



## MEDIA STATEMENT

# The United Nations Calls for an Immediate Cessation of Violence in Hela Province and Mobilizes Humanitarian Assistance for Affected Communities

1 February 2021

The United Nations Resident Coordinator, Mr. Gianluca Rampolla, has called for an immediate cessation of violence in Hela Province.

Mr. Rampolla said: "This senseless violence must stop now before more innocent people are killed, wounded or displaced. The United Nations stands by the Hela Government and is already mobilized to provide for the immediate needs of those affected by the fighting".

The UN Resident Coordinator further stated: "We appeal to the PNG Defense Forces and Police to assist the mediation efforts of the Provincial Government and ensure the safety and security of the affected communities. Stopping the spiral of violence requires holding to account and bringing to justice the perpetrators of crimes and providing for the immediate needs of those affected, especially women and children. The recent events once again remind all of us of the need to invest into ensuring longer term development to achieve peace in the Highlands".

UN staff from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) joined a team from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Tari on Saturday, January 30, to verify information on the number of persons displaced, injured, and killed, and to assist in providing for immediate needs of those displaced.

Hela Governor, Hon. Philip Undialu, has indicated that urgent support is needed for temporary shelters, emergency food and water, and non-food items, such as hygiene and dignity kits, kitchen and bedding items. "We welcome Governor's Undialu mediation efforts and are encouraged by the news that the parties have agreed to lay down arms and engage in dialogue", said Mr. Rampolla.

The Disaster Management Team, in support of and in close coordination with Hon. Philip Undialu, together with church partners, civil society organizations, the private sector, and development

partners, including DFAT, is now mobilizing resources to ensure these needs are met and that the safety of displaced persons is assured.

The UN welcomes the incredible generosity of the communities that have provided shelter, distributed food and collected vital information for those displaced by this recent violence. The outpouring of support for affected families demonstrates the compassion of the people of Hela and reaffirms that the advocates for peace in Hela far outnumber those who perpetuate violence.

The United Nations in partnership with the Hela Government is committed to supporting peacebuilding and development in the Province through the Highlands Joint Programme.

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For more information on our ongoing support in Hela Province, contact Rachel Donovan at [rachel.donovan@one.un.org](mailto:rachel.donovan@one.un.org)