

Papua New Guinea - Moderate risk

Papua New Guinea's 2017 election was marred by violence and allegations that thousands of names were left off the electoral register. These come on top of recurrent allegations that the PNG police have opened fire on student protestors (2016) and unarmed suspects. Unless these related problems are addressed, they could sow the seeds for future communal violence, including atrocity, crimes around elections.

Papua New Guinea (PNG) also continues to confront a number of challenges which could give rise to atrocity crimes. High rates of violence are endemic across PNG. The town of Lae, for example, has one of the world's highest murder rates. In particular, PNG experiences extremely high levels of gender and sexual based violence. Sexual violence is endemic and the country is judged by many to have the highest rate of sexual and 'domestic' violence of any country in the world outside a context of armed conflict. In the past few months, there has been a spate of attacks on women accused of sorcery. Six women have been killed.

Recommendations:

The government of PNG and its partners should:

1. Thoroughly investigate all allegations of the use of excessive force by the security forces and ensure full legal accountability for all shootings and other acts of violence.
2. Publicize, educate and enforce the human rights of girls and women.
3. Ensure improved access to justice for the victims of gender and sexual based violence.
4. Tackle impunity by strengthening the training and accountability of security forces, including police.
5. Increase support for the victims of sexual and gender based violence.
6. Develop and implement a strategy for reinforcing anti-violence norms amongst men.
7. Empower women through increasing educational and economic opportunities.
8. Fulfil its responsibility to protect all populations on its territory, including refugees and asylum seekers.