

**The Malaysian Society for Transparency  
and Integrity**

(ROS Registration No. 1649)

**(TI Malaysia)**

**Annual Report 2009**

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## **The Executive Committee**

|                          | <b>24 March 2009 – 7 November 2009</b> | <b>7 November 2009 – Present</b>    |
|--------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| <b>President</b>         | <b>: Datuk Paul Low</b>                | <b>Datuk Paul Low</b>               |
| <b>Vice President</b>    | <b>: Dato Mohamed Iqbal</b>            | <b>Prof Datuk Mohamad Ali Hasan</b> |
| <b>Secretary General</b> | <b>: Dr. K.M. Loi</b>                  | <b>Ngooi Chiu Ing</b>               |
| <b>Treasurer</b>         | <b>: Richard Wong</b>                  | <b>Richard Wong</b>                 |
| <b>Member</b>            | <b>: Dr. Chin Yoong Kheong</b>         | <b>Dr. Chin Yoong Kheong</b>        |
| <b>Member</b>            | <b>: Mohamed Raslan Abdul Rahim</b>    | <b>Mohamed Raslan Abdul Rahim</b>   |
| <b>Member</b>            | <b>: Dato' Murad Hashim</b>            | <b>Dato' Murad Hashim</b>           |
| <b>Member</b>            | <b>: Amu Tharmarajah</b>               | <b>Amu Tharmarajah</b>              |
| <b>Member</b>            | <b>: Ngooi Chiu Ing</b>                | <b>Fahri Azzat</b>                  |
| <b>Member</b>            | <b>: Tan Sri Robert Phang</b>          | <b>Lee Swee Seng</b>                |
| <b>Member</b>            | <b>: Josie Fernandez</b>               | <b>Chew Phye Keat</b>               |
| <b>Member</b>            | <b>: Dr. Pola Singh</b>                |                                     |
| <b>Member</b>            | <b>: Murad Ali Abdullah</b>            |                                     |

## **The Secretariat**

At the time of writing this report, the Secretariat is managed by the following team:

|                               |                        |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Executive Director:</b>    | <b>Mark Chay</b>       |
| <b>Project Manager (FGI):</b> | <b>Victor Soosai</b>   |
| <b>Executive Officer:</b>     | <b>Ms Ng Swee Ling</b> |
| <b>Executive Officer:</b>     | <b>Ms Usha Devi</b>    |
| <b>Research Officer:</b>      | <b>Wong Chan Wai</b>   |
| <b>Research Officer:</b>      | <b>Joseph Tong</b>     |
| <b>Project Officer (FGI):</b> | <b>Ms Kogilavani</b>   |

## Annual Report 2009

Initiatives taken by TI Malaysia (TI-M) in the course of 2009 have started to bear some fruits especially after the launch of 2009 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) showing Malaysia's drastic drop from 5.1 to 4.5 and country ranking from 47 to 56. The government has commissioned a Special Officer in the Prime Minister Department and a consultant, Ethos & Company, to engage TI-M in a series of discussions on ways to curb corruption. We believe this led to adoption of some of our suggestions in the drafting of the roadmap for Government Transformation program, which was launched by the Prime Minister on 28 January 2010.

Meanwhile progress for the legislation of a Freedom of Information Act had met with lack of enthusiasm from some Government departments, although the Selangor state government is keen to table the bill.

Our work was made possible by the steadfast financial support from donors such as Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, Petronas and British High Commission.

### The Political Financing (*Crinis*) Project

#### Background

The political financing project which begun in 2008 aims to:

- Provide an assessment of existing legislation and institutions that oversee financing of politics in Malaysia.
- Address key issues related to political financing such as the funding of parties, the financing of parliamentary and state elections as well as party electoral contests, and the ownership and control of corporate entities by parties.
- Propose institutional and legislative reforms to help ensure that politicians and parties account for and disclose the sources of their funds.

This project is based on the *Crinis*, "ray of light" Project, undertaken in Latin America, by Transparency International (TI) and the Carter Center, United States of America.

The project was replicated in Bangladesh, Nepal, Indonesia and Malaysia with modifications to accommodate the specificities of the countries.

#### The following activities have been carried out:

- Desk research and literature review on political financing in Malaysia.
- Interviews on political financing in Malaysia were conducted with politicians, political analysts, NGOs, journalists, students, members of the public, Election Commission and companies.
- Two workshops and a conference on the need for reforms on political financing in Malaysia were held with various stakeholders; members of political parties, Election Commission, MACC, academicians and NGOs. (See also section on Events)

#### Future programmes

- A book on proposed reforms on political financing in Malaysia will be launched in March 2010.
- In 2010 advocacy campaigns will be run on creating awareness for the need for reforms on political financing in Malaysia.

### Freedom of Information Project 2009

#### Background Information

The objectives of the Freedom of Information (FOI) Project which begun in 2008 are to create awareness on the right to information for the public and advocate for the enactment and implementation of an FOI Act in Malaysia. The project was funded by Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS).

#### The following activities were undertaken in 2009.

##### a) Training of Trainers, 6 to 8 January, 2009.

This training was conducted in Kuala Lumpur for a core group of FOI advocates and NGOs. This three day training was facilitated by Toby Mendel, a trainer from Article 19, an organization based in London that promotes freedom of expression and freedom of information globally.

#### **b) Awareness session for target groups between May to September 2009**

A series of half day talks and awareness sessions with targeted groups were held in 2009. The first session was held on May 10 in Klang, Selangor. Subsequent sessions were held in Perak, Penang, Sabah, Kelantan, Seremban, Pahang and Kuala Lumpur.

#### **c) FOI Conference 2009**

The urgent need for Malaysia to adopt the FOI Act was highlighted at the regional conference on FOI jointly organized by TI-M and Centre for Independent Journalism (CIJ) on 3 and 4 November 2009. (See *section on events*)

#### **d) FOI Task Force Roundtable 2009**

A FOI Roundtable was organized on 9 December, 2009. (See *section on events*)

#### **Future programmes**

In 2010, the following project activities will be undertaken

- FOI campaign kit
- Advocacy programmes to achieve FOI legislation

## **Forestry Governance & Integrity (FGI)**

Phase 1:

Forest Governance Anticorruption Advocacy, Analysis and Monitoring

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#### **Project Duration: March 2009 – August 2010**

#### **Overall objective**

The project serves as a preliminary step to contribute to improved and strengthened transparency, integrity and accountability of forest governance systems and related target groups in national, transnational and sub-national forest sector governance in Asia Pacific.

#### **Specific Objectives**

- Increasing awareness and knowledge of the challenge and systemic structure of forest sector corruption.
- Fostering the development and application of monitoring tools.  
Strengthening cooperation among relevant stakeholders addressing the challenge.

#### **Expected Results**

- Risk assessment and monitoring tools are developed and implemented.
- All stakeholders (public and private sector, civil society, communities) have increased opportunities to participate in developing and implementing monitoring processes.
- Strategic advocacy, capacity development and public discussions increase on problems and potential remedies related to corruption and illegal and unsustainable deforestation.

#### **Target countries**

The target countries are China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. The Transparency International Chapters in each country have set up local forestry units and Indonesia has started a Regional Centre in Jakarta and three units in the three major islands. The Regional Centre implements the project with the support of the TI Secretariat.

#### **Update on the project: what has been achieved so far?**

- 7 FGI Units (Malaysia being one of it) and the Regional Centre have been established in the project countries.
- The Launch Meeting, including Capacity-Building Workshops for the FGI staff, took place in Jakarta in June 2009.
- A Manual and Tool for mapping, analysing and monitoring corruption risks in the forestry sector has been prepared in consultation with major global stakeholders, and is currently being adapted at the local level.
- Consultations with stakeholders in Peninsular, Sabah and Sarawak are ongoing using the Anti - Corruption tools that has been developed.
- National diagnostic papers on forest governance have been drafted, and working papers on specific areas of intervention (Malaysia's working paper is on Reducing Incidence of Timber Laundering) is being prepared.

- Newsletters with FGI news and communications network have been set up with the Regional Center and TI-S

### Project objectives ahead

1. National adaptation and implementation of anti-corruption tools for the forestry sector through multiple local stakeholder consultations (Ongoing).
2. Mid-term regional meeting in Malaysia to monitor progress, revise work plans and strategies, and present preliminary results of the tools (February 2010).
3. Verification of results through local stakeholder consultations (March to June 2010).
4. Research papers on Forest Governance in areas identified as being of prime importance for anti corruption activities will be prepared (Ongoing until April 2010).
5. Publication of the tools results and of research papers (May to August 2010).

### Procurement & Integrity Pact

Integrity Pact is a tool developed by TI Berlin to curb corruption in procurement for the private and public sector.

In the course of the year, initiatives had been taken to educate transparency and integrity in procurement for these two sectors.

A training manual had been drawn up in the Secretariat covering the features of integrity pact and whistle blowing system

On September 8, a training workshop on Tools against Corruption was conducted by Dr. K M Loi and Mark Chay for participants from the private and public sector. It had generated some interests among the corporate participants to move on further in particular BASF-Petronas for full adoption and implementation of Integrity Pact. Besides, participants had shown interests in forming a coalition to advocate integrity in procurement for the private and public sector.

At the same time, advocacy was done via Datuk Paul Low at the PKA Ad-hoc Committee on Governance and this had led to the need for a PKA conference on Integrity Pact and Governance.

The team also promoted integrity in procurement to the special team from the Prime Minister Department including their appointed consultant Ethos & Co., to facilitate their drafting of the roadmap on Key Result Areas (KRAs) for the government.

### Funding

The bulk of the operating expenditure of the secretariat was funded by Petronas which has been very supportive by giving TI-M an annual reimbursable grant to support the operations of the secretariat. However, other donors prefer to support on project basis either entirely or partially.

Below is an overview of approved fund allocation for the year

| Approved Fund Allocation for 2009        | Amount         | Percentage  |
|--|----------------|-------------|
| <b>Petronas</b>                          | 360,000        | 39%         |
| <b>Membership (Corporate)</b>            | 18,000         | 2%          |
| <b>Membership (Individual)</b>           | 7,600          | 1%          |
| <b>Forest Governance &amp; Integrity</b> | 326,240        | 35%         |
| <b>Crinis</b>                            | 91,700         | 10%         |
| <b>Freedom of Information</b>            | 72,400         | 8%          |
| <b>Others</b>                            | <u>50,400</u>  | <u>5%</u>   |
| <b>Total:</b>                            | <b>926,340</b> | <b>100%</b> |

## **Contributions**

Besides Petronas, we would also like to express our gratitude and thanks for the contributions and support from the following organizations:

- Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung
- Transparency International, Berlin
- British High Commission
- European Union Commission
- High Commission of Canada
- Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers
- Asian Strategy and Leadership Institute
- Centre for Independent Journalism

## **Transparency International Malaysia (TI-M) 2009 Events, Activities, Meetings and Representations**

### **6 – 8 January Right to Information (RTI) Training of Trainers Workshop**

A three-day Right-to-Information training workshop was held at IMM to train a core group of people for future education and advocacy work. The course provided a comprehensive understanding and importance on the right to information, legal bases and basic principles governing the right; exceptions to the right of access, role of oversight and public bodies and future work. This core group will in turn engage the public as well as the state and federal governments to bring about change to information access in Malaysia. The trainer of RTI was Toby Mendel of Article 19, a leading organization dealing with RTI.

### **16 January Crinis Malaysia Project Launch**

A press conference was held at Wisma FMM to launch the Crinis project in Malaysia. The overarching goal of the Crinis project is to strengthen the legitimacy and credibility of democratic institutions by increasing the levels of transparency and accountability in the political finance systems. The project activities target key stakeholders for the reform of political finance systems including political parties, the private sector, oversight institutions, the media and civil society. TI believes that by analyzing these actors' roles in the political finance system and generating clear incentives for change behavior, the existing regulatory frameworks and practices can be reformed to establish a more transparent political finance system.

### **24 March Annual General Meeting**

The 11<sup>th</sup> AGM of Malaysian Society for Transparency and Integrity (MSTI) was held at Wisma FMM. It was chaired by the president, Tan Sri Ramon Navaratnam. The meeting was attended by 28 ordinary members and 6 corporate members. The following were elected to the Executive committee:

1. Datuk Paul Low – President
2. Dato' Mohamed Iqbal – Deputy President
3. Dr Loi Kheng Min – Secretary-General
4. Richard Wong – Treasurer
5. Pola Singh
6. Dr Chin Yoong Kheong
7. Murad Ali
8. Dato' Murad Hashim
9. Ngooi Chiu Ing
10. Tan Sri Robert Phang

### **30 – 31 March National Anti-Corruption Summit**

The Anti-Corruption Summit was held at Sime Darby Convention Center, with the theme "Towards Zero Tolerance for Corruption". It was jointly organised by Transparency International - Malaysia and the Asian Strategy & Leadership Institute (ASLI). It aimed to provide a timely opportunity for policy and management decision-makers in the public and private sectors to update on the importance of incorporating good ethical practice and transparency, promote greater awareness of accountability and responsibility in management practices and set up acceptable benchmark standards in good corporate governance. The objective was to eradicate corruption and unethical practices in organisations.

### **10 May RTI Workshop in Klang**

The 1<sup>st</sup> Workshop of the "Right To Information Project 2009" organized by TI-M and Centre For Independent Journalism with support by Consumer Association Klang. It was held at Community Centre, Klang. It was a half day forum with a dialog, presentation and Q and A sections. The ultimate aim of the Forum was to generate public support for a Right to Information Law. Facilitated working group had a discussion on day II after the background papers were presented on day I. On the second day of the forum, representatives from each group presented their findings. TI-M will collate and publish the findings in a form of report for the participants and used as a basis for advocacy. The participants included Bar Council representatives, Representatives from the electronic, print and broadcast media, State government officials, NGO representatives, State Anti Corruption Agency, Resident's association, representatives from academics and businesses sectors.

### **19 May Selangor World Press Freedom Day**

World Press Freedom Day is celebrated globally on the 3rd of May each year to commemorate the importance press freedom plays in building a democratic society. It was held at Auditorium, Petaling Jaya Civic Centre, Petaling Jaya, Selangor. The Selangor State Government has been proactive in promoting Freedom of Information. A Taskforce on Freedom of Information was formed early 2009 consisting of State Assemblymen and members of civil society, chaired by YB Elizabeth Wong, State Executive Councillor. The Taskforce's first project was to study the possibility of legislating a Freedom of Information Act (FOI Act). The objective is to eventually legislate an FOI Act. The Selangor World Press Freedom Day is held both to mark the significance of press freedom in reporting in a responsible, investigative and free manner; as well as to conduct a public consultation with a cross-section of stakeholders in society on its intended FOI Act. There were presentations by a panel and discussion between the



panel and members of the public. Discussions and feedback were be collated and duly considered when the Bill is tabled at the Selangor State Legislative Assembly.

**3 June Press Conference on Global Corruption Barometer (GCB) Report**

Datuk Paul Low announced to a capacity crowd of media and stakeholders at Wisma FMM the results of the Global Corruption Barometer Report 2009 by Transparency International. Contained in the report were the results of its public opinion poll on corruption in 69 countries and territories around the world.

**14 June RTI Workshop in Ipoh**

TI-M and the Centre for Independent Journalism (CIJ) jointly organized the workshop on Right to Information and its benefits to society.

**22 June Lunch with HE Boyd McCleary, the British High Commissioner to Malaysia**

The lunch was at the residence of the High Commissioner attended by Datuk Paul Low, Dr. KM Loi and Mark Chay in the presence of Second Secretary Dawn Naughton. There was an exchange of views on current affairs in general and corruption in particular. At the end of the lunch meeting, the High Commissioner expressed interest to support the Crinis project as well as Integrity pact initiative.

**22 July RTI Workshop in Sabah**

The objective was to introduce the law to groups in Sabah, which has not been involved in any past civil society initiatives regarding right to information. Following the presentation there was a discussion on how the law would help in the work of the communities that are confronted by land disputes, cultural rights, biotechnology and patenting of local medicines.

**17 August RTI Workshop in IIM (Institut Integriti Malaysia)**

The session started with introduction of the power to control information by certain authorities, followed by discussions between the speaker and participants. Topics discussed included the consequences of the abuse of the power to retain information and the current legislations that prohibit the exercise of FOI.

**29 August RTI Workshop in Seremban**

It was an interactive session with participants. The participants were curious about the FOI and asked questions regarding the FOI as they wanted to know the purpose and benefits of having FOI legislation in Malaysia. There was an interesting exchange of views on freedom of information and privacy.

**6 September RTI Workshop in Cameron Highland**

The participants were receptive towards the implementation of Freedom of Information. They were aware of the importance of FOI within the local context. Participants also believed FOI would help the locals and tourists to be aware of the local contamination problem.

**8 September Integrity Pact and Basic Principles Countering Bribery Workshop**

A workshop on "Training on Tools Against Corruption" was held at Corus Hotel, Kuala Lumpur on 8<sup>th</sup> September, 2009. It incorporated two sessions which were Integrity Pact (IP) and Basic Principles Countering Bribery (BPCB). The IP session was presented by TI-M Executive Director, Mark Chay while BPCB was presented by the then Secretary-General, Dr K.M. Loi. The workshop aims to create awareness and the strategic approaches in combating corruption in both the public and private sectors by using the available tools.

**15 September Datuk Paul Low and Crinis Team interviewed Tun Dr Mahathir**

The interview took place in Tun Dr Mahathir's office, Perdana Leadership Foundation in Putrajaya on 15 September 2009. Tun Mahathir believes that there will always be accusations on the people who are in position to be corrupt. We can only see indications of corruption by the way(s) one spends the money.

He said in order to reduce political corruption, the leader has to be clean and it will lead the rest to be clean.

**23 September Global Corruption Report (GCR) 2009 Launch**

Transparency International's Global Corruption Report 2009: Corruption and the Private Sector (GCR) featured more than 75 experts examining the scale, scope and devastating consequences of corporate corruption. This was complemented by 45 in-depth country reports along with best practices and practical recommendations. The GCR is a flagship yearly publication from TI that compiles expert research and analyses from around the world with a thematic focus related to corruption. GCR 2009 discussed the most promising tools to tackle corruption in business, identified pressing areas for reform and outlined how companies, governments, investors, consumers and other stakeholders can contribute to raising corporate integrity and meeting the challenges that corruption poses to sustainable economic growth and development.

**5 – 6 September Forest Governance & Integrity (FGI) Workshop**

15 participants from Berlin (TI-S), Indonesia, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea and Malaysia participated in the FGI Workshop held on 5 & 6 Oct 2009 at Corus Hotel, Kuala Lumpur. The workshop was conducted to review the anti-corruption tools that have been developed by Natural Capital Advisors, LLC, one of the consultants for the FGI

project. The anti-corruption tools that were developed were intensely debated as the tools had to be streamlined to suit the needs of each participating country involved in the FGI programme. The development of the final set of tools will be finalized by end of November.

#### **15 October Mission Cluster Group meeting for 10th Malaysia Plan, organised by the Economic Planning Unit (EPU) of the Prime Minister's Department**

The Mission Cluster Group is chaired by the EPU, and comprises representatives from the Public Services Dept, Ministry of Finance, MAMPU, Public Complaints Bureau, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Public Works Department, Ministry of Information, Communications and Culture, Ministry of Housing and Local Government, Ministry of International Trade and Industry, Securities Commission, Integrity Institute of Malaysia (IIM), Communications and Multimedia Commission, Energy Commission, INTAN, Malaysian Institute of Corporate Governance, American Chamber of Commerce, British Malaysian Chamber of Commerce, Malaysian International Chamber of Commerce and Transparency International Malaysia. Then-Executive Committee member, C I Ngooi attended this meeting.

There are four Technical Working Groups for the 10th Malaysia Plan: Public Service Delivery, Private Service Delivery (Telecommunications, Energy and Water, Financial and Banking Services), Public Sector Competencies and Integrity (headed by IIM). The Target outcome for upholding Integrity is a trusted service delivery with integrity, and the agreed proposed National Programmes are for (1) Transparency of processes, decision-making, monitoring, enforcement and punitive actions and (2) Good governance as a culture.

#### **3 – 4 November Freedom of Information (FOI) Conference**

The urgent need for Malaysia to adopt a Freedom of Information Act was highlighted at the regional conference on the Public Right to Information organized by TI-Malaysia and the Centre of Independent Journalism (CIJ) on 3 and 4 November 2009 in Kuala Lumpur.

70 participants attended the two-day conference at the Royale Chulan Hotel. The participants comprised of officials from embassies, elected representatives, TI-M members, the media, private sector, academia, NGOs and university students.

##### **The speakers for the two-day conference were:**

- Datuk Hafarizam Harun, Legal Advisor of UMNO.
- Y.B. Elizabeth Wong Keat Ping, Executive Councillor for Tourism, Environment and Consumer Affairs, Selangor State Government.
- Mohd Nizam bin Mohd Ali, Director, Private Sector, Integrity Institute of Malaysia.
- Y.B. Lau Weng San, Member of the Selangor State Legislative Assembly Select Committee on State Government Agencies, Subsidiaries and Statutory Bodies.
- Joseph Paul, Chairperson, Amnesty International Malaysia.
- H.R. Dipendra, Co-Chair Person, Civil & Political Rights Working Group, Malaysian Bar Council.
- R. Nadeswaran, Editor, Special and Investigating Reporting, the Sun Daily.
- Anung Karyadi, FOI Advocate in Indonesia, TI-Indonesia.
- Professor M.K. Balachandran, Director, Amity Law School, Delhi, India.
- V. Gayathry, Executive Director, Centre For Independent Journalism.
- Dr. Denison Jayasooria, Human Rights Commissioner, SUHAKAM, Malaysia.

##### **The key issues discussed were:**

- The Selangor FOI enactment is being redrafted and it is expected to have its first tabling in early 2010.
- The FOI principle benefits the public.
- UMNO fully supports the implementation of an FOI Act.
- The FOI principle is an extension of the Freedom of Expression.
- The FOI principle is very important in order to carry out human rights work effectively.
- The FOI Act enables the public to hold the government accountable for the irregularities noted in the 2009 Auditor-General's Report, in order to inculcate transparency and accountability.
- There must be political will in changing old mindsets and civil society must play a role in educating the people about the importance and benefits of an FOI Act.
- The FOI principles should be followed at the local council level, citizens must be made aware of their rights to access relevant information.
- The FOI principle is a basic right, as access to information affects our daily lives.
- The FOI Act ensures the right to privacy by defining what public and private information should be.

##### **Future programmes**

A Roundtable dialogue for FOI is to be conducted on 9 December 2009 to form the coalition for the 2010 TI-M-led FOI campaign to promote the implementation of an FOI Act in Malaysia.

#### **7 November EGM (Extraordinary General Meeting)**

An Extraordinary General Meeting was held to resolve serious issues relating to the resignation of the President, Datuk Paul Low and a defamation suit against him. It was attended by 50 Ordinary and Corporate members.

The following Resolutions were adopted:

1. That the Society endorses and supports the Global Corruption Report 2009 (GCR 2009).
2. That the Society endorses and supports the words and actions of the then President Datuk Paul Low relating thereto, and accordingly the Society pledges full financial and other support of the Society in claims, suits and proceedings arising from or relating to the GCR 2009 and the words and actions of the then President relating to the GCR 2009.

The Executive Committee stepped down, and the following new Executive Committee members elected for the remainder of the term ending March 2011 are:

President :Datuk Paul Low (unopposed)

Deputy President :Prof. Datuk Hj Mohamad Ali Hasan

Secretary-General :Ngooi Chiu Ing

Treasurer :Richard Wong (unopposed)

Members: :Dato' Murad Hashim

Dr. Chin Yoong Kheong

Mohamed Raslan Abdul Rahman

Fahri Azzat

Lee Swee Seng

Amu Tharmarajah

### **17 November Corruption Perception Index (CPI) 2009 Launch**

CPI 2009 was launched at the Royal Selangor Golf Club (RSGC). The President, Datuk Paul Low announced that Malaysia ranked 56 (a drop of 9 places) out of 180 countries in the world with a CPI score of 4.5 out of 10, with 10 being the least corrupt. The annual CPI of Transparency International focuses on corruption (the abuse of public power for private gains) in the public sector. There was a glaring contrast in CPI scores between Malaysia and some emerging Asian economies. From 1995 to 2009, China improved from 1.94 to 3.6; South Korea from 4.29 to 5.5; Thailand from 2.79 to 3.4; Indonesia from 1.94 to 2.8, whereas Malaysia dropped from 5.28 to 4.5 with the greatest drop in 2009.

### **30 November National Conference on Political Financing**

The first *National Conference on Political Financing in Malaysia: Challenges for Institutional and Legislative Reforms*, organised by TI-Malaysia (TI-M), was held on 30 November 2009 in Kuala Lumpur with support from the Kinrad-Adenauer-Stiftung. The conference featured the following speakers:

- Prof. Jon S. T. Quah, Anti-corruption Consultant, former professor of National University of Singapore,
- Prof. Dr. Edmund Terence Gomez, Faculty of Economics and Administration, University of Malaya,
- Dr. Mavis Puthuchery, former academic and political analyst,
- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bridget Welsh, Singapore Management University,
- Datuk Wira Haji Wan Ahmad bin Wan Omar, Deputy Chairman, Election Commission of Malaysia,
- Tuan Abdul Wahab Bin Abdul Aziz, Director of Excellence and Professionalism, Malaysia Anti-Corruption Commission,
- Dr. Goh Ban Lee, Fellow of Socio-Economic and Environmental Research Institute, Penang,
- Tan Sri Megat Najmuddin Megat Khas, President of Malaysian Institute of Corporate Governance,
- Mr. Philip TN Koh, FCIS, Advocate & Solicitors, High Court Malaya, Senior Partner, Mah-Kamariyah & Philip Koh.

TI-M president Dato Paul Low gave the opening remarks on behalf of TI-M. The conference was moderated by Josie Fernandez, Ngooi Chiu Ing and Prof Edmund Terence Gomez.

Among the 120 guests and participants were representatives and officials from Embassies and High Commissions, the Election Commission, Malaysia Anti-Corruption Commission, government agencies, political parties, TI-M members, NGOs, academicians, political analysts and the media.

The conference raised some important issues in pursuing a level playing field in political financing, such as:

- The responsibility for eradicating corruption must not be left with the Police.
- Political Parties should depend more on individual contributions rather than corporate contributions.
- To build up the capacity of the civil servants.
- Even with the perfect legislations and institutions in place, the problem of political corruption could still exist if the interpretation of the law is done with partiality.
- The limitations of the EC and the MACC in curbing political corruption due to inadequate laws.
- A Political Party Act was proposed to monitor the political financing of parties.

Among the topics that participants proposed for future conferences are:

- In-depth comparative studies on political financing.
- Value-based education.
- The implementation of anti-bribery initiatives in the corporate and private sectors.

TI-M's future plans for 2010 for the political financing project are:

- A publication on proposed reforms for Political Financing in Malaysia.
- Advocacy through coalition building for Political Financing reforms.

The conference was well attended by 17 members of the media, and reports on the proceedings are both in print and posted on the websites of the Star, theSun, Utusan Malaysia, Sin Chew Daily, Oriental Daily, MalaysiaKini, The Nut Graph, TV Selangor and The Edge Financial Daily.

#### **8 December Meeting with the Dutch Ambassador to Malaysia**

The meeting at the Embassy of the Netherlands was attended by the Secretary General and Executive Director. It was a briefing session for the new Ambassador on the current scenario in Malaysia. He expressed interest and support on TI-M's initiatives on Integrity Pacts and Governance in the public/private sector as he would like see improvement in the environment to do business in Malaysia. Corruption is one of the deterrents to the Dutch investors.

#### **9 December Freedom of Information (FOI) Roundtable Dialogue**

An FOI Roundtable was organized as a follow-up to the FOI "Access to Information" Workshop, "Train the Trainer" Workshop and a series of FOI Awareness Workshops. The Roundtable, held at Shah Village's Hotel, Petaling Jaya with the support of Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS), sought to gather ideas on action plans, strategies and coalition building toward achieving an FOI Act.

The Roundtable, which brought together 12 citizens groups representing a range of advocacy and residents organisations, aimed to:

- Build a coalition to advocate for FOI
- Set up a coalition taskforce
- Explore strategies
- Embark on a FOI Campaign
- Discuss implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the coalition's aims, and
- Identify sources of funding for the coalition's work

The outcomes of the Roundtable were:

- A Coalition for the FOI campaign 2010, consisting of Roundtable participants, was established
- A task force was set up to develop the action plan for the Coalition
- The coalition is to be led by TI-M, which will host the coalition secretariat and secure funding for its activities.

#### **10 December EU Seminar on Women's Rights**

The above seminar was jointly organised by the Delegation of the European Union to Malaysia and the Embassy of Sweden as current EU Presidency together with Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (Suharkam). The Secretary General represented TI-M. It marks the start of the projects selected under the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) grant program in Malaysia.

#### **11 December EU Ambassador's Visit to TI-M**

The EU Ambassador HE Vincent Pickett paid a courtesy visit to TI-M and was received by our President

#### **17 – 18 December Government Transformation Program (GTP) Open Day**

The GTP open day was held at the Sunway Convention Centre. It was launched by Tan Sri Dr. Koh Tsu Koon to showcase the government initiatives to transform under the National Key Result Areas (NKRA). Corruption is one of the six NKRA's. Political financing is listed as one of the elements the government is going to address. The Executive Director attended the launch.

## **2009 TI-M Press Statements**

- 18 January      TI Malaysia Supports Reforms to Curb Political Corruption
- 10 April        TI-M calls for strong political will and leadership by the Cabinet in combating corruption
- 12 April        TI-M lauds the launching of Integrity Plan
- 06 May         PKFZ FIASCO: Root problem is the mixing of politics with efficiency of a government agency
- 22 June         Corruption Watch in Tender Boards of Selangor Local Councils
- 15 July         MACC must be transparent on files seized from Reps.
- 17 July         Teoh's death warrants Independent Inquiry on MACC
- 28 July         Key Result Area – Combating Corruption
- 17 August       30-member MACC Task Force
- 26 August       Hundreds of NGOs push for anti- corruption action at UN meeting
- 10 September   Government Task Force on PKFZ