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# MERI TOKSAVE 2016 AGM

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

**MERI TOKSAVE INC.**

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Good Afternoon / Gutpla Avinun to our Members, Volunteers, Partners, Fellow Directors of the Executive Management Team and Guests, welcome to the third Annual General Meeting of Meri Toksave.

Apologies for my mode of appearance however I am currently in Fiji as the Gender and Education Advisor for a Fijian NGO that focuses on Sexual and reproductive health rights and services. Firstly, I would like to pay respect and acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we are meeting. I pay my respects to their Elders, past and present, and the Elders from other communities who may be here today, paying particular attention to the women of these communities.

I am delighted to present you with my third president's report and make clear my intentions of re-nominating for presidents positions for the 2016/2017 for the final time. As you may or may not be aware Meri Toksave is a youth led organisation and bound to be led by young people under the age of 27. This therefore will be my final year pending re-election of president and of course as the Executive Director.

Let me begin by discussing what Meri Toksave is and what our objectives are: Meri Toksave Inc. is a youth led (being between the ages of 18-27), non-profit organisation that is based on providing a platform for youth engagement and youth-led solutions towards addressing the high incidence of gender based, family and sexual violence in Papua New Guinea (PNG).

### **The objects of the association are:**

1. Empower women of all ages and facilitate the development of their self-worth within Papua New Guinea.
2. Harness educational mechanisms of printed, video and social media and materials in both Papua New Guinea and Australia to end domestic, family and sexual violence and gender-based violence in all its form in Papua New Guinea.
3. Create generational change within Papua New Guinea and address the negative stigma of gender based violence victims.
4. Engage men of all ages within Papua New Guinea and Australia to challenge the existing negative behaviours, attitudes and perceptions of women.
5. Address the information asymmetry within Papua New Guinea of emergency services contact details for victims of violence.
6. To act as a platform that provides youth engagement and solutions towards combating gender based violence within Papua New Guinea and Australia.

7. Actively challenge bystander behaviour within Papua New Guinea and Australia.
8. Partner with grassroots, local and international organisation in Papua New Guinea to help meet the aforementioned objectives.
9. Partner and empower with the Papua New Guinea community in Australia and particularly in Queensland to help meet the aforementioned objectives.

**Over the past year Meri Toksave achievements were as follows:**

- Since inception of the Meri Toksave directory initiative Meri Toksave has distributed over 5000 hard copy books to partners on ground in PNG, the online copy has been viewed approximately 1948 times and we have been developing new collateral (and funding for that collateral) to include pocket size directories that will also be available in Tok Pisin.
- I spent the year in PNG as the Child Protection, Gender Equity and Social inclusion Coordinator for Save the Children in PNG – I often conducted child protection training for various organisations and to my delight the Meri Toksave Directory was mentioned in training by participants as their referral list: Buk Bilong Pikinini, Oil Search Foundation and Strongim Pipol Strongim Nesen. Meri Toksave directories were also on display at the Marie Stopes Reception in Port Moresby.
- Further Oil Search Foundation at their own cost has run 2 re-prints of the Meri Toksave booklet for every employee within the foundation and company. Meri Toksave received requests from the PNG and Australian Federal Police Partnership for booklets, unfortunately we had none left and this speaks to the need for the pocket-sized directories.
- Meri Toksave's Directory has been listed on the Westpac Women in Business Website for Pacific Women and economic empowerment.

However, Meri Toksave has had a quiet year in comparison to the year's prior. Indeed we have been working on our strategic direction as an organisation, the success we received from the directory put us on the map but now we have been working on how we can continue to contribute meaningfully in the intersecting space of youth and gender without resting on our laurels. The executive team this year has been developing the organisations internal management structures but further two new programs, one I will mention now.

Meri Toksave are proposing the development of a youth-led, non-profit, non-partisan, gender-focused Think Tank with the initial pilot within Queensland, Australia and then extending to include a branch in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea where 60% of the nation's population is under the age of 30 and under-represented. The think tank would aim to recruit a cohort of young people to be involved in a policy fellowship whereby they will be researching, drafting and formulating a major Policy Paper on a particular issue in gender equality selected by the cohort. The Policy Fellowship would entail sessions over 6 months with workshops for public policy skills, topic/thematic knowledge, and policy paper research, drafting and formulation. Sessions would feature leading individuals with experienced backgrounds across the public, nongovernmental, academic and private sectors. The Policy Fellowship would be an incubator program for a generation of young leaders to have a new, developed, and enhanced

understanding of the public policy implications of gender inequality. Leadership is predominantly about fostering an environment of mentorship and investing in people.

The aims of the think tank are:

- To provide a platform for youth engagement in constructive dialogue, meaningful action, public policy creation and analysis;
- To develop public policy solutions for gender equality;
- To incubate a generation of young leaders with knowledge of gender equality policy;
- To engage and empower young people in challenging gender inequality;
- To submit gender equality policy recommendations to all levels of government;
- To provide commentary on gender equality policy to the media;
- To raise awareness of the implications of gender inequality in the community;
- To examine gender inequality in Australia, Papua New Guinea, and the Asia-Pacific;
- To build a gender equality network of young people and coalition of gender focused organisations;
- To raise the status of youth engagement in public policy

**This year has been quiet and challenging for Meri Toksave as the entire executive have been split geographically and the majority of our leadership team have also graduated from University entering the workforce which comes with lesson on how to prioritise time.**

- Securing sources of funding however we have remedied our banking processes and are working on a diversifying a financial strategy, so we are hoping to overcome this challenge within this coming year.
- Our organisational structure has also been a challenge this past year however the executive committee is in the process of adapting these structures and creating more ways for our volunteers to engage and easily accomplish tasks whilst gaining experience.
- Further adapting these structures means that over the next year we will be looking to recruit individuals to our Board of Directors.

It is important to remember that none of these challenges are impossible to overcome and we will continue to work hard at achieving our goals.

**This brings me to the year ahead of us.**

- Meri Toksave would like to implement the youth led gender focused think tank
- New collateral for the pocket size directories
- Continue securing funding
- Increasing volunteers and capacity developing in PNG and Australia,
- The inclusion of the board of directors

- Continue developing our policy bank to ensure integrity, compliance and risk management including:
  - Integrity, Accountability and Transparency Policy
  - Anti-Fraud Policy
  - Gender Equality, HIV and Social Inclusion Policy
  - Counter-Terrorism Policy
  - Environmental Sustainability Policy
  - Volunteer Recruitment and On-Boarding Policy
  - Records Management Policy
  - Partnerships Policy
  - Procurement Policy
  - Fundraising and Sponsorship Policy
  - Intellectual Property Policy
  - Board of Directors Engagement Policies
  
- Working on developing our frame works and long term strategic plan including:
  - Governance and Reporting Strategy
  - Impact and Program Evaluation Strategy
  - Fundraising and Sponsorship Strategy
  - Communications and Media Strategy
  - Human Resources Strategy
  - Due Diligence
  - 5-15 year Strategic Plan
  
- Continue application for Overseas Aid Gift Deduction Scheme, which would allow us to work more seamlessly in PNG and provide tax-deductible donations for those who donate to Meri Toksave.
  
- Finally, working towards application for the following status and memberships which will further legitimise Meri Toksave:
  - ACFID membership
  - Australian DGR status (which we have begun application for Overseas Aid Gift Deduction Scheme, which would allow us to work more seamlessly in PNG and provide tax-deductible donations for those who donate to Meri Toksave).
  - UN NGO status

Thank you for attending this afternoon and for continuing to support Meri Toksave. A heartfelt final thank you to the team that make Meri Toksave the organisation that it is – you are valued and appreciated.

Ayesha Lutschini

President and Executive Director of Meri Toksave