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**MOBILISING PEOPLE:
CONNECTING AGENTS OF CHANGE**

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Long Session Report: Global Solutions

Session Title: After the Transition: The Role of People Power in Dismantling Entrenched Corruption, and Consolidating Democratic, Accountable Governance and Sustainable Peace

Date & Time: 9:00-11:00, Friday 9th November

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Experts:

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Dadang Trisasongko, National Advisor on Human Rights and Anti-Corruption KEMITRAAN (Partnership for Governance Reform)

Moderated by: Arwa Hassan, Regional Outreach Manager, Middle East and North Africa, Transparency International

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Summary of Panellists' Contributions & Discussion Points (please be as detailed as possible)

This session focused on how to address the issue that corruption does not necessarily evaporate after a transition towards democracy and peace. Many of the same players retain influence and power, and systems of graft and abuse reconfigure

as the vested interests benefitting from corruption adapt to the new situation. If left unchecked, corruption threatens the consolidation of peace and democratic governance by hindering critical reforms, the emergence of a legitimate government, fair and clean institutions, and overall trust in the state and the new political system.

At the same time transitions to peace and/or democracy present opportunities to change entrenched patterns of power and corruption. However, genuine internal efforts by honest powerholders are often blocked, and externally driven reforms are rarely successful. Nonetheless, there is another force for change in societies – people power. Citizens mobilized in nonviolent civic initiatives and movements are impacting corruption and playing an active role in building accountable, democratic governments – even under the most difficult of conditions.

The session built on the experiences and insights of a number of civic leaders engaged in curbing graft and abuse during the post-transition process, focusing on: 1) the role of citizen campaigns and movements to undermine systems of corruption inherited from authoritarian regimes and/or violent conflicts, as well as gain accountability, facilitate reform, and support honest powerholders; and 2) what roles international actors can play to affirm civic initiatives and when they should stay away.

The session was divided into two parts. In the first part focus was on post-transition, grass-roots civic initiatives and general lessons learned. The experts from Indonesia and Korea highlighted successful people power campaigns that impacted horizontal corruption involving the executive and legislative branches of the government, and the economic sector. In the case of Korea, from 1948 to 1987, successive dictatorships ruled with an iron fist but could not stifle citizen dissent and demands for democracy. In 1987, spurred by student and labor groups, millions rose up in the “June 10 Citizens’ Democratic Revolt,” forcing military strongman Doo-Hwan to agree to an amendment allowing direct presidential elections, and Korea embarked on the road to democracy. Yet corruption continued unabated and by 1999, Koreans were disgusted by gross malfeasance involving politicians, officials, political parties and business conglomerates (*chaebols*).

In January, 2000, a coalition of nearly 1100 civic groups formed the “Citizens’ Alliance for General Elections 2000 (CAGE). Although prohibited by the Election Laws (Articles 87 and 59), the campaign mobilized people in mass civil disobedience – through signature drives, phone calls, and local street actions around the country. The objectives were to blacklist corrupt nominees and final candidates, improve the quality of parliamentary candidates, and elect cleaner, more accountable representatives. CAGE developed seven blacklist criteria (including corruption convictions), assessed all parliamentary nominees and final candidates based on publicly available information, and transparently presented its findings. The outcomes were extraordinary: 43.1 percent (44 out of 102 blacklisted nominees) failed to win party nomination; and 68.6 percent (59 out of 86 blacklisted candidates) lost the elections.

Beginning in 1996, Indonesia endured 32 years of brutal dictatorship under General Suharto, with a centralized and personalized government. Corruption was tolerated as a political instrument to manage political loyalty. By the 1990s, human rights and pro-democracy groups began to form. Regular citizens lived in poverty while watching Suharto and his cronies amass fortunes. In 1997 popular discontent peaked in the wake of election-related fraud, harsh repression and the Asian financial crisis. In 1998 the *Reformasi* movement emerged, supported by students, civil society, religious groups, reformist politicians, intellectuals, and the public. They demanded an end to the Suharto regime, corruption, collusion and nepotism, democracy and human rights, and a stop to the military's political involvement. Suharto was forced to resign, paving the path for democracy.

In 2003, the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) became operational, a landmark for the anti-corruption struggle in Indonesia. It vigorously exposed corruption and meted out justice. Judges, prosecutors, ambassadors, ministers, commissioners, governors, mayors, national and local parliamentarians, senior government officials and high-ranking state-owned and private sectors chief executives were jailed. It earned the public's admiration. Since 2010, three grass-roots campaigns - through the use of new social media (such as Facebook and Twitter) and a variety of creative street actions - came together to defend the KPK when attempts were made to undermine its mandate and immobilize its leadership.

The 2009 CICA campaign (Love Indonesia, Love KPK) rallied around two deputy commissioners who were falsely charged with corruption and jailed. Within two weeks, a Facebook group grew to 1,349,171 members, and a host of nonviolent actions were held across the vast archipelago, from rallies to stunts, concerts, petitions, wearing a black ribbon symbolizing the death of justice, leaflets, banners, sit-ins, and gathering in front of police stations. Both KPK officials were released from prison, the case was dropped and later, a senior police official testified that the police force had a special team in place to target KPK's Commissioners.

From June to October 2012, in response to parliamentary delays in approving KPK's budget, including funds for a new building, the "Public Donation for KPK Building" collected money and construction materials from citizens around the country. The collective pressure pushed the parliament to finally pass the budget. In October, 2012 the "Save KPK" campaign engaged in nonviolent intervention. During an investigation of traffic police corruption, citizens staged an overnight vigil to prevent the arrest of an investigator (<http://vimeo.com/51039023>). Digital resistance through Twitter and real-life protests questioned President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's silence. Shortly thereafter, he announced that KPK should conduct the investigation.

The experts from Afghanistan and Palestine presented examples of innovative civic initiatives at the local level (community monitoring and social accountability). Following the overthrow of the Taliban regime post 9/11 Afghanistan experienced a massive inflow of aid. More than 40 donors and 20 international agencies were providing support to the country. However, in designing and delivering projects and programmes were rarely consulted or engaged. At the same time monitoring of these projects and programmes is often done by consulting companies and the

information generated is rarely made public. This is further compounded by the fact that close to three quarters of development assistance is delivered outside of the government budget. Integrity Watch Afghanistan (IWA) has been working to break this pattern, developing the capacity of communities to themselves monitor the implementation of development projects, in most cases, from start to finish.

When IWA engaged with communities they encountered a high level of enthusiasm. There was a sense that the monitoring initiatives could help address the felt deficit of accountability. An added dimension of the initiatives is that local monitors were elected by their respective communities, thereby building democracy from the ground up. This also serves to empower the monitors. The initiatives have played an important role in changing the flow of information, now it is the people who are providing the information. As a result delivering substandard projects or embezzlement of funds from development projects has become more difficult. Donors are also getting more accurate information about the implementation of projects and programmes that they are funding.

The example from Palestine focused on the impact of conflict of fragility and corruption, and how the local population in Hebron, in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, came together to hold the municipality accountable for more effective management of water resources. In fragile contexts there are typically high expectations from the population. At the same time state structures are typically weak and the lack of service delivery has resulted in a breakdown of the social contract. Hand-in-hand with this come increased aid flows and a string desire to end conflict at almost any cost.

In these contexts social accountability and constructive engagement between the population and state institutions have an important role to play in countering corruption and rebuilding social trust. At the same time it necessary to identify what the incentives are for constructive engagement in what are usually highly politicized contexts. Care also needs to be taken to not create new power structures benefiting from corruption and the inflow of aid.

In the case of Hebron the answer was to build the capacity of citizens, not only to know their rights but also to know how and where to act. It was also through bringing people together for constructive action, with the establishment of community monitoring groups. Part of the approach was also to identify agents of change within the municipality and to form joint working groups with these agents of change.

However, when the working groups in Hebron presented their findings, there was no political will to listen to the issues raised. Instead they and their findings were challenged. To counter this, the working groups broadened the diversity of the monitoring groups, ensured that their methods and approach was valid and that the data and evidence that they presented was solid.

In the second part, the experts provided bottom-up recommendations for the international community on how to support transitions, facilitate reforms, and build

the foundations for transparent and accountable governance systems. While the international community has an important role to play in giving a voice to civil society, it was also noted that they should themselves adhere to the principles of transparency in making public project documents and information about aid disbursement. Donors should also not give funding to project implementers to themselves organize social monitoring and paying monitors. Also, the international community was urged to not sacrifice anti-corruption reforms in order to achieve political settlements or in reaching peace deals.

Main Outcomes (include interesting questions from the floor)

In transition settings:

- It is often the case that state institutions are weak while citizens hold great expectations.
- Even with political change, the corrupt system persists underneath. For example, in spite of democratic presidential elections, corrupt systems can remain the same.
- A common characteristic of transitions is the contestation of power between old and new powerholders. This results in a lack of political support for anti-corruption efforts, and often, hostility and efforts by genuine reformists seeking to change the system.
- The lessons from Korea and Indonesia are that two parallel strategies are needed – building capacity within state institutions along with strengthening and maintaining public pressure.

Anti-corruption movements can either be the pre-cursors to or the successors of democracy movements. Through people power it is possible to create and strengthen will to fight corruption. People power is about changing power dynamics, moving from top-down approaches to ones characterized by bottom-up communication and accountability of duty-bearers to rights-holders.

The experience in Afghanistan has been that donors did not engage citizens in reconstruction efforts and the selection and design of projects and top-down accountability mechanisms have not been working that well.

Citizen initiatives are organic; they develop out of the grass-roots. The volunteer spirit of people power/community monitoring is important and should be safeguarded. Hence, they cannot be programmatized by international actors paid to conduct projects to mobilize citizens. Thus, international actors are urged to: not fund private sector development firms to initiate and manage social accountability; and not pay citizens to engage in civic action. This will create a conflict of interest; delegitimize citizen mobilization; put a price on citizen action; create social tensions; and thwart the emergence of genuine civic efforts in which citizens take ownership and responsibility on a voluntary basis. The strong desire for participation in low accountability environments should be harnessed and care taken not to undermine the legitimacy of people's power movements by introducing financial incentives.

Funding can also create social tensions. For example, in Afghanistan, a company was funded to both implement a development project and manage a monitoring effort of that same project. It not only paid local monitors, but used money to build a house for the head of the monitoring team, all of which created numerous problems within the community and undermined the emergence of a collective community effort.

Participants had many questions and shared experiences during both parts of the session. One person asked about the difference between people power movements before (during authoritarian rule) and now (transition). Dr. Kim and Mr. Trisasongko replied that now corruption is the big issue. In Korea, during the transition, the

administration ignored the importance of curbing corruption and it was up to citizens to pressure powerholders. Another person asked what did the presenters think is political will, how can it be identified and encouraged. Dr. Torabi commented that “political will is not just one person. It depends on power arrangements, institutions and their effectiveness.” Dr. Qazzaz observed that political will is not just an issue at the national level but also at the local level, where “personal elements” can play a role. In such contexts, she stated that it’s possible to “create or change political will if there’s enough people power to change the person or system.”

When asked about the role of the private sector, Dr. Torabi noted that interaction with the companies is a critical part of creating greater accountability in development efforts, and Dr. Kim highlighted TI’s integrity pacts between business and civil society as a possible approach. At the same time, Dr. Torabi noted that in Afghanistan, international development partners were more receptive to the inputs from citizen monitoring, than were the private companies.

Recommendations, Follow-Up Actions

Our featured expert speakers offered a comprehensive range of recommendations pertaining to the role of the international community vis-a-vis grass-roots civic initiatives and social movements targeting corruption.

- Civil society and grass-roots citizen require access to information. There is therefore a need to push governments (including donor governments) to put in place meaningful mechanisms for access to information. Information + citizen action = bottom-up power.
- Independent and strong anti-corruption commissions are crucial for transitioning countries. Therefore, international actors can facilitate strong cooperation and cross-learning among anti-corruption commissions around the world.
- International actors can enable peer-to-peer learning and exchanges, and support networks that emerge among civil society actors and grass-roots civic leaders across countries.
- A global social movement is needed to push all UNCAC state parties to support the independence of anti-corruption bodies through legal and political back-up and sufficient budgets to enable effective functioning of these bodies.
- People power is needed to disrupt “intelligent corruption,” for example, in the global financial sector.
- Outside support for people power movements has the potential to undermine their legitimacy. International actors are cautioned to not attempt to control, direct or co-opt people power movements.

Several targeted recommendations focused on contexts where international aid may be forthcoming in large quantities following nonviolent struggles for democracy or during peacebuilding transitions:

- Adhere to the principles of transparency and access to information. Access to contracts, project documentation, etc. can enable more effective community monitoring and citizen engagement.
- Do not sacrifice the anti-corruption agendas in recipient countries in order to achieve other political aims. This undermines national anti-corruption efforts and builds in the possibility of future instability.
- It is essential to rethink the model of using subcontractors in development activities because it is open to huge problems of corruption and erodes the chain of accountability both upwards and downwards.
- International pressure can have an impact, and governments – both at the local and national levels – may listen to them when they are resistant to interacting with citizen initiatives and civil society organizations close to communities. Thus, norms about social accountability can be pushed by the international actors.
- Do not fund the private sector to both implement a development project and initiate social accountability. This creates a serious conflict of interest.

- Do not contract private sector development firms and external organizations not immersed with communities on the ground to mobilize citizens.
- Do not pay citizens to engage in civic action.

Highlights (please include interesting quotes)

People power is based on two complementary and reinforcing dynamics – disruption of corrupt systems and winning people and entities over, including engagement with honest powerholders from the state, private sector or other realms, who can become agents of change.

Citizens fighting corruption engage in a wide range of creative, nonviolent actions (tactics). For instance: information gathering and dissemination, monitoring, rating services such as through report cards, street theatre, youth concerts, songs/ringtones, mobilization and awareness-raising cartoons, candidate blacklists, human chains, stunts, digital resistance (Facebook groups, Twitter), symbolic gestures (donations of money and building supplies because the Indonesian parliament did not pass budget allocation for the new anti-corruption commission building).

Attention should also be paid to the emergence of “new” donors, who may not always place as much emphasis on accountability and transparency on the part of recipient governments.

Corrupt old politics, which survives political and/or conflict transitions, can be the most serious obstacle to reform, both political and social. “We are still in a transition. It is not completed yet. It depends on the effectiveness of people power. If we have more pressure from people, the transition may be shortened.”

“We need public pressure because there’s not only a lack of capacity to reform but also a lack of commitment.”

“Over 49 years, two trillion dollars went to international aid, in contrast to 18 trillion dollars going to bail out banks during the global financial crisis.”

“We had the Arab Spring, now we need a Wall Street Spring.”

“There was a desert of accountability.”

“Political will means from the top. People power is from the bottom-up. We need both if we want democracy.”

Key Insights Recommended to be included in the IACC Declaration

People power is about changing the power dynamic, moving from top-down approaches to one characterized by bottom-up communication and accountability of duty-bearers to rights-holders. It encompasses social, political and economic pressure through nonviolent actions by significant numbers of citizens united around shared grievances and goals.

Through people power it is possible to create and strengthen political will to fight corruption. It should also be recognized that political will does not rest with one individual, but can be built through creating networks and alliances for change. In countries that are highly dependent on international assistance, the international community should recognize that they can have significant impact on political will.

Citizen initiatives are organic; they develop out of the grass-roots. Hence, they cannot be programmed by international actors paid to conduct projects to mobilize citizens.

The volunteer spirit of community monitoring/people power should be safeguarded. In low accountability environments there is a strong desire for participation that should be harnessed, and care be taken to not undermine the legitimacy of people power movements by introducing financial incentives. Legitimacy can also be undermined when outside actors attempt to control, direct or co-opt these movements.

Rapporteur's name and date submitted
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