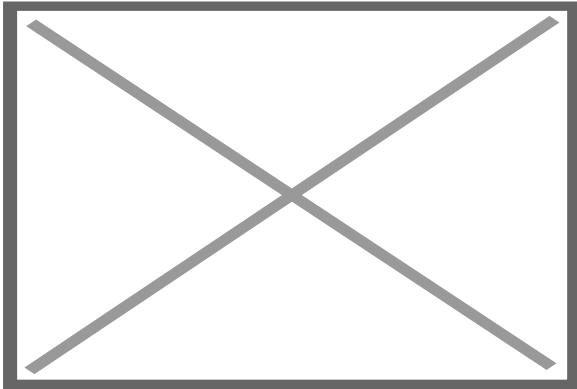


## The General requests prayer for Papua New Guinea

**Local business went up in flames during the fight between looters and police.**

*IHQ –*



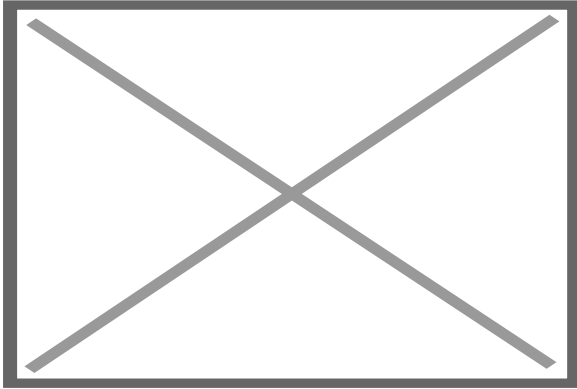
*Fire burned several buildings after a situation between looters and police turned ugly. | Photos by Julie Alley*

General André Cox has called for Salvationists and friends around the world to remember in prayer the people of Papua New Guinea—and particularly the work of The Salvation Army in the volatile Pacific nation.

On March 24, a large fire broke out in a shopping center only 160 feet from The Salvation Army's Territorial Headquarters (THQ) compound in Port Moresby. The situation quickly escalated, with fights breaking out between the police and looters. Police were forced to use tear gas and live ammunition as the crowd's numbers reached the thousands.

"It was devastating to watch helplessly while the medical center succumbed to the flames, the dental surgery and the pharmacy—all vital services to the people of Port Moresby," said Territorial Commander Colonel Kelvin Alley. "All razed to the ground. A number of decent businesses also, all gone along with the many hundreds of jobs and livelihoods for business owners and employees." Colonel Julie Alley quickly put measures in place to evacuate the 800 children from the school that forms part of the compound. Most of the THQ staff left through an exit at the rear of the building, leaving only the senior leadership and security personnel in place to protect the site.

"The place was full of smoke and remains of tear gas," Alley said.



*A supermarket, medical center, dentist  
and pharmacy were burnt to the ground. |  
Photos by Julie Alley*

The situation started in the morning and ended in the afternoon. THQ staff were able to safely head home once things had settled down.

“Please be assured we are OK, and The Salvation Army here has done well today,” Colonel Alley said. Alley reassured that The Salvation Army is committed to supporting the community to rebuild in an interview with [The Guardian](#).