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Subject: *Lack of Transparency in & by the Media*

This following is my reaction to a news item which I read on-line entitled "**Belize Election in Doubt**" dated February 7, 2008 on the "**Prensa Latina**" (Latin America News Agency); and February 8, 2008 on the "**Inside Costa Rica**" and "**NAM News Network**" websites.

The Press Release being quoted in this article came from the United Democratic Party and dated Feb 1, 2008. There were two responses strongly refuting the gross allegations in the said Press Release as follows: Love News on Feb 1 and Feb 2 and an official Press Release by the Office of Governance on Feb 4, 2008, which is attached for your perusal.

Furthermore, the Elections and Boundaries Department was made a Department by the party in power (United Democratic Party) in 1989 moving it from an Independent Model (under a Commission) to a Government Model (under a Minister). The Department has been under the Minister responsible for the Public Service since 2000 to present under the new government. Up to the end of the last government, the Rt. Hon. Said Musa was the Minister responsible for the Public Service and therefore the Minister responsible for the Elections and Boundaries Department. In other words in the formal governance framework scheme of things, the Rt. Hon. Said Musa was the first line supervisor to Mrs. Myrtle Palacio.

The abovementioned article was dated **after** the responses were made refuting the allegations, but made no reference to these. The said article in the "**Prensa Latina**", "**Inside Costa Rica**" and "**NAM News Network**" demonstrated a lack of knowledge of the governance framework of the Government of Belize which could have elicited information for triangulation to bring balance and accuracy to the said article. It also exhibited a total disregard of good governance principles of fairness, data and

professional integrity, and may have validated the character assassination which may be the object of the forementioned Press Release.

Therefore this raises questions as to the motive and agenda behind the said article in the **“Prensa Latina”**, **“Inside Costa Rica”** and **“NAM News Network”** with respect to accuracy and integrity of information.

The media as an important agent of change works for the common good. As a result the media must set and maintain the highest standards of transparency and integrity of information. From my professional perspective, the article **“Belize Election in Doubt”** in the **“Prensa Latina”**, **“Inside Costa Rica”** and **“NAM News Network”** mentioned above, demonstrated neither and its content is not credible.

Thank you
Myrtle Palacio