

Biden Administration Strategy Signals New Chapter in Fight Against Global Corruption

Civil Society Engagement Will Be Essential to Informing and Guiding New Approach

A statement from the U.S. office of Transparency International
December 6, 2021

WASHINGTON, DC – Today the Biden Administration released the first-ever United States Strategy for Countering Corruption. The nearly 40-page outline of proposals reflects in large part a February 2021 bipartisan plan for combating global corruption released by Transparency International, and is separated into five pillars: Modernizing, coordinating, and resourcing U.S. government efforts to fight corruption; curbing illicit finance; holding corrupt actors accountable; preserving and strengthening multilateral anti-corruption architecture; and improving diplomatic engagement and leveraging foreign assistance resources to advance policy goals.

Among the document's commitments are pledges to crack down on dirty money in U.S. real estate, to require certain gatekeepers to the U.S. financial system such as attorneys, accountants, and investment advisers to perform greater due diligence on their prospective clients, and to make it a crime for foreign officials to solicit or accept bribes from U.S. companies.

Gary Kalman, Director of the Transparency International U.S. Office, said the following on the release of the strategy:

Today's strategy offers the promise of a new chapter in the U.S.'s fight against global corruption. In a year where Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index revealed little or no progress in the fight against corruption around the world, unprecedented new engagement, leadership, and investment from the United States is desperately needed.

If today's strategy is matched with appropriate resources, it has the power to fundamentally change the calculus for kleptocrats and redirect stolen funds back to the original problems they were meant to fund such as fighting the pandemic, countering the effects of climate change, funding economic development and opportunity, and more. We look forward to hearing more about this new course for anticorruption at the U.S.-led Summit for Democracy later this week. In a world where corruption fuels authoritarianism, today's strategy provides a forward-looking blueprint for bolstering government integrity and advancing democracy. Today's coinciding announcement of plans to draft new rules to address money laundering in the U.S. real estate sector is a promising first step.

While today's statements are among the most ambitious and comprehensive anticorruption commitments in recent history, they are certainly not the first to be offered. We look forward to working with the Administration to ensure that today's stated ambitions are translated from good intentions to effective policy.

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Transparency International is the world's largest coalition against corruption. We give voices to victims and witnesses of corruption, and work with governments, businesses, and citizens to stop the abuse of entrusted power. In collaboration with national chapters in more than 100 countries, we are leading the fight to turn our vision of a world free from corruption into reality.

Related Resources

- Read the Biden Administration's [United States Strategy on Countering Corruption](#);
- Read Transparency International's February 2021 policy plan for fighting foreign corruption, [Combating Global Corruption: A Bipartisan Plan](#);
- See the U.S. Treasury Department's [request for public comment](#) on a potential rule for addressing the vulnerability of the U.S. real estate market to money laundering and other illicit activity;
- Read Transparency International's report on the corruption challenges facing the top 25 countries on the Corruption Perceptions Index, [Trouble at the Top](#);

- Read the [new, joint report](#) from Transparency International, the FACT Coalition, and Global Financial Integrity on the corruption threats posed by loopholes in anti-money laundering laws for investment advisers;
- Read a July 2021 Transparency International [factsheet](#) on the need to criminalize the “demand side” of foreign bribery;
- Read Transparency International’s full [Corruption Perceptions Index](#).

Media Contact

Scott Greytak, Director of Advocacy, Transparency International U.S. Office

Telephone: +1 614-668-0258

Email: sgreytak@transparency.org

Twitter: @TransparencyUSA