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MEDIA RELEASE

Youths told to choose wisely

Secretary of Transparency International (TI-PNG) Richard Kassman told more than a hundred youths to choose their leaders carefully and wisely when casting their votes for the upcoming national elections.

Mr Kassman was speaking at a Youth Against Corruption Association Forum (YACA) staged at Jubilee Catholic Secondary school over the weekend in Port Moresby. He told the youths mostly students from UPNG and six NCD schools that a number of our leaders today were perceived as bad leaders because of their behaviour in public, the attitude they portray and the decisions they make.

He said in order to change this perception, the responsibility lies on the youths of today. "It's your job to focus on your education to make a better future for you, your children and grandchildren."

Mr Kassman also highlighted the role of the Opposition, MPs and the importance of a Shadow Ministry. He said, "Papua New Guinea lacks a Shadow Ministry whose role is to research the issues and policies that the Government of the day makes so that it can be debated at the floor of parliament before it is passed. He said PNG has far too long had a big government and a very small opposition resulting in policies passed without being properly debated thus causing problems for the country.

Mr Kassman told the youths that the role of an MP requires integrity, intelligence and honesty. He said, "a good MP is one with a good character and leadership." He reminded the youths that the choices they make now, especially those who are eligible to vote in the upcoming general elections will provide the answers for tomorrow. Mr Kassman also took time to speak on issues of accountability, good governance and democracy.

Also speaking at the forum were Lawyer Grace Waide of the PNG Ombudsman Commission who talked about the role of the Ombudsman Commission emphasising strongly on the Leadership Code, and Emily George Taule, Executive Director of Transparency International [TI-PNG] who stressed on the power of influence youths have in disseminating valuable and educational information.

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The YACA Forum is the second of the eleven monthly planned forums for 2007. The forum concluded with a LPV Mock Election exercise that was carried out by the PNG Electoral Commission.
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Approved by

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