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Governments should hear the global outcry against corruption

Berlin, 5 December 2012 – A growing outcry over corrupt governments forced several leaders from office last year, but as the dust has cleared it has become apparent that the levels of bribery, abuse of power and secret dealings are still very high in many countries. Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index 2012 shows corruption continues to ravage societies around the world.

Two thirds of the 176 countries ranked in the 2012 index score below 50, on a scale from 0 (perceived to be highly corrupt) to 100 (perceived to be very clean), showing that public institutions need to be more transparent, and powerful officials more accountable.

“Governments need to integrate anti-corruption actions into all public decision-making. Priorities include better rules on lobbying and political financing, making public spending and contracting more transparent and making public bodies more accountable to people,” said Huguette Labelle, the Chair of Transparency International.

“After a year of focus on corruption, we expect governments to take a tougher stance against the abuse of power. The Corruption Perceptions Index 2012 results demonstrate that societies continue to pay the high cost of corruption,” Labelle said.

Many of the countries where citizens challenged their leaders to stop corruption – from the Middle East to Asia to Europe – have seen their positions in the index stagnate or worsen.

Corruption Perceptions Index 2012: The results

In the Corruption Perceptions Index 2012 Denmark, Finland and New Zealand tie for first place with scores of 90, helped by strong access to information systems and rules governing the behaviour of those in public positions.

Afghanistan, North Korea and Somalia once again cling to the bottom rung of the index. In these countries the lack of accountable leadership and effective public

institutions underscore the need to take a much stronger stance against corruption.

Underperformers in the Corruption Perceptions Index 2012 also include the Eurozone countries most affected by the financial and economic crisis. Transparency International has consistently warned Europe to address corruption risks in the public sector to tackle the financial crisis, calling for strengthened efforts to corruption-proof public institutions.

“Corruption is the world’s most talked about problem,” stated Cobus de Swardt, Managing Director of Transparency International. “The world’s leading economies should lead by example, making sure that their institutions are fully transparent and their leaders are held accountable. This is crucial since their institutions play a significant role in preventing corruption from flourishing globally,” de Swardt said.

Background

This year Transparency International has updated the methodology for the Corruption Perceptions Index 2012. To reflect this the Corruption Perceptions Index is presented on a scale from 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean).

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Transparency International is the global civil society organisation leading the fight against corruption

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