



**Independent Joint Anti-Corruption
Monitoring & Evaluation Committee**

NEWS RELEASE: Transparency International Again Ranks Afghanistan as One of the Most Corrupt Countries in the World

(Kabul, December 2014) On December 3, 2014, the world's leading anti-corruption body, Berlin-based Transparency International (TI), issued its annual Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), which once again ranked Afghanistan as one of the world's most corrupt countries. This year's CPI ranked Afghanistan 172 out of the 175 countries evaluated by TI.

The CPI measures perceptions of public-sector corruption from the perspective of business people and experienced country experts. To produce the CPI, TI gathers data from independent institutions specializing in the overall governance and business climates within a given country.

Afghanistan's low ranking does not come as a surprise. In 2013, it finished tied for last place with North Korea and Somalia, with an overall score of 8 out of a possible 100. This year, Afghanistan received a score of 12 out of 100. The reasons for Afghanistan's repeated poor performances in this survey are many. They include, but are not limited to, the limited capacity of its law-enforcement and judicial institutions; the continued interference of politically powerful people in matters as simple as paying their electricity bills; the rampant purchasing of appointments, including military and police positions; porous international borders that incentivize smuggling; land grabbing; the byzantine process aspiring entrepreneurs must go through to open a new business or to sell their land; and a lack of political will on the part of some, but not all, high-ranking officials to make anti-corruption efforts a priority.

However, MEC is encouraged by the new administration of President Ashraf Ghani and its willingness to make improving Afghanistan's anti-corruption regime one of the focal points of his first months in office. Over the past month, MEC representatives have held multiple meetings with the President and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Dr. Abdullah Abdullah. During these meetings, the President and CEO asked MEC to provide them with a comprehensive list of our previous recommendations that have not been implemented. Moreover, the President also asked MEC to send him several corruption-related matters that could be fixed by immediate presidential actions. MEC provided the President with these items and looks forward to working closely with the new administration in the coming year.

It is MEC's sincere hope that, in the near future, Afghanistan will take incremental steps toward improving its anti-corruption institutions and bringing to justice those responsible for looting the public treasury for their own benefit. One such case involves the collapse of Kabul Bank, which MEC has been reporting on for more than two years. While the outcome of President's Ghani's aggressive push to resolve this particular issue remains uncertain, MEC finds it promising that he is focused on this matter, which continues to drain Afghanistan's budget even today.

No single strategy will vault Afghanistan to the top of the CPI by 2015—or even by 2020. Fighting corruption in Afghanistan is the work of generations, and TI's CPI provides a useful baseline for the government, donors, and public, showing where Afghanistan stands and where it must improve.

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