



Porgera District Women's Association president Maria Kensary handing the petition and a stack of papers containing the 3,000-plus signatures to 'Operation Ipili 09' commander Chief Insp David Manning.

## Porgera folk petition Govt to extend ops

THE people of Porgera are petitioning the National Government to extend the current security call-out operations in Porgera Valley.

Porgera District Women's Association (PDWA) president Maria Kensary last Wednesday handed the petition, containing more than 3,000 signatures, to "Operation Ipili 09" commander Chief Insp David Manning to pass on to the relevant authorities.

The petition was addressed to Prime Minister Sir Michael Somare, Minister for Internal Security Sani Rambi, Lagaip-Porgera MP Philip Kikala, Police Commissioner Gari Baki, Enga Governor Peter Ipatas and provincial administrator Dr Samson Amean.

A wide cross-section of the community, including school children, women, elders, youths and leaders, signed the petition, which was circulated for

two weeks by Porgera District Scouts Association members, covering 19 wards in the local level government areas of Porgera and Paiela.

In the petition, the people of Porgera said they supported the NEC-approved operation that had brought about a lot of positive changes since last March.

The note read in part: "We, the undersigned, representing the silent majority of our people of Porgera Valley, wish to, firstly, humbly thank you for stepping in the right direction - deploying police into Porgera Valley when we desperately needed the police intervention in the midst of the worst lawlessness in the valley in living memory."

Mrs Kensary told Chief Insp Manning in a small ceremony that, since the operation, women had more freedom going about their daily tasks in gardens, marketing, shopping or simply being

out in public areas.

"Mothers and daughters can walk freely without being threatened by knife- and axe-wielding thugs, and we don't fear tribal fights because of what the operation has done to stop these illegal activities," she said.

Porgera station councillor Joe Kuala said the petitioners hoped for an extension of the operation, which would discourage illicit activities.

Chief Insp Manning received the petition and also challenged the Porgera people to take responsibility to find lasting solutions for social problems in their valley.

He emphasised that securing a safer future for Porgera would come about only if the people themselves changed their attitudes and made a stand through building effective stakeholder partnerships.

Chief Insp Manning is expected to hand the petition to Mr Baki.

## **New programme for Porgera**

AN innovative training programme adapted from Barrick's Courageous Safety Leadership programme has been rolled out to influential Porgera community members by the Porgera Joint Venture since last December. Appropriately called Courageous Community Leadership Training, the programme was designed to empower members of the local Porgera community with the skills and knowledge to address social issues in Porgera Valley. It is hoped that with this training, leaders will be able to address law and order issues, demonstrate visible leadership, encourage community leaders to advocate the ideals of a trouble free society and to rebuke law breakers in conjunction with the LLG and other stakeholders.