



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **PNG Olympic Committee expresses sorrow over passing of Sir Henry**

The Papua New Guinea Olympic Committee has expressed its sorrow on the news of the passing of its Life Member and former President, Sir Henry ToRobert.

Sir Henry was President of the organisation for 29 years. He first held the role from 1980 to 2000 and then from 2003 to 2012. On his retirement he was awarded Life Membership with the PNGOC. Sir Henry was also involved with the sport of Softball.

As the head of the Board in the then PNG Sports Federation & National Olympic Committee (PNGSFOC), Sir Henry led the participation of Team PNG at numerous Pacific, Commonwealth and Olympic Games.

A man who has had a long association with Sir Henry is Sir John Dawanincura who joined the PNGOC in 1984 as the Secretary General.

Sir John recalls Sir Henry first contacting him in 1980 and suggested he apply for the position of General Team Manager for Team PNG to the inaugural Pacific Mini Games in 1981 in Honiara, Solomon Islands, and then to later become the Secretary General.

Both men were instrumental in the development of the organisation but it was Sir Henry's leadership and guidance that was the beacon for the PNGSFOC.

"His experience as the founding Governor of the Bank of Papua New Guinea benefitted us greatly through dealing with important decisions, issues and also ensuring better management for the organisation," Sir John recalls.

He described Sir Henry as an influential figure who contributed enormously to the growth of the organisation and to sport in the country.

"He was a private man but a hard worker and very professional in his conduct. I admired his work and also learned some important lessons during my time working with him.

"I am deeply saddened by his passing but I have some good memories from our working days that I will forever cherish as I look back on his life and also in my own journey," he said.

"On behalf of the Papua New Guinea Olympic Committee and its member National Federations, I offer our deepest condolences to the family of the late Sir Henry ToRobert.

Secretary General of the PNG Olympic Committee, Auvita Rapilla remembers Sir Henry as a man of integrity who provided strong leadership for the organisation. She served the first year in her current role with Sir Henry at the helm as President.

“He provided the type of leadership that we looked up to and a lot of the organisation’s success can be attributed to the foundation that he set,” Rapilla said.

Apart from his affiliation to sport, Sir Henry is a notable figure in Papua New Guinea history having been the first Governor of the Bank of Papua New Guinea and holding the position for 20 years (1973-1993) making him one of the longest serving governors in the Commonwealth.

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