

December 15, 2020

Biden Administration and New Congress Must Crack Down on Corruption

To help restore confidence in democracy at home, challenge authoritarian regimes abroad, combat the pandemic, and ease economic chaos, the incoming administration and new Congress must prioritize anticorruption reforms

In the wake of the recent U.S. presidential election campaign—in which corruption and international engagement featured as major themes—Transparency International’s U.S. office issued the following statement calling on the incoming administration and new Congress to take urgent action to combat corruption at home and abroad:

We congratulate President-elect Biden and his team on their election victory. Now, we urge them to combat the pandemic and the economic chaos it engendered, to restore confidence in American democracy and challenge authoritarian regimes overseas by prioritizing strong anticorruption reforms. The new administration should act quickly to root out the financial and political corruption that undermines pandemic recovery and diminishes trust in our political institutions.

Around the world, authoritarian and kleptocratic regimes are on the rise. Corrupt rulers are capitalizing on the pandemic, stealing funds meant for relief efforts and undermining core democratic rights such as a free press, the right to peaceful protest, and protections for whistleblowers. Domestically, corruption and criminality undermine recovery efforts, too. Stolen funds and self-dealing mean small businesses close and jobs disappear. Misdirected funds mean faulty personal protective equipment or shortages of goods and services. Corruption has real-world consequences for all those in need of urgent aid.

The incoming administration must accomplish at least three things: It must re-engage the world on anti-corruption, centering its foreign policy on stopping the flow of illicit funds that help sustain authoritarian and kleptocratic regimes around the world. It must work with Congress to pass an ambitious global and domestic anti-corruption agenda, such as our office’s forthcoming “Bipartisan Plan to Fight Global Corruption.” And it must double-down on protecting and actively enforcing existing laws and rules that stop illicit finance and sustain political integrity.

National security, sustainable inclusive economic growth, and the health of democratic institutions at home and abroad depend on the next administration investing up front in an aggressive anti-corruption agenda.

Related Resources

[Money Laundering and the Next Recovery Package](#)
[Exporting Corruption Progress Report 2020](#)

Recommended Reforms for Whistleblower Protection in the U.S.
25 Essential Anti-Corruption Provisions to Include in the Coronavirus Response Package

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