

Ghana Disputes Corruption Ranking

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Ghana's government is questioning the basis of a Transparency International report that named the West African nation as one of the most corrupt countries in world.

Government spokesman Frank Agyekum says the Kufuor administration is disappointed about the findings of the report, because a number of measures have been introduced to help curb corruption in the country.

"I talked of such mechanism as the procurement act, as the financial administration act, as the whistle-blowers act, as the internal auditors act, all these measure that have been put in place by government to help stem the tide of corruption," he noted.

Transparency International has been conducting annual corruption surveys for 11 years. Its report is compiled from numerous surveys of business people and country analysts who are asked for their perception of a country's corruption.

The 2006 report, released Monday, scored Ghana at three-point-three points, on a scale of one to 10, with the lowest being the most corrupt.

Agyekum questions the basis for the score.

"They gave us a score of 3.3, the same as in 1999," he added. "And I am saying that if in 1999 you gave us three-point-three when we did not have all these laws in place and 2006 when we have all these laws in place, is it to say that we have 3.3 it means that in the interim, you are trying to say, that we have not done anything at all? And that is not true."

There is widespread public perception of corruption among public officials in Ghana. But Agyekum says the Transparency International report does not reflect the positive developments that have been achieved.

"We are not saying that as a government we are 100 percent corruption free," he said. "That is not what we are trying to say. But we are saying that yes before these laws came into being we have a low mark, we could understand. But these laws have come, and you realized that when you talk about corruption, yes it has always persisted in the police force and stuff like that in all those areas. But also in the area of purchases of government equipment, you had a lot of corruption going on, and that is where procurement act did come in."

Agyekum says the government is committed to win the fight against corruption.

Meanwhile, the Ghana Integrity Initiative, the local branch of Transparency International, has called for the government to do more to deal with corruption.



Ghana Government spokesman Frank Agyekum

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