



# NEWSLETTER



A Nation Without Corruption, A Society with Integrity

Volume 50 (May-August 2023). KDN Permit No: 11959/03/2019 (025399)

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It is a privilege to address all our members on behalf of the executive committee.

It is about 3 weeks after the state elections for the six states. The state elections have no bearing on the federal government although some political leaders were eager to claim that the federal government could be changed. Our movement have taken a strong stand against those planning to install a backdoor government through undemocratic means. Going by our experience in 2020 when the “Sheraton Move” happened all our efforts to push for institutional reforms stalled. One of the main casualties, was the amendments to the Whistle Blower Protection Act (WPA) 2010, which is now 4 years after we participated in the first consultation with all stakeholders in 2019. With the present government there has been good progress made on the WPA and if all goes well the bill could be tabled for the first reading in the coming October parliament sitting. Any midway change of government now, would result in another disaster for our institutional reform agenda. The unity government has been urged to accelerate all the key institutional reforms to demonstrate its commitment towards good governance, transparency, integrity and accountability.



On our programs, we have been working on our advocacy work through forums and workshops. The Collective Action Project with the Terengganu State government is progressing well in Marang and Dungun and it is led by our exco member Alan Kirupakaran. The second project is the training for the political leaders and members of political parties on political financing, asset declaration and beneficial ownership. This project is funded by the International Republican Institute, done jointly with IDEAS and is expected to be completed by November this year. The third project is part of our Business Integrity Program to assist the private sector to understand on the Liability of Legal Persons if corrupt practices of giving, rewarding, offering or promises to reward with the intent to obtain, retain a business and gain an advantage in the conduct of the business. This is funded by UNODC. The fourth project is on Youth Education called “Generasi Kita” will be executed in October is for the youth on two areas. One is about “Freedom of Information” and other is about “Diversity & Unity are Malaysia’s Strengths”. On behalf of the exco I want to thank all our corporate and individual members for your continued support for our movement to play a prominent role in the reforms of our country.

*Dr Muhammad Mohan*

**President**

**Transparency International-Malaysia**

## EDITORIAL

### **Fostering Solidarity with Whistleblowers Everywhere - Malaysia's Reform Journey**

In this edition of our newsletter, we commemorate World Whistleblowers Day 2023 under the theme "Fostering Solidarity with Whistleblowers Everywhere." It is a significant occasion for us, as we reflect on the progress Malaysia has made in its whistleblowing reforms while acknowledging the challenges that lie ahead.



### **A Journey Towards Accountability**

Whistleblowers are the unsung heroes of transparency and anti-corruption efforts. They bring to light the shadows of misconduct and graft, helping to cleanse institutions and fostering an environment of accountability. Malaysia, like many nations, recognizes the indispensable role of whistleblowers in upholding the principles of good governance. In recent years, our nation has taken noteworthy steps in creating a conducive environment for whistleblowers. The Whistleblower Protection Act of 2010 marked a pivotal moment, offering legal safeguards to those who step forward with information about corruption, abuse of power, and other forms of wrongdoing. However, true progress is measured not just in laws on paper but in their implementation and impact.

### **Challenges and Opportunities**

While the legal framework is in place, challenges persist. Whistleblowers still face potential threats to their safety, and many continue to grapple with fear of retaliation. Our mission, as advocates for transparency, is to create a culture that embraces truth-telling without fear of consequences. We must ensure that the protections offered by the law are fortified by the collective will of society. One, vital aspect of Malaysia's whistleblowing journey is to continually improve reporting mechanisms and support systems. Government agencies, private corporations, and civil society organizations must collaborate to create avenues that allow whistleblowers to come forward safely, while guaranteeing the utmost confidentiality.

### **Solidarity Across Borders**

The spirit of "Fostering Solidarity with Whistleblowers Everywhere" transcends national boundaries. Corruption knows no borders, and our commitment to transparency is a global endeavor. Malaysia's reforms can serve as an inspiration to countries striving to strengthen their own anti-corruption efforts. By sharing our experiences and lessons learned, we contribute to a global movement that empowers truth-tellers worldwide.

### **A Call to Action**

As we mark this year's World Whistleblowers Day, let us reiterate our commitment to standing with those who speak out against corruption and wrongdoing. The journey to a more transparent, accountable society is ongoing, and our work is far from over. Let us amplify the voices of whistleblowers, advocate for their rights, and continue to push for reforms that protect their invaluable contributions. To all whistleblowers everywhere, we stand in solidarity with you. Your courage and commitment are instrumental in shaping a better future for us all. As citizens, it is our collective responsibility to nurture an environment where truth prevails and corruption is no longer tolerated.

*Eulis Rachmatiah Iskandar*

## TI-MALAYSIA HOLDS 'BENKEL PENDANAAN POLITIK PERINGKAT NEGERI JOINTLY WITH IDEAS AT THE TUARAN CONSTITUENCY & SUBANG CONSTITUENCY BRINGING POLITICAL FINANCING, ASSET DECLARATION AND BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP TO THE GRASSROOTS



*Ravinderjit Kaur from SSM spoke on Beneficial Ownership*

From May to June, two workshops on Political Financing were successfully held at Tuaran and Subang constituencies organized by Transparency International Malaysia (TI-Malaysia) together with the Institute for Democracy and Economic Affairs (IDEAS) with support from the International Republican Institute (IRI). The workshop was designed to provide information on Political Financing along with Asset Declaration and Beneficial Ownership to the average layperson.

For the workshop in Tuaran, we invited Alexander S. Kunghi of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) to speak on Asset Declaration and Ravinderjit Kaur of the Companies Commission of Malaysia (CCM) to speak on Beneficial Ownership. These two sessions on Asset Declaration and Beneficial Ownership, respectively, in tandem with the session on Political Financing, promote greater transparency and understanding of the importance of legislative reforms in Malaysia.

Datuk Seri Panglima Wilfred Madius Tangau was also invited and came to the workshop in Tuaran to garner more public support for political financing and to increase the involvement of Members of Parliament in such engagements.

From the workshop in Tuaran, TI-Malaysia learned that there is a lot of interest in anti-corruption issues in Sabah. Topics such as Asset Declaration and Beneficial Ownership are still very new concepts here. More education on the need for legislation on these topics must be done. The challenges faced by Sabah regarding corruption are known factors. The people here would like to see more done to end corruption concerning arrests and convictions before they see the need for preventive measures such as Asset Declaration and Beneficial Ownership. TI-Malaysia will continue highlighting the importance of Asset Declaration and Beneficial Ownership in fighting corruption in Malaysia in a way that all citizens can understand.



*Alexander S. Kunghi spoke on Asset Declaration*

The fourth workshop was held at the Subang constituency. We invited Hong Chin Chin of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) to speak on Asset Declaration and Ravinderjit Kaur of the Companies Commission of Malaysia (CCM) to speak on Beneficial Ownership. Our speakers were invited to provide knowledge on Asset Declaration and Beneficial Ownership clearly and concisely.

From the Subang workshop, TI-Malaysia found that people are still not aware that MACC is merely the custodian for the information on Asset Declaration for members of parliament

and has no power to enforce laws to ensure members of parliament declare their assets. There is still a need for legislation on Asset Declaration for members of parliament. As for Beneficial Ownership, we find that most participants had limited knowledge on this, and we were glad to share with them the work CCM had done to develop this area in Malaysia. CCM is also happy to provide public awareness talks on their work on Beneficial Ownership. Knowledge on this subject matter is the first step in having more people support laws to strengthen the declaration of Beneficial Ownership in Malaysia.

### **LAUNCH OF THE PEMBANGUNAN INTEGRITI BERSAMA KOMUNITI (PIBK) PROGRAM. BUILDING INTEGRITY TOGETHER WITH THE COMMUNITY**



*Group Photo with SUK Terengganu: YBM Tengku Farok Hussin*

Transparency International Malaysia was invited to the launch ceremony of the PIBK Program (Pembangunan Integriti Bersama Komuniti) held on 17th May 2023 at Wisma Darul Iman, Kuala Terengganu. This program marks a significant milestone in our continuous efforts to promote integrity and combat corruption in Malaysia.

The PIBK Program is a context-based approach that aims to identify and implement effective solutions to enhance the integrity of

infrastructure and public services. Here, integrity is defined as the alignment of Accountability, Efficiency, and Ethics, free from corrupt practices.

This is a community-driven approach to development, known as CIB (Community Integrity Building), has proven successful and effective in improving the quality of public programs, development projects, and services, ultimately enhancing the lives of the residents.



*Alan Kirupakaran received an appreciation plaque from YBM Tengku Farok Hussin*



The objectives of the PIBK Program are as follows: Provide better public services and empower stakeholders to ensure that policies are relevant, information is reliable, and public funds are efficiently utilized. The findings from our initial assessments are promising, indicating the potential for significant positive outcomes.

As Transparency International Malaysia, we are committed to working hand in hand with the community, government agencies, and stakeholders to drive positive change through the PIBK Program. By fostering integrity, accountability, and ethical practices, we can create a better future for our nation.

## TI-MALAYSIA EMPOWERS THE COMMUNITY WITH JOINT LEARNING WORKSHOP AT MAJLIS PERBANDARAN DUNGUN FOR THE PIBK PROGRAM



*TI-Malaysia and Participants of the Joint Learning*

Transparency International Malaysia recently (TI-Malaysia) hosted a successful Joint Learning Workshop for the program "Pembangunan Integriti Bersama Komuniti" (PIBK) on June 14th and 15th, 2023. The workshop focused on the Community Development Program and the Responsibilities of the Community Monitoring Team. The two-day event comprised various sessions to equip participants with the necessary knowledge and skills for effective monitoring in the PIBK program.

The workshop commenced with an introductory session, where participants had the opportunity to get acquainted with the three zones' monitoring teams, contractors, and Majlis Perbandaran Dungun personnel. This ice-breaking session fostered a sense of

camaraderie among the participants and facilitated better collaboration throughout the workshop.

TI-Malaysia, provided a comprehensive overview of the PIBK program, emphasizing its goals, objectives, and the importance of the monitoring team's role. The session aimed to ensure that participants have a solid understanding of the program's concept and their responsibilities as monitors.



*Alan Kirupakaran provided the training at the session*

Another engaging session was conducted by Prof. Said, who shared valuable insights into data measurement techniques focusing on extracting and visualizing data using Microsoft Power BI, an essential tool for effective data analysis and reporting in the PIBK program.

This session highlighted essential aspects such as data collection methods, dashboard utilization, and reporting procedures. Participants were provided valuable guidance on navigating these key elements of the PIBK program effectively.

In the last session, TI-Malaysia invited representatives from Suruhanjaya Pencegahan Rasuah Malaysia, Cawangan Negeri Terengganu, to provide an in-depth understanding of corruption, its implications, and the associated legal consequences. Participants gained insights into the various forms of corruption, the penalties involved, and the importance of combating corruption

within the community. Additionally, we invited a representative previously involved in the PIBK program to share their first-hand experiences and insights on the program's implementation in Majlis Daerah Hulu Terengganu. This session was a valuable platform for exchanging knowledge and promoting a collective commitment to integrity and anti-corruption efforts.

Overall, the Joint Learning Workshop was highly informative and interactive. It provided participants with the knowledge, skills, and insights necessary for their roles as Community Monitoring Team members in the PIBK program. The workshop successfully fostered a sense of collaboration and dedication in upholding integrity within the community.

## **TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL MALAYSIA (TI-MALAYSIA) SUCCESSFULLY CONDUCTS CORPORATE LIABILITY TRAINING IN COLLABORATION WITH UNODC**

Transparency International Malaysia (TI-Malaysia) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) together organized a highly successful half-day training session on "Decoding Section 17A: Impacts and Insights on Corporate Liability." The training took place at the Royale Chulan Hotel in Kuala Lumpur, showcasing a fruitful collaboration between the two organizations.

The training aimed to enhance participants' understanding about Section 17A and its implications. As part of the training, TI-Malaysia designed pre and post-test questionnaires to assess participants' knowledge before and after the training, providing valuable insights into the effectiveness of the session.

The event commenced with the opening remarks by Dr. Muhammad Mohan, President of Transparency International Malaysia (TI-Malaysia), who provided an overview of the

topic and set the stage for the training. Following the opening remarks, Chuah Yeon Ping and Nurirdzuana Ismail, both distinguished members of TI-Malaysia's Exco, took to the floor as speakers for the training session.



*Opening remarks by Dr. Muhammad Mohan*

Chuah Yean Ping led the first part of the training session, sharing her extensive experience into the subject matter. Participants were encouraged to engage actively by raising questions, to which both Chuah Yean Ping and Nurirdzuana Ismail provided brilliant and comprehensive responses, ensuring a dynamic and enriching learning environment.



*Chuah Yean Ping spoke on Corporate Liability*

During the second part of the training session, Nurirdzuana Ismail shared her expertise, delving further into the intricacies of corporate liability under Section 17A. The participants

had the opportunity to gain deeper insights into the topic and pose questions to clarify on any doubts.

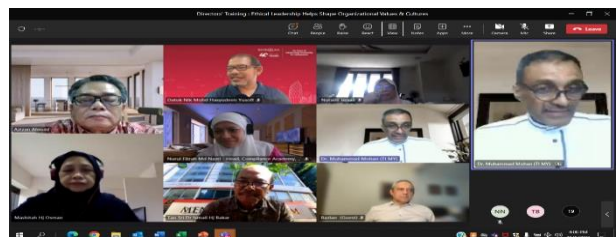


*Nurirdzuana Ismail Engaging with Participants*

The success of the training event would not have been possible without the active participation and enthusiasm of the attendees, as well as the insightful contributions from the esteemed speakers, Chuah Yean Ping and Nurirdzuana Ismail. Transparency International Malaysia (TI-Malaysia) extends its gratitude to all participants, speakers, and partners for their valuable contributions.

### **TI-MALAYSIA PRESENTATION ON ETHICAL LEADERSHIP FOR BANK ISLAM: SHAPING ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES & CULTURES**

Transparency International Malaysia (TI-Malaysia) presented an informative and engaging webinar in partnership for Bank Islam board members, focusing on the crucial theme of Ethical Leadership and its profound impact on shaping organizational values and cultures. The webinar served as a platform for insightful discussions and valuable exchanges on the significance of ethical leadership in promoting integrity within institutions.



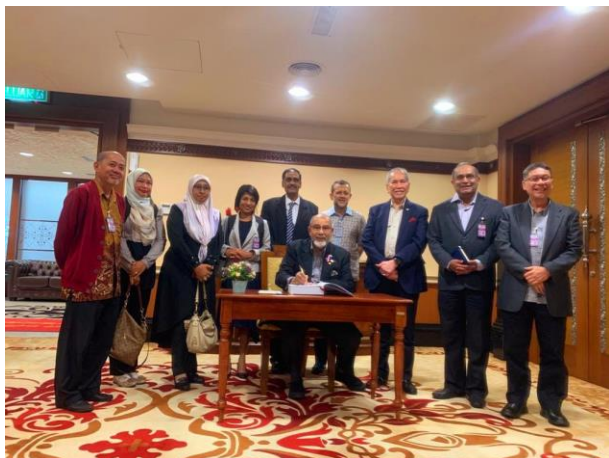
*Dr. Mohan and the webinar participants*



An integral aspect of the webinar revolved around the exploration of ethical leadership values. This session delved into the core values that define ethical leadership, underscoring the importance of fostering a culture of

integrity and ethical conduct within organizations. Participants were encouraged to reflect on the ethical values that guide their actions and decisions as leaders.

### TI-MALAYSIA ADVOCATES FOR INSTITUTIONAL AND LEGISLATIVE REFORMS: ENGAGING WITH YDP DEWAN NEGARA



*Dr. Mohan, CSOs and Tan Sri Wan Junaidi*

TI-Malaysia together with other CSOs held a meeting with YDP Dewan Negara, Tan Sri Dato Sri Dr Wan Junaidi, to advocate for crucial institutional and legislative reforms. During the engaging session, TI-Malaysia and several civil society organizations (CSOs) presented eight key demands for institutional and legislative reforms. The meeting aimed to provide YDP Dewan Negara with a comprehensive understanding about these demands and to seek his support in accelerating the necessary reforms.

The first demand discussed was the amendment of the Whistleblower Protection Act. TI-Malaysia emphasized the importance of strengthening existing laws to provide robust protection for individuals who expose wrongdoings. Enhancing whistleblower protection would create a conducive

environment for reporting corruption and foster a culture of transparency and accountability.

The second priority demand focused on comprehensive reforms within the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC). TI-Malaysia highlighted the urgent need to enhance the effectiveness, independence, and capabilities of MACC in its fight against corruption. Strengthening the MACC would bolster public confidence.

A crucial aspect of the discussion centered on the separation of powers between the Attorney General (AG) and the Public Prosecutor. TI-Malaysia emphasized the importance of maintaining the integrity of the justice system by clearly defining and upholding the separation of powers. This separation ensures impartiality and upholds the principles of justice and fairness.



*Engaging Discussions on Institutional and Legislative Reforms with Tan Sri Wan Junaidi*



Political financing was another significant area of concern. TI-Malaysia stressed the need for a robust and transparent political financing framework to prevent illicit practices, promote accountability, and safeguard the integrity of the democratic process. A comprehensive Political Financing Act would regulate campaign financing, disclose political donations, and strengthen oversight mechanisms.

In addition to the four priority demands, TI-Malaysia highlighted the importance of advancing reforms in other key areas. These included enhancing the Procurement Act to ensure transparency, fairness, and competitiveness in government procurement processes. Strengthening the autonomy and effectiveness of parliamentary services through the Parliamentary Services Act was also emphasized. Furthermore, TI-Malaysia advocated for the full implementation of the National Anti-Corruption Plan (NACP) to address corruption risks, improve governance structures, and promote integrity across all sectors of society.

TI-Malaysia conveyed these demands with clarity and conviction, emphasizing the urgent need for comprehensive reforms to build a more transparent and accountable nation. TI-M and other CSOs sought the support of YDP Dewan Negara, Tan Sri Dato Sri Dr Wan Junaidi, in championing these reforms and influencing the government to expedite their implementation.

The meeting with YDP Dewan Negara was a significant step towards advocating for institutional and legislative reforms in Malaysia. TI-Malaysia remains committed to its mission of combating corruption and promoting good governance. Through ongoing advocacy efforts and collaborations with key stakeholders, TI-Malaysia strives to foster a society that upholds the values of transparency, integrity, and accountability. The organization appreciates YDP Dewan Negara for his willingness to address these crucial issues and looks forward to a continued partnership in building a corruption-free Malaysia.

## **TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL MALAYSIA (TI-MALAYSIA) HOSTS COURTESY VISIT BY ACA UZBEKISTAN TO FOSTER ANTI-CORRUPTION COOPERATION**



*Raymon Ram presents on Malaysian anti-corruption efforts*

On 12th July 2023 - Transparency International Malaysia (TI-Malaysia) had the honor of

welcoming a delegation from the Anti-Corruption Agency (ACA) of Uzbekistan, accompanied by officials from the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC), for a fruitful courtesy visit at TI-Malaysia's office. The delegation from ACA Uzbekistan, embarked on this working trip with the primary objective of exchanging knowledge, experiences, and best practices in the ongoing fight against corruption.

The visit commenced with a warm reception and introductory remarks from the Secretary General of TI-Malaysia Raymon Ram,

emphasizing the importance of international collaboration in combating corruption and the shared commitment towards transparency, integrity, and good governance. The ACA Uzbekistan delegation expressed their gratitude for the opportunity to engage with TI-Malaysia, highlighting their eagerness to learn from Malaysia's experience and explore avenues for enhanced cooperation.

During the interactive session, TI-Malaysia had the opportunity to share valuable insights and information on key topics related to anti-corruption efforts in Malaysia. One of the key areas of the discussion centered around the active involvement of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in fighting corruption. TI-Malaysia highlighted the crucial role played by NGOs in promoting transparency, advocating for ethical practices, and mobilizing public support for anti-corruption initiatives.

Another important aspect discussed was the Corruption Perception Index (CPI), a widely recognized measure of corruption levels worldwide. TI-Malaysia provided an overview of Malaysia's CPI ranking and shared the strategies employed to improve the country's standing. The ACA Uzbekistan delegation expressed their interest in understanding the methodologies and factors contributing to the CPI assessment.

Furthermore, the meeting served as a platform to discuss the engagement between anti-corruption authorities and relevant government ministries, departments, and agencies. TI-Malaysia shared valuable insights on establishing effective communication channels, fostering coordination, and maximizing synergies among stakeholders in the anti-corruption ecosystem. The ACA Uzbekistan delegation expressed their appreciation for the comprehensive

knowledge sharing, which they believed would significantly contribute to their ongoing efforts to combat corruption in Uzbekistan.



*Raymon Ram & ACA Uzbekistan exchange tokens of appreciation*

The visit concluded on a positive note, with both parties exchanging tokens of appreciation symbolizing the strengthened partnership and commitment for continued cooperation in the fight against corruption. The ACA Uzbekistan delegation expressed their gratitude for the warm hospitality extended by TI-Malaysia and commended the organization's dedication and expertise in promoting transparency and integrity.

TI-Malaysia is proud to have facilitated this meaningful exchange and looks forward to further collaborations with ACA Uzbekistan and other international counterparts to create a world free from corruption. Through such engagements, TI-Malaysia continues to contribute to the global fight against corruption, striving for a more transparent, accountable, and just society.

## AGORA SOCIETY MALAYSIA PUBLIC FORUM EXPLORES CORRUPTION AS A CULTURAL PROBLEM



In pursuit of fostering an enlightened movement for a Corruption-Free Generation, Agora Society Malaysia organized an important public forum on "Corruption as a Cultural Problem" on 22nd July 2023. The forum aimed to delve into the intricate relationship between culture and corruption, and how this connection shapes the fabric of society.

TI-Malaysia, is at the forefront of combating corruption, was represented by Alan Kirupakaran. In his presentation, Alan eloquently explored the correlation between culture and corruption, highlighting its potential impact in shaping societal norms and values. The forum brought together distinguished speakers from various backgrounds, each offering unique perspectives on this pressing issue.

Ibrahim "Ben" Suffian, Co-founder of Merdeka Center for Opinion Research, contributed to the discussion by analyzing public perceptions of government corruption. Drawing upon extensive research, he shed light on how these perceptions play a crucial role in shaping the nation's fight against corruption.

Datuk Wira Dr. Hj Rais Hussin Mohammed Ariff, the esteemed President and CEO of EMIR Research, presented a compelling discourse on the pivotal role of intelligentsias in informing the public about corruption. He emphasized the significance of research as a tool to understand and address the multifaceted nature of corruption in Malaysia.

Another noteworthy speaker was Zaidi Azmi, the Special Projects Editor at Sinar Daily, who offered keen insights into the challenges faced in investigative journalism when uncovering and reporting corruption cases.



*Alan speaks on the correlation between culture and corruption*

The forum's engaging discussions were expertly moderated by Wathslah Naidu, the Executive Director of the Center for Independent Journalism. Her guidance ensured a harmonious exchange of ideas and provided a platform for open dialogue among participants.

Alan's presentation, meticulously outlined the detrimental cost of corruption to Malaysia and its direct impact on the nation's welfare, resonated with the audience. He meticulously examined the root causes of corruption, emphasizing the urgent need for stronger oversight, punitive measures, and the fostering of personal integrity. Furthermore, he stressed

the importance of accountability among leaders and demanded a collective commitment from citizens to combat this pervasive issue. Alan also highlighted TI-M's groundbreaking advocacy for Collective Action, a potent model being utilized to drive

behavioral change at the grassroots level. By fostering trust and upholding integrity among all stakeholders, Collective Action holds the promise of transforming the nation's approach to tackling corruption.





## TI-M sokong laporan SPRM dibentang terus di parlimen

Diterbitkan: Jun 30, 2023 12:34 PM · Dikemaskini: 12:37 PM

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HIGHLIGHTS **GEIS**

Podcast > Morning Run > Morning Brief > How To Stamp Out Corruption At Immigration?

### HOW TO STAMP OUT CORRUPTION AT IMMIGRATION?

Dr Muhammad Mohan, President, Transparency International Malaysia  
04-Jul-23 08:30

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# Top heads must also roll, say groups

By GERARD GIMINO



## NATION

Monday, 03 Jul 2023

PETALING JAYA: Government agency heads and director-generals should also be held accountable if corruption cases are detected under their agencies, say good governance experts.

## Related News



They say better transparency and accountability alongside whistleblower protection was needed to fight corruption.

Transparency International Malaysia (TI-M) president Dr Muhammad Mohan said apart from holding implicated officers accountable if an investigation revealed so, government agency heads and director-generals should also have action taken against them.

## Come clean on LCS issue, TI-M tells govt

By R. SEKARAN



## NATION

Monday, 29 May 2023  
1:36 PM MYT

## Related News



## TI-M demands accountability over process that led to LCS scandal

Published: May 29, 2023 3:57 PM · Updated: 5:41 PM



**Stop it! TI-M condemns politicians plotting backdoor government to get Anwar out**

18 Aug 2023 • 12:00 PM MYT



**M. Krishnamoorthy**  
A media coach, associate professor and an undercover journalist



Dr Muhammad Mohan says stop plotting backdoor government. Image Credit: [The Sun Daily](#).

**Naming uncooperative PAC witnesses a good move, says TI-M**

By Iylia Marsya Iekandar - August 17, 2023 @ 7:18pm



TI-M president Dr Muhammad Mohan said today naming these witnesses would not put them at risk since PAC's questions would simply be about their job, actions and fiduciary duties while in active duty. -NSTP file pic

KUALA LUMPUR: Transparency International Malaysia (TI-M) applauds the Public Accounts Committee's (PAC) decision to name uncooperative witnesses, especially high-ranking civil servants, as they are morally obligated to respond.

**Fokus isu rakyat pada saat akhir kempen PRN - TI-M**

Oleh Zanariah Abd Mutalib - Ogos 10, 2023 @ 4:46pm  
zanariah\_mutalib@bh.com.my



Foto hiasan - NSTP/Mikail Ong

KUALA LUMPUR: Pada saat-saat terakhir kempen Pilihan Raya Negeri (PRN) di enam negeri, calon dan parti yang bertanding digesa memberi fokus kepada perkhidmatan kepada rakyat, bukan terus membangkitkan isu agama dan perkauman serta fitnah, apatah lagi memberi rasuah.

Presiden Transparency International Malaysia (TI-M), Dr Muhammad Mohan, berkata setakat ini, kempen PRN secara keseluruhannya berjalan lancar, namun disebabkan Malaysia tidak mempunyai undang-undang berkaitan dana politik, calon dan parti boleh mengambil kesempatan dengan menggunakan politik wang untuk membeli undi.



The mock donation cheques provided to primary and secondary schools in Ipoh featured the DAP logo, the PH coalition symbol, and the Malaysia Madani logo, earning the ire of netizens and the opposition parties - Facebook pic, August 25, 2023

NEWS

**Issue directive banning party branding on govt programmes, TI-M urges Anwar**

Watchdogs believe controversies like this can damage the government's attempts at pushing a reformist agenda

## TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL'S 30TH ANNIVERSARY: A MILESTONE IN THE GLOBAL FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

Transparency International is celebrating 30 years of strengthening democracy, rights and equality by tackling corruption.



What began with a group of individuals trying to break the taboo around corruption and show that it can be stopped is now a global movement with chapters and partners in over 100 countries, challenging wrongdoing to hold power to account for the common good.

Over the past three decades, Transparency International has played a pivotal role in placing corruption at the top of the global agenda and spearheading action on all levels to tackle this pervasive issue. What now appears as common knowledge was driven by Transparency International's work – that social justice, democracy and the protection of fundamental rights go hand in hand with the fight against corruption.

### **Driving global change**

Over the years, Transparency International has achieved remarkable breakthroughs towards building a world free of corruption and bringing meaningful progress to change people's lives.

Our research and advocacy efforts have shaped key international standards, including the 2003 United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) and the 2019 European Union directive on whistleblower protection, which is a landmark international law for defending people who expose wrongdoing. Our campaigning has also led to revising global standards on corporate transparency –



now, over 200 jurisdictions must track the real owners of companies, making it increasingly difficult for corrupt people to hide their ill-gotten gains.

By driving the adoption of the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention in 1999 and pushing states to enforce it since then, we have played a decisive role in efforts to stop companies from bribing foreign public officials when conducting business abroad. This has led to hundreds of individuals and companies being criminally sanctioned for foreign bribery and billions being paid in penalties.

Every year, our Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) draws widespread attention to governments' weak spots – and outright failings – in tackling public sector corruption. And the Global Corruption Barometer (GCB) – the only worldwide public opinion survey on corruption – is equally hard to ignore. Having surveyed over 850,000 people in more than 150 countries, the GCB has revealed widespread distrust in institutions, and has gone even further to expose how officials demand sex from people trying to access basic services like health care or land registration. This is known as sextortion and it is one of several forms of discriminatory corruption that Transparency International not only researches, but supports survivors of and advocates against.

We know that corruption must be challenged at all levels. So our chapters work tirelessly in national and regional contexts to change people's lives, including through our public project monitoring tool – the integrity pact. This tool has protected over a billion dollars' worth of taxpayers' money in more than 30 countries through binding agreements with and close monitoring of authorities and bidders for public contracts.

And through our Advocacy and Legal Advice Centres (ALACs) – established in 2003 – we have given advice and support to 320,000 survivors and witnesses of corruption in more than 60 countries, enabling them to assert their rights, seek redress and contribute to case-based advocacy.

### **A movement of empowered individuals**

The strength of the Transparency International movement lies in the dedication and expertise of our diverse members and partners – we understand that change for the good of everyone only happens when people with different identities, backgrounds and skills work together.

That is why our movement, with chapters in every continent, supports emerging anti-corruption leaders and empowers communities that are often ignored in decision-making processes. It is also why we bring different professionals together for innovative and collective ways of fighting wrongdoing – only through collective action will we be able to overcome the environmental crisis, bring integrity to politics, stop flows of dirty money and, of course, protect public resources.

This ranges from establishing the Global Anti-Corruption Consortium – which combines hard-hitting investigative journalism with skilful civil society advocacy – to founding international networks like the UNCAC Coalition and the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, which mobilise experts and decision-makers to drive change on a global scale.

Furthermore, Transparency International has been the Secretariat for the International Anti-Corruption Conference (IACC) since 1997, providing a platform for global leaders, activists, young people and many others to discuss solutions and shape the anti-corruption agenda collectively.

### **Embracing the future**

As we reflect on our achievements and look towards the future, Transparency International's purpose is more relevant and urgent than ever.

Winning the fight against corruption means empowering people and advancing their rights, strengthening democratic values in the face of rising authoritarianism, protecting the vast investments aimed at tackling climate change, and using public resources to benefit everyone. Progress against corruption ultimately helps cement global efforts towards a fair and sustainable future.

The world needs a global movement that holds powerful people to account for the common good while convening and strengthening the wider anti-corruption community. Transparency International is just that.

We will continue to pursue our vision of a world in which government, politics, business, civil society and people's daily lives are free of corruption. This means we will stay neck and neck with any form of corruption that emerges or becomes more complex, keep harnessing the power of individuals across all sectors of society, and continue advocating and campaigning for change at every level.

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<https://www.transparency.org/en/news/transparency-international-30-anniversary-global-fight-against-corruption>

## **WORLD WHISTLEBLOWERS DAY 2023: FOSTERING SOLIDARITY WITH WHISTLEBLOWERS EVERYWHERE**

Whistleblowers play a crucial role in the fight for a fairer world. On World Whistleblowers Day, 23 June, we honour the courage and determination of people worldwide who speak up against wrongdoing and celebrate the positive changes they bring. However, this is also a day to acknowledge the challenges they often face and the protection they need to speak up. Transparency International is continuously striving to provide this support to whistleblowers so they can continue to use their voices for justice.

Whistleblowers like the ones in these 12 inspiring stories from around the world have helped safeguard public funds, defend the environment and protect public health – but their journeys have often been tough. Without proper protection, whistleblowers can face personal, professional and legal attacks for speaking up – including dismissal, demotion and prosecution – harming their mental or physical wellbeing. People can be deterred from coming forward if the risks of reporting seem too great, or if they fear they won't be taken seriously. For example, Transparency International's Global Corruption Barometer – European Union shows that only 47 per cent of people in the EU feel they can safely report corruption, and 45 per cent fear reprisals. Women are less likely than men to believe they can safely report corruption or to think that citizens can make a difference against corruption. This means wrongdoing can remain undetected.

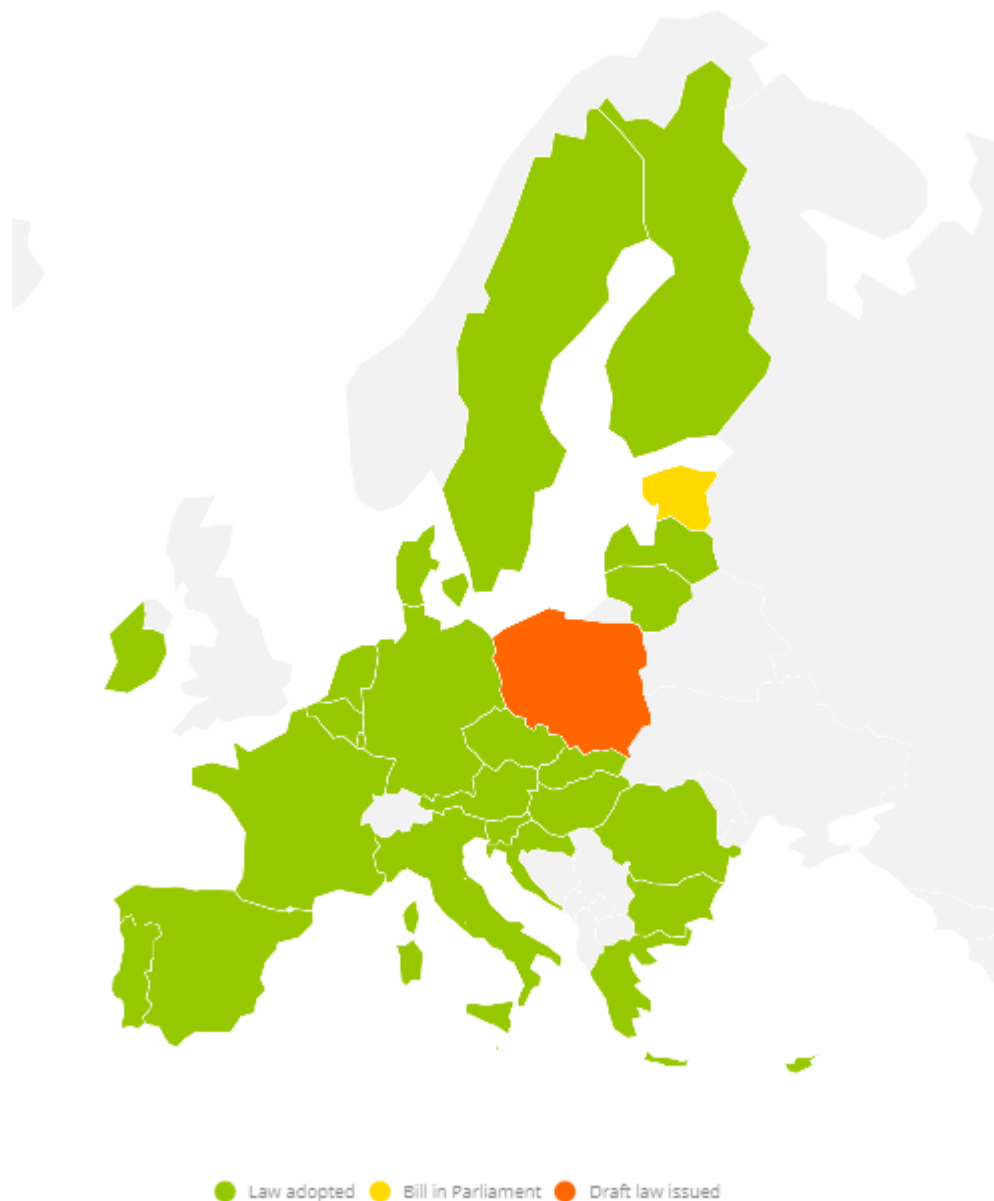
Regardless, every year, whistleblowers worldwide do speak out and safeguard the public interest. In 2022, Transparency International Pakistan's Advocacy and Legal Advice Centre (ALAC) received a whistleblower complaint highlighting official collusion with two private oil companies, costing the state 1.13 billion rupees (US\$3.9 million) in unpaid royalties. Protecting the whistleblower's identity, the chapter wrote to the Prime Minister asking regulators to investigate. The Office of the Prime Minister issued instructions for recovery of the royalties. The Treasury received payment from both companies in February 2023, – providing vital resources for the people of Pakistan.

### **Ensuring countries fulfil their commitments**

Robust whistleblower protection laws and public scrutiny are essential to safeguard citizens and institutions from corruption. Many cases can be prevented or exposed if people are empowered to come forward and report them to their employer, the authorities or civil society. From helping shape international standards and national laws to providing support in individual cases, Transparency International is working to ensure victims and witnesses of corruption have access to safe, effective mechanisms to report wrongdoing and achieve redress, within a culture of public support.

Since 2019, we have been advocating for European Union (EU) member states to transpose the EU Whistleblower Protection Directive into national law. Yet only five member states had adopted national laws by the deadline for transposition and two and a half years later, two countries have still not. We are keeping up the pressure and are now monitoring and supporting implementation by stakeholders to ensure all whistleblowers are effectively protected.

**EU WHISTLEBLOWING DIRECTIVE TRANSPOSITION: STATUS AS OF JUNE 2023:**





## **Creating tools for whistleblower protection**

Adopting laws is only the first step to achieving whistleblower protection. Employers also need to set up internal whistleblowing systems which provide safe reporting channels, protect those reporting concerns from retaliation and ensure the organisation acts on these reports. These systems are powerful risk management and prevention tools that help safeguard the public interest and protect organisations from the effects of misconduct.

To help public and private organisations implement effective internal whistleblowing systems – and fulfil their obligations under the EU directive – Transparency International has developed best-practice principles. These can be used by organisations in all sectors and countries to design and operate whistleblowing mechanisms that effectively prevent, detect and address corruption and other wrongdoing.

## **Fighting corruption case by case**

Together, ALACs across Transparency International's worldwide network have received reports from more than 320,000 people, including whistleblowers. We provide them with reliable legal advice and support, both before they blow the whistle, to reduce personal risks and improve the chances of success, and afterwards, to address retaliation or inaction.

With this support, people around the world have achieved significant change, locally or at systemic levels, reaffirming that every individual can make a difference in the fight against corruption. In Kosovo, a whistleblower has even helped improve reporting mechanisms for other whistleblowers. In 2022, he notified our local ALAC that the institution he worked for in the justice sector had not appointed an official to handle internal whistleblowing cases, as required by law. After investigating, the chapter published a report revealing similar failings across the justice sector. In response, many institutions appointed a whistleblowing official and are encouraging people to report corruption.

## **Building consistent solidarity**

As well as supporting individual whistleblower cases and strengthening legal and institutional frameworks, Transparency International is building public support for speaking up against wrongdoing. Although whistleblowers often risk their livelihoods, or sometimes their lives, to expose corruption, they are viewed with suspicion in many places. We work globally to dispel the negative perceptions surrounding whistleblowers and to raise awareness about their vital role in fighting for a fairer society.

On World Whistleblowers Day, we celebrate their achievements in stepping forward and speaking up. But our work extends far beyond today. By promoting a widespread culture of support for whistleblowers and their vital role, we're working to make every day a day of empathy and solidarity for whistleblowers worldwide.

*These cases show that people speaking up, with the right support, can help fight corruption and mitigate repercussions from administrative misconduct and abuse of power. The positive change they can bring creates a snowball effect, making it easier for others to speak up as well. Together, we can build a future where safe and robust whistleblowing laws are put in place and effectively implemented everywhere.*

*Until then, Transparency International's Advocacy and Legal Advice Centres (ALACs) are here to help. No one needs to report corruption alone. Across the world, ALACs act to ensure people reporting wrongdoing are kept safe and that their stories help bring justice. We will also keep pushing for legal protection, so that whistleblowers can safely expose and help prevent corruption, ultimately building integrity across our societies.*

*Join us on World Whistleblowers Day, 23 June, to celebrate the people who bravely speak up against wrongdoing and give special recognition to the crucial role they play in the fight for a corruption-free world.*

*Transparency International's European ALACs are supported by Speak Up Europe, an EU-funded project aiming to prevent corruption in high-risk areas in the EU by empowering individuals to speak up about misconduct to public, private and civil society organisations that can take action.*

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<https://www.transparency.org/en/news/world-whistleblowers-day-2023-anticorruption-solidarity>

# What's Fake and Not Fake in Turkey's Election

By Oya Özarslan And Lars Wriedt

The use of disruptive technologies presents a new set of challenges for governments around the world. Big data and its misapplication in political election campaigns has changed our understanding of free and fair elections in recent years, contributing to a dangerous trend of worldwide democratic backsliding. People's use of social media as a news source and tech companies' use of algorithms to ensure that consumers see what they want has made the relationship between technology and elections much more complex. Cambridge Analytica was the first widely known intervention in elections, where the personal data of thousands of American voters was used to target their perceptions, but this kind of interference keeps happening. Campaigns during Brexit, as well as the elections of Brazil and the Philippines, are good examples. And now, Turkey appears to be the latest playground for electoral misinformation and fake news.

Turkey has undergone a radical transformation in terms of declining human rights and rule of law since 2003. The country is now rated as "not free" with respect to its political rights and civil liberties. In 2022, Freedom on the Net also rated Turkey "not free" with an internet freedom score of 32 out of 100. Perhaps not surprisingly, then, it is also constantly dropping in the Corruption Perception Index, with a current score of 36 and ranking 101st in 180 countries. According to the Election Vulnerability Index, which looks at indicators in the digital age for disruptive effects and assesses the risk of violations and digital interference ahead of significant elections around the world, Turkey ranks as low as 33, with 100 representing the least vulnerability in terms of election integrity. Amidst all of this is the challenge of misinformation and fake news.

Turkey held its general elections on Sunday, May 14, 2023, and the lead-up appeared to be a new playground for testing the abuse of digital forces. The country has experienced intense political polarization during the last 21-year rule. This election has been defined by many as among the most important elections globally in 2023. The opposition is presenting a strong front against the increasingly restrictive regime, which follows the upset of the 2019 municipal elections when, for the first time in over a decade, the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) lost control of Ankara, Istanbul, and other major cities, showing that authoritarianism can be defeated, despite an uneven playing field.

## Is It A Bot Or A Real Person?

While election irregularities in Turkey are more often related to issues like the detention of opposition party representatives or the use of public resources in favor of the governing party, manipulation of social media through bot movements has been a dominant feature of this election. Click farms, where thousands of machines are lined up to generate fake engagement, have been used frequently,

with accounts endlessly generating new faces of people who do not exist or impersonating those profiles that do.

Even though Twitter shut down 7,340 accounts in Turkey in 2020, claiming that the accounts could be attributed to “state-linked information operations,” these accounts can be easily replaced by new bots. Twitter’s changed security protocols have also made it harder to detect fake accounts. For example, the famous blue check is now a paid subscription and has been removed from legacy accounts, making it harder to know if the account belongs to a bot or a real person. Twitter’s new lack of blue checks allows bad actors to effectively spread misleading or fake messages and have them read. It also allows these actors to artificially push up a chosen keyword rating in Twitter’s trend algorithms. Another important issue is that bad actors already create compelling content that is very difficult to distinguish from genuine tweets by using artificial intelligence large language model tools like Google Bard and ChatGPT as well as visual generators like DALL-E or Dream Studio.

Twitter itself acknowledges that the level of fake or abusive accounts and content on its platform is rising. The social media giant reports that in the first six months of 2022, it has seen a 29% increase in content that violates Twitter’s rules when compared to the last six months of 2021. The first half of 2022 has also seen a 28% increase in those accounts that had to be suspended for misusing the platform. This shows that Twitter itself is fighting an uphill battle to keep up with the misuse of the platform.

Turkey, for its part, is the country with the highest exposure to fake news according to EPFL — and the current election landscape has shown this to be true a number of times. Presidential candidate Muharrem İnce pulled out of the race partly due to a fake video tape. And even Erdoğan shared fake videos linking his main rival Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu to the militant Kurdish organization PKK.

### **Attack Of the Bots**

The use of artificial intelligence for diverting public opinion in elections is a relatively new but effective tool. This year, at least 20% of trending topics on Turkish Twitter have been manipulated by the intervention of bots, and so can hardly be considered reliable.

Nevertheless, what is new in this election is that fake news has been generated and distributed by suspicious bot movement, i.e., thousands of Russian, Hungarian, and Brazilian-speaking Twitter accounts, which in turn have influenced Twitter trends. The Russian interference in the 2016 US presidential elections serves as an example that may be easily followed by others who wish to unfairly influence elections by using bots on social media platforms. Sources from the main opposition, the Republican People’s Party (CHP), claim that there is Russian influence behind all digital manipulation, and some accounts with more than 10,000 followers have been bought to manipulate the Turkish people through social media. While Russia continues to support Erdoğan, Russian officials deny any of these allegations. CHP leader Kılıçdaroğlu, however, has openly accused Russian officials of intervening in Turkish elections.

Democracies with free and fair elections are already declining around the world. This is partly because big tech is abused by bad actors and autocratic foreign interests to influence election outcomes. The internet, once seen as a key source of open information, is now functioning as a stage for dark and

deep manipulations bolstered by algorithms and weak security systems. While technology still holds great promise for us all, when algorithmic tools are used to mislead and confuse people — generating misinformation — it can damage a broader society in unspeakable ways. AI tools must be held accountable and cannot be left unregulated. In order to reduce the abuse of machine learning in social and political contexts, stricter legal framework needs to be adopted. And in the age of the algorithm, it is clear that ethics must be inherent in the process of the design of these tools from the beginning.

Watching the lead-up to Turkey's elections has made it clear that it is time to talk about ethical and responsible AI, effective regulations for big tech, civil society inclusion, and stronger security systems. Otherwise, the disruptive use of technology, which is now an active part of information warfare, has the potential to create enormous concern for democracy in the world.

#### AUTHOR BIO

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##### **Oya Özarlan and Lars Wriedt**

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# Absolute Poverty Rises Amid Debt Distress and Corruption

New humanitarian approaches are vital instead of IMF austerity.

August 7, 2023

By [Frank Vogl](#)

Nine Kenyans were killed and more than 300 were arrested by the police in recent protests over what many Kenyans view as draconian government economic policies.

In Lebanon, according to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) – “the nearly four-year economic meltdown has cost the local currency roughly 98% of its value, seen GDP contract by 40%, pushed inflation into triple-digits and drained two-thirds of the central bank’s foreign currency reserves.”

According to a recent headline in the Middle East Eye, “Egypt has hit a financial deadlock. (President) Sisi’s only hope now is a miracle.”

The mounting economic turmoil in many countries, which sees acute difficulties for governments to service their huge foreign debts, is no longer just a financial challenge. More importantly, it is a humanitarian crisis of mounting dimensions.

The only viable solution is massive humanitarian and anti-poverty aid led by the World Bank. But it must have one critical condition: The aid must be independently monitored by civil society watchdogs to guard against theft and corruption.

## **Economic wreckage and IMF responses**

An increasing number of middle- and low-income countries are facing crushing economic strains. From Argentina to Pakistan to Zambia, living costs are rising, economic growth is stalling and absolute poverty is increasing. At the same time, governments are finding it staggeringly difficult to find ways to pay the interest and principal on their vast foreign debts.

In classic bureaucratic language, the IMF and the World Bank call these the “debt distressed countries.” The truth is that the economic conditions, and the policies that governments feel forced to impose, are gravely adding to poverty.

## **Dire humanitarian consequences**

In a new report, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) calls for major new foreign aid support to assist foreign debt servicing by developing countries. It notes: “During 2020-2023, we project that 165 million people fell into poverty (with incomes of under \$3.65 a day).”

The UNDP adds: “The cost of inaction for dozens of economies currently facing high debt service levels is devastating. Debt service payments are displacing investments in important areas such as health, education and social protection and hindering efforts to mitigate income, job and poverty shocks.”

## **Causes of distress**

Almost all non-oil exporting middle- and low-income countries have been hit brutally by the combination of the COVID 19 global economic slowdown, sharply rising global rates of interest as the central banks in the United States and Europe have sought to counter domestic inflation and, in many countries, a sharp increase in food prices directly attributable to the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

This problem may become even more acute, given the latest Russian actions to curb Ukrainian food exports. In addition, the governments of many countries have, at times, wasted foreign exchange income, and inefficiently managing inflows of borrowed foreign currency. This contributes to corruption.

For example, corruption has been widely seen as one of the prime causes leading such countries as Sri Lanka, Zambia, Lebanon and Argentina to default on their foreign debt payments.

## **Making bad choices**

The era of low global interest rates that began following the financial crisis of 2008-09 greatly encouraged many governments to borrow funds on international debt markets.

The opportunity to secure higher rates of return on foreign bond investments was very tempting to many international investors. And so countries like Zambia, Albania, Ukraine and Belarus (aided by bankers in London, New York and Zurich) issued so-called “sovereign bonds.”

## **China and technical “bailouts”**

At the same time, Chinese institutions (mostly backed by the government of China) were keen to invest in many developing countries and offered low-interest medium-term loans to governments.

China today is the largest single creditor to many sub-Saharan African countries (as well as to many others). Right now, many countries have to find ways to pay regular interest payments on their foreign debts, and to repay those bond loans that are coming due.

They owe money to international private investors (including in China), to many bilateral official lending institutions in the United States and Europe and Japan as well as to multilateral official lenders like the World Bank and the IMF.

At a meeting of Ministers of Finance in India of the Group of 20 in recent days, there was an attempt to sound upbeat and suggest that the official creditors, including China, are moving closer towards finding common approaches to debt restructuring.

### **The hard facts**

The hard facts are that debt negotiations are proving to be exceedingly difficult and so protracted that the debtor countries face mounting misery as the IMF fails to secure speedy and comprehensive relief.

UNDP points out that 25 developing countries – the highest number in over two decades – are having to spend more than 20% of their total government revenues on servicing external debts. In Kenya, for example, the public protests have been a response to tax increases and income subsidy reductions imposed by the government.

The East African newspaper recently reported that “Kenya is now sitting on a public debt mountain of almost \$70 billion or about 67% of gross domestic product (GDP) –and repayment costs have jumped as the shilling sinks to record lows of around 140 to the dollar.”

### **Unworkable solutions**

At times of debt crises, the IMF rides to the rescue as the lender of last resort for governments. They offer money to help governments meet some of their foreign debt payments – but with conditions.

The austerity measures usually demanded by the IMF aim to help the country to reduce any balance of payments deficits, curb public borrowing and restructure domestic finances so that more money is available to meet the demands of foreign creditors.

Striving to help Egypt and Pakistan avoid debt defaults, the IMF recently agreed bail-out loans. For example, the IMF told the government of Egypt that it had to sell many military-owned business to foreign investors to raise foreign money.

To take another example, higher taxes, cuts in public spending (including curbs on energy subsidies) are part of the conditions imposed by the IMF on Pakistan.

### **The Argentina examples**

Argentina defaulted on its foreign debts in 2016 – and received the largest bail-out program that the IMF has ever granted. Today, Argentina owes the IMF \$44 billion and has no means to repay.

The government has not been able to impose the kinds of austerity programs that the IMF requires – partly because of huge public protests in the face of inflation, which is now around 114%, and partly because of a lack of support for agreed upon measures by influential politicians.

Typical of the IMF’s current approach is its regular meetings with Argentine ministers to shore-up the sick economy. The latest session was on July 28 – as the problems keep getting kicked down the road.

Hugo Godoy, a union leader who has organized major public protests, recently told Reuters: “We must change these economic policies, we must break with the dependence on the IMF. Some 43% of Argentines live below the poverty line and 4.5 million, 10% of the population, suffer from hunger.”

### **Finding humanitarian solutions**

The IMF is a financial institution, and so it seeks to address the current massive debt-distress debacle by both encouraging borrowing countries to tighten their belts, while seeking to convince the private and official creditors alike to restructure their loans and provide debt relief.

Getting the Chinese and the other official creditors to even agree on helping a borrowing country is difficult enough. But engaging the private investors at the same time has been endlessly frustrating.

Meanwhile poverty mounts, and an increasing number of economies are falling on hard times. A huge transfer of funds from the world’s wealthier countries to the poorer ones, perhaps \$100 billion or even more, has long been under discussion in the corridors of the IMF and was noted at the recent G20 meetings of finance ministers in India.

Such a transfer of funds could be arranged from the IMF’s reserves, and from the holdings by the world’s richest countries by means of so-called Special Drawing Rights. This would indeed produce relief for many economies.

The problem with this approach is that it would, in effect, add to the long-term indebtedness of the borrowing countries unless the transfer of funds was just a gift – most unlikely from the Chinese and the richer nations of the world.

### **Solutions and band aids**

A combination of some transfer of funds, plus agreements to pause demands for immediate debt-serving repayments (plus increases in foreign aid, including World Bank funds, to directly counter the impact of failing economies on the very poor) might all assist the situation.

Yet, this approach is more like providing countries with multiple band-aids, not lasting hope for a brighter future. World leaders at the Group of 20 and the Group of 7 need to start looking at the debt-distress crisis as a humanitarian crisis first and foremost and not assign top priority to the financial challenges.

### **World Bank and civil society leadership**

The World Bank should be in the lead, not playing second fiddle to the IMF. The World Bank needs to formulate a comprehensive new development approach that places reducing absolute poverty and assisting in major ways to support sustainable environmental policies at the top of the agenda. This will mean huge amounts of new long-term World Bank lending, plus very large amounts of grant aid.

I believe the Bank’s brand-new President, Ajay Banga recognizes this, and is developing new plans and programs. As he has recently indicated: “the Bank must adopt a new vision and mission that is worthy

of our shared aspirations. In my view, the vision for the World Bank is simple: to create a world free of poverty on a livable planet.”

To succeed, President Banga must both find ways to mobilize an unprecedented amount of cash to support developing countries, including funds and mechanisms to reduce their external debts, while ensuring that the assistance does not just flow into the personal coffers of corrupt regimes – be they in Pakistan or Sri Lanka or Egypt or other countries with huge economic difficulties today.

It is long overdue that the World Bank starts to strongly support civil society organizations and investigative journalists in developing countries. It needs them to serve as the eyes on the ground that ensure that sound policies are put in place with transparency, accountability and integrity. Governments need to be told that this is a minimum condition for massive World Bank support at this time.

What is needed is a new humanitarian approach to debt-distress that places sustainable economic growth and transparency at the front. The era when IMF-austerity programs were seen as the solution, and where conditions for IMF loans are negotiated behind closed doors between international bureaucrats and the senior assistants to kleptocrats regimes, needs to end.