Short Session Report

Session Title: Time for Equity  
Date & Time: 2 December 2016, 14:30-16:00  
Report prepared by: Elizabeth Tronsor, Programme Coordinator, Transparency International

Experts:
- Peter Eigen, Founder, Chair Advisory Council, Transparency International  
- Lawrence Lessig, Roy L. Furman Professor of Law, Harvard Law School  
- Salil Shetty, Secretary General, Amnesty International  
- María Soledad Pérez Tello, Minister for Justice and Human Rights, Congress of Peru

Moderated by: Sarah Chayes, Senior Associate, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

Main issues raised in kick off remarks.

Sarah Chayes opened the session:

The U.S. election has brought matters into focus. Americans have been living under systemic corruption for years but found reasons to shrug their shoulders. They can do so no longer. The election of Donald Trump requires something of every American, who will now be tested as so many people in the audience have been tested. It is shameful that the U.S. has lacked a strong anti-corruption organization that could protest the loss of the Republic.
What ideas have been showcased?

Too often when talking about corruption the focus is on the individual and not on institutions. It is possible for there to be ethical individuals in corrupt institutions. Lawrence Lessig gave the example of the U.S. Congress, which he says is one of the most corrupt institutions in the world, but with ‘uncorrupt’ people. Those elected to office (and in corrupt institutions) are open to criticism if they refuse to seek institutional reforms.

There is a big gap between what is said and what is done. Many countries have gone down the wrong track on accountability and human rights abuses. Samil Shetty noted the current global refugee crisis as an example of the ‘say-do’ gap. Before refugees reached the shores of Europe, there was little attention.

Peter Eigen stated that national governments is failing because of asymmetries related to what is needed to regulate and their capacity.

To improve institutions and address corruption, we need to bring together the ‘magical triangle’ – government, civil society, business.

The gap between the rich and poor is growing. María Soledad Pérez Tello offered that to address this we need to strengthen institutions, do what we say, and start talking about corruption in the first person, taking personal responsibility.

Institutional change needs to be led by the people in the institution; and they have a moral obligation to do so.

The ‘say-do’ gap has eroded trust in government. Injustice around the world has led to anger and frustration, visible in adherence to violent extremism, protests and revolutions, and populist votes as in the U.S.

Unifying phenomena can be game changers in addressing a problem. Corruption should be used to unite people on the mission for integrity and use the power of collective action and networking.
Education and awareness raising cannot be taking for granted. Building grassroots movements and speaking to new audiences is key in harnessing people power for change.

Briefly describe the highlights including the thematically interesting questions and ideas that were generated from the discussion or from the floor, and session quotes.

“It is time for pretences to end. We [Americans] are in a period of existential crisis. Please hold us to account.”
Sarah Chayes

“The U.S. Congress is the most corrupt institution in the world.”
Lawrence Lessig

“We are in a dark place [with the refugee crisis], and part of the reason for this is we say one thing and do the other.”
Samil Shetty

“It’s great to be at my 10th IACC, sitting next to a Peruvian Minister. The first IACC in Peru was opened by the President of Peru, who is now sitting with in jail with his friend Fujimori.”
Peter Eigen

“There’s nothing further from justice than impunity.”
María Soledad Pérez Tello

“We need to start talking about corruption in the first person….and make integrity a personal goal.”
María Soledad Pérez Tello

“Everyone has the responsibility to hold their government responsible”
Samil Shetty

“The world is in revolt against corruption. Where are we?”
Sarah Chayes
Key Insights that could be included in the IACC Declaration

The anti-corruption movement needs to better respond to and harness the huge wave of anti-corruption sentiment sweeping populations around the world.

Rapporteur’s name and date submitted

Elizabeth Tronsor, 2 December 2016

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