



**MINISTRY  
OF  
WORKS & HIGHWAYS  
OFFICE OF THE MINISTER**



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DATE: 12<sup>th</sup> MAY 2025

FILE: IEPNG-PNGTS-WTC2025

**SUBJECT: PAPUA NEW GUINEA ADMISSION INTO THE  
INTERNATIONAL TUNNELING AND UNDERGROUND  
SPACE ASSOCIATION AS THE 81<sup>ST</sup> MEMBER COUNTRY.**

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As the State Minister responsible for the Professional Engineers Registration Act (PERA), 2007 of Papua New Guinea and all its Technical Chapters including PNG Tunneling Society; I proudly announce a historic milestone for Papua New Guinea in the engineering and technical space.

I am proud to announce that Papua New Guinea has been unanimously admitted as the 81st Member Nation of the International Tunnelling and Underground Space Association (ITA-AITES) during its General Assembly, held on Day 2 of the 51<sup>st</sup> World Tunneling Congress (WTC 2025).

This historic milestone comes at a critical time, just 100 days before Papua New Guinea celebrates its 50th Independence Anniversary. It is a symbolic and strategic step forward in our national journey of building smarter and more resilient infrastructure systems for the next 50 years.

Our participation and new membership align directly with the Government's long-term development agenda, as outlined in:

- **PNG Vision 2050**, which seeks to create a smart, fair, and wise society;

- **The PNG Development Strategic Plan (2010–2030) and the Medium-Term Development Plan IV (2023–2027)**, which set priorities for inclusive, sustainable growth;
- **The National Transport Strategy and Medium-Term Transport Plan III**, focused on multimodal connectivity and integrated infrastructure;
- **The National Road Network Strategy (2018–2037)**, which guides long-term road investment and rehabilitation;
- And most importantly, the **Connect PNG Infrastructure Development Plan (2020–2040)**, our flagship program to connect 90% of the population to a reliable road network and develop an emerging national railway system.

What does Papua New Guinea gain from ITA membership?

1. **Technical Expertise and Global Innovation:** Our engineers and institutions will benefit from access to world-class research, best practices, and technologies in tunnelling and underground space construction.
2. **Strategic Infrastructure Solutions:** With PNG's challenging topography, tunnelling will be vital to the successful implementation of highway corridors and the future national railway network under Connect PNG.
3. **Urban Development Support:** Our membership provides the technical basis to address complex urban challenges such as drainage, utilities, and traffic. As our first initiative, we will host an Optioneering Engineering Workshop to tackle Port Moresby's chronic drainage and traffic congestion, in partnership with ITA and international experts.
4. **Capacity Building:** Through training, knowledge-sharing, and professional engagement with over 80 member nations, our engineers will be empowered to design and implement infrastructure that meets global standards.

5. **Strengthening Local Institutions:** This milestone also supports the growth of the Papua New Guinea Tunnelling Society, our first technical group under IEPNG, established to drive underground infrastructure solutions across transport, energy, water, and urban sectors.
6. **Research and Development in Tunneling Technology:** Having access to 80-member country experts in research literature in tunneling technology plays a pivotal role given the young geology of Papua New Guinea that is evolving. With the tough terrain and geography of our country highway and railway network infrastructure development cannot be developed without tunneling technology.

I take this opportunity to commend the outstanding leadership of Mr. Solomon Angoman, President of the PNG Tunnelling Society, and his executive team for their tireless efforts in establishing the technical society (PNGTS) and the preparation and guiding our application for ITA membership. Your dedication and professionalism are commendable and I challenge all Papua New Guinea engineers and technologists to think innovation and provide solutions for emerging infrastructure challenges.

We also extend our deepest gratitude to Professor Arnold Dix, President of ITA-AITES, for his warm welcome and support in bringing Papua New Guinea into this prestigious global association. To the volunteers, advisors, and engineering professionals who have supported this journey, thank you. Your passion for engineering and national progress has paved the way for this historic achievement.

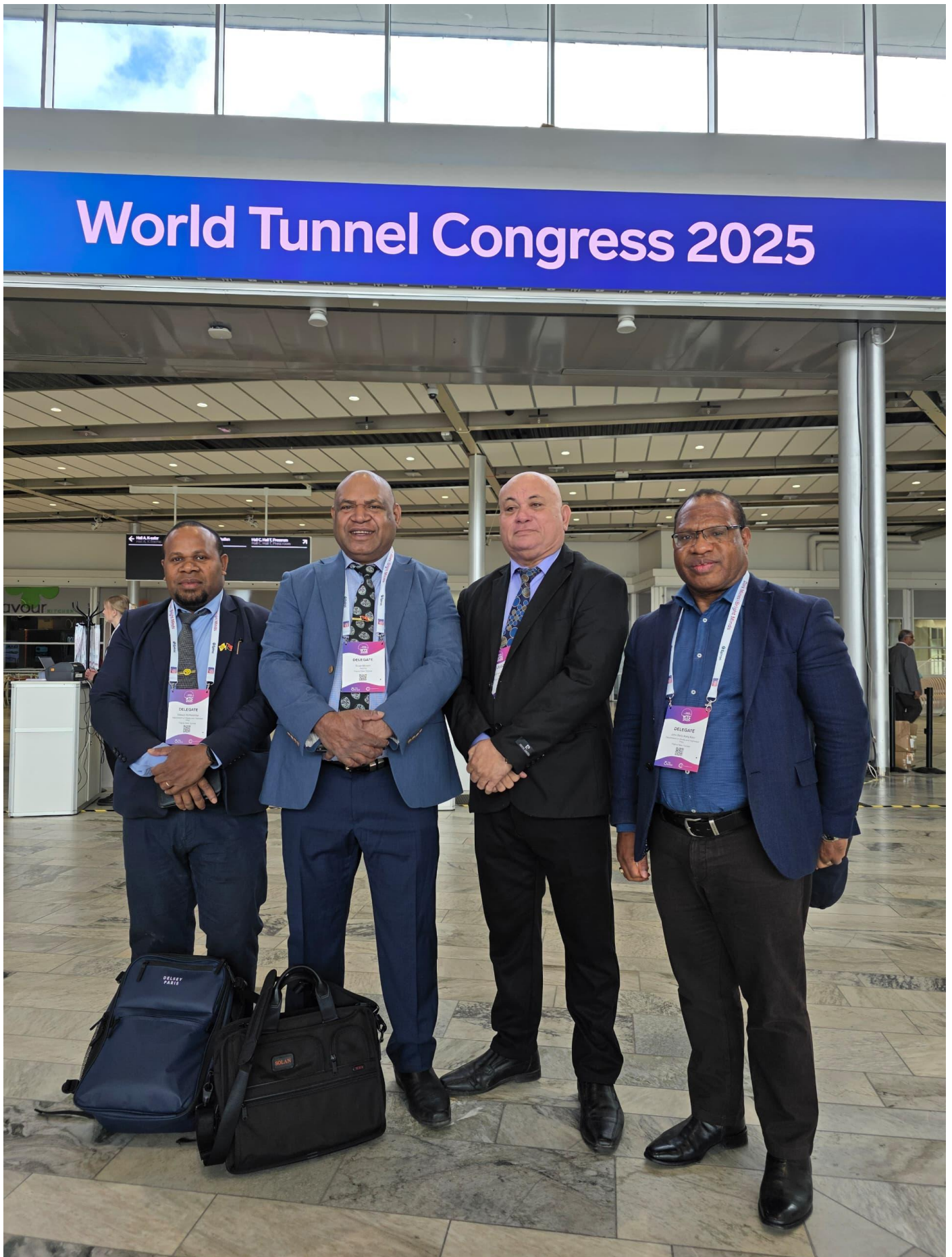
Let us remember: ***ENGINEERING IS NOT JUST ABOUT BUILDING ROADS AND TUNNELS; IT'S ABOUT BUILDING FUTURES.*** Through this partnership, Papua New Guinea is now better positioned to deliver modern, climate-resilient, and inclusive infrastructure that connects our people, supports economic growth, and secures a brighter future.

Together, with engineering at the heart of transformation, we will shape the next 50 years of Papua New Guinea's development, above and below ground.

Thank you and God bless Papua New Guinea.







**From Left – Right:** (Secretary for Works & Highway and President of IEPNG, Mr. Gibson Holemba, Hon. Solan Mirisim, MP, Minister for Works & Highways, Secretary for Transport, Mr. Mathew Wowoni, and Mr. John Belly Kelly Kaio, Team Leader for Connect PNG Program).





ASSOCIATION  
INTERNATIONALE DES TUNNELS  
ET DE L'ESPACE SOUTERRAIN

**AITES**

**ITA**

INTERNATIONAL TUNNELLING  
AND UNDERGROUND SPACE  
ASSOCIATION

## CERTIFICATE OF NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP

*Papua New Guinea Tunnelling Society  
Papua New Guinea*

*Is the Contact Member for the said Member  
Nation and is Accordingly Fully Entitled to all  
the Privileges Granted by the By-Laws of the  
Association.*



Arnold Dix

President

May 2025