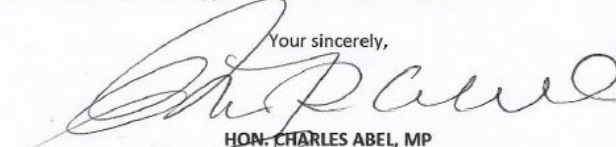
While our Committee members agree that EL-4 positions should only be approved when individuals are performing critical and senior roles, it is very clear that coordinating the national GBV response across the country qualifies as such. The CEO of the NGBVS must:

- Be sufficiently senior to coordinate and drive implementation across the entire government at national and sub-national levels. They must be able to effectively engage with Secretary-level officials and Provincial Administrators on equal footing in order to champion ending GBV. They are responsible for country-wide coordination, including establishing and/or overseeing the efforts of the 22 provincial, NCD and AROB GBV Secretariats and Action Committees;
- Be of equal standing to the head of the National Office of Child and Family Services (EL-4 – see Annex 1) and the head of the National Youth Development Authority, both of which have similar coordination mandates. The Government could learn from the successful model of the HIV/AIDS Council, which was responsible for coordinating the national response and had a Executive level CEO as its head.
- Be sufficiently senior to attract the best candidates in PNG. As you noted in your presentation to the Committee, the Government has a very difficult time recruiting senior women into the public service. If this position does not have sufficient seniority and remuneration, it will be difficult to attract the suitable skills set, noting that it is likely the CEO of the Secretariat will come from the private sector or the development sector if they are to have the management and technical capacities required.

You will recall the situation on HIV/AIDs in our country in the past two decades which was declared an epidemic. Setting up a dedicated government agency through the National HIV/AIDs Secretariat with the appropriate level of authority and technical staff was the only way to control the transmission in our country. We would encourage the Government to recognise that a similar level of response is warranted by the epidemic of GBV in PNG.

If you wish to discuss this letter, please call me on 07253-9533.

Your sincerely,



HON. CHARLES ABEL, MP
Chairman, Special Parliamentary Committee on Gender-Based Violence
& Member for Alotau