



International Secretariat
Alt Moabit 96
10559 Berlin, Germany
Tel: 49-30-3438 20-0
Fax: 49-30-3470 3912
Email: ti@transparency.org
<http://www.transparency.org>

New Anti-Corruption Governments:
The Challenge of Delivery
Nairobi, 12 - 13 October 2004

CLOSING PLENARY

Chair: Hon. Wangari Maathai

Corruption and poor governance are major factors in the widespread and deep poverty in Africa. Thus the reduction of corruption is a requirement for the growth and amelioration of the poverty in most developing countries. This places a duty on any civic minded citizen to be involved in efforts that are required. On the other hand, telling facts as they are is a difficult and often fraught with dangers in the countries where corruption is endemic. The fear and protection should come from civil society organizations and individuals keeping solidarity with each other. All citizens of developing countries should recall this statement. "If you do not speak to power, it will speak to you and crush you". If corruption is allowed to thrive, then it soon extends to every area. This is evident in the connection between corruption, deforestation and serious environmental degradation in Kenya.

John Githongo

The whole set of recommendations is quite comprehensive but could be reduced to seven main points.

- Leadership by the executive in the fight against corruption is important and must be demonstrated and continuously expressed.
- Transition governments should start with quick wins that demonstrates its commitment while also undertaking systematic institutional reform.
- The freedom of the media and civil society organizations is of critical importance in maintaining public support.
- Transition governments must take cognisance of networks within civil society organizations and engage with them.
- Since corruption is now globalized hence governments must support international instruments that respond to corruption. Corruption and the corrupt tend to globalise faster than governments do.
- It is critical for transition governments to deal systematically with the past.
- Public procurement is a significant point for reducing corruption hence reforms for sustained transparency are imperative.

Discussion

- ***Trans-national Cooperation***

Corruption has become a trans-national issue and demands closer scrutiny and cooperation. There is a real risk that the transition governments could get swallowed unless its strategy for combating corruption takes the international dimension into account. Assistance that results from cooperation is invaluable in tracing assets, identifying corruption networks and understanding the trends in corruption throughout the world. Transition countries need to facilitate this cooperation as fast as can be done.

- **The Premium of Leadership**

Political leadership must lead in the fight against corruption because fighting corruption is not an easy task in the absence of strong and consistent support by the chief executive. With explicit support from the chief executive, then the reforms will percolate throughout all the arms of government. Though leadership is a necessary condition, it is often not a sufficient condition for sustained reduction in corruption because it is critical to have a clean judiciary, legislature and the public sector. The premium of leadership is demonstrable because it takes away the impunity that characterizes public sector workers in countries in transition and shows the public that the political will does exist.

- ***Institutional Reforms***

Widespread misuse of public funds and assets in many countries is due to corruption and failed institutions. Transition governments must buttress the fight against corruption with reforms of the internal procedures and styles of working in the public sector generally. This suggests broad reforms in the economic system such as the removal of exchange and price controls as they became convenient avenues for corruption. For instance, reforms in public procurement presents challenges that require systemic reorientation and must be reinforced by other reforms that allows for whistle blowing and competent investigative action by the anti-corruption authority. However, these reforms must go further than public procurement and consider state owned enterprises not only because of the amount of public resources invested in them, but because the accountability structures designed for most of them are inadequate. "Public procurement reform is the Achilles heel of corruption"

- ***Research***

Corruption throughout the world is conventionally understood as an economic crime and an ethical issue. As a result, the intersection between corruption and the environment, quality of public services and the maintenance of monopolies is less appreciated. There is a solid case for establishing the degree of these links through increased research for improving the measurement indices as the present indices are mostly based on perceptions. Expansion of the scope of research would have the value of bringing novel dimensions to the public policy problem of corruption and allow for the development of dynamic responses.

Peter Eigen

"Fighting corruption is not a science but is clearly an art. It must be supported by research and technical analysis but in the final analysis, the political context may call for different solutions".