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## UK High Commissioner Presents Letter of Introduction to PM – Discusses Trade, Scholarships and Games Preparations

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The new United Kingdom High Commissioner to Papua New Guinea presented his letter of introduction to the Prime Minister this morning.

Prime Minister, Hon Peter O'Neill CMG MP, received H.E. Simon Tonge and discussed a number of bilateral issues including trade, academic scholarships and the Commonwealth and Pacific Games.

“I was pleased to welcome High Commissioner Simon Tonge to Papua New Guinea and expressed our desire for ongoing warm bilateral relations,” the Prime Minister said.

“There is potential to increase and diversify trade between Papua New Guinea and the United Kingdom.

“Currently the United Kingdom is our 12<sup>th</sup> largest trading partner and exports from Papua New Guinea continue to expand.

“British companies have announced their intention to increase investment in PNG’s energy sector and we welcome this vote of confidence.”

PM O'Neill said that British development support to Papua New Guinea is well received and appreciated, particularly in areas such as education.

“The British Chevening Scholarship is a very important international program that enables a select number of students to study for their masters degree in the United Kingdom.

“The Chevening Scholarship is relevant to students interested in leadership in governance across a range of disciplines and I urge qualified students to apply.”

The Prime Minister further congratulated the High Commissioner for the United Kingdom’s hosting of the Glasgow Commonwealth Games.

“The Papua New Guinea delegation to the 20<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Games was made to feel welcome in Glasgow, and the outstanding sporting facilities enabled our athletes to compete at the highest level.”

The Prime Minister said that the organizers of the 2015 Pacific games have been in contact with officials from Glasgow to gain from their experience in preparing to host the games.

At a diplomatic level, Papua New Guinea and the United Kingdom have maintained diplomatic relations for nearly 38 years having established formal links on 16 September 1975.

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