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PRESS RELEASE

KENYA REGISTERS A DROP IN THE 2018 CORRUPTION PERCEPTION INDEX

Nairobi, Kenya – 29th January 2019: Kenya has dropped one point in the global Corruption Perception Index (CPI) released by the Transparency International today. The country has obtained a score of 27 out of 100 a decline from 28 points scored in 2017 (with zero perceived to be highly corrupt, and 100 very clean). Kenya is ranked at position 144 out of 180 countries and territories listed in the CPI. Kenya's score is below the global average of 43 and Sub Saharan Africa's mean of 32.

In the past five years, Kenya's score has ranged between 25 and 28, having scored 28 in 2017, 26 in 2016, and 25 in 2015 and 2014, demonstrating that efforts to tackle corruption have borne little results. The CPI measures the perceived levels of public sector corruption in countries and territories worldwide. The report ranks countries by their perceived levels of public sector corruption. It is a composite index, a combination of surveys and assessments of corruption which is collected by a variety of reputable institutions.

Regional outlook

Rwanda is ranked highest in the East African region garnering 56 points followed by Tanzania with 36, Kenya and Uganda scoring 27 and Burundi with 17 points.

CPI highlights

The top countries are Denmark and New Zealand with scores of 88 and 87, respectively. The bottom countries are Somalia, Syria and South Sudan with scores of 10, 13 and 13, in that order. According to the report, only 20 countries have significantly improved their CPI scores since 2012, including Argentina, Senegal, Guyana and Côte D'Ivoire. Equally troubling, 16 countries significantly decreased their scores, including Australia, Chile, Malta, Hungary and Turkey. The highest scoring region is Western Europe with an average score of 66. The regions which score lowest are Sub-Saharan Africa (average score: 32) and Eastern Europe and Central Asia (average score: 35).

With a score of 71, the United States, dropped four points since last year to earn its lowest score on the CPI in seven years. This also marks the first time since 2011 that the US drops out of the top 20 countries in the CPI. This comes at a time when the country is experiencing threats to its system of checks and balances, as well as an erosion of ethical norms at the highest levels of power.

This year, further research analysis shows a disturbing link between corruption and the health of democracies, where countries with higher rates of corruption also have weaker democratic institutions and political rights. “Our research makes a clear link between having a healthy democracy and successfully fighting public sector corruption,” said Delia Ferreira Rubio, Chair of Transparency International. “Corruption is much more likely to flourish where democratic foundations are weak and, as we have seen in many countries, where undemocratic and populist politicians can use it to their advantage.”

Measures to propel anti-corruption efforts in Kenya

“This year Transparency International Kenya marks 20 years at the frontline of the fight against corruption in the country. We believe that effective anti-corruption efforts are premised on three pillars; political will, effective institutions and an engaged citizenry,” said Mr. Samuel Kimeu, Executive Director, Transparency International Kenya. “The Executive continues to speak strongly against corruption but the results are yet to be seen judging from the 2018 score, it is time to translate anti-corruption commitments to action. Some of the key institutions in the anti-corruption chain have faced significant challenges in delivering their mandates mainly because of a pervading culture of impunity among the political and economic elite. They further face budgetary deficits that impede optimal performance. Political goodwill and leadership are particularly important in mobilising citizen participation and support. The weaknesses in these three pillars need to be addressed to turn the tide against corruption.”

TI-Kenya further proposes the following:

- That the Executive prioritises to finalize and put into effect a National Ethics and Anti-corruption policy to guide the various interventions geared towards fighting graft.
- All arms of government need to understand and apply Chapter 6 of the Constitution to the latter with similar standards both for the public office and elective positions.
- To strengthen public participation and support there is need to urgently enact the key legislations recommended by the Attorney General’s Taskforce Report on the review of the legal, policy and institutional framework for fighting corruption of 2015 such as the Whistleblower Protection Bill and the False Claims Bill.
- Despite government efforts on E- Procurement there is need for a more robust mechanism to be implemented to enhance its functionalities at all the stages of the public procurement cycle.
- At the center of corruption is how candidates and political parties fundraise hence the need to regulate and create accountability mechanisms in campaign financing.
- To enhance social accountability, there is need to fully implement wealth declarations and lifestyle audits by digitising the declaration forms and making them public. This enables citizens to report any incongruity between earning and expenditure.

- All state and non-state actors responsible for civic engagement to actively mobilise citizens in shaping the policy and legislative agenda, and other relevant anti-corruption action.

Note to the Editors

- Transparency International Kenya is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1999 in Kenya with the aim of developing a transparent and corruption-free society through good governance and social justice initiatives. TI-Kenya is one of the autonomous chapters of the global Transparency International movement that are all bound by a common vision of a corruption-free world.
- Since its inception in 1995, the Corruption Perceptions Index, Transparency International's flagship research product, has become the leading global indicator of public sector corruption. The index offers an annual snapshot of the relative degree of corruption by ranking countries and territories from all over the globe. In 2012, Transparency International revised the methodology used to construct the index to allow for comparison of scores from one year to the next. For more information, visit www.transparency.org/research/cpi/.
- Data Sources: The CPI 2018 is calculated using 13 different data sources from 12 different institutions that capture perceptions of corruption within the past two years. Nine data sources we used for Kenya including the African Development Bank CPIA, Bertelsmann Foundation Sustainable Governance Index, Economist Intelligence Unit Country Ratings, Global Insight Country Risk Ratings, World Bank CPIA, World Economic Forum EOS and World Justice Project Rule of Law Index.

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