

**Subject: Update by TI Chair, April 2017**

**From: Jose Ugaz (Chair)**

**To: all TI National Chapters, National Chapters in formation, National Contacts and TI Individual Members**

**Cc: TI-S and TI Board of Directors**

Dear Friends across the TI Movement:

This is an informal letter to provide some information on TI's work around the world and in so doing respond to the call by many chapters that I report more directly to you.

Our Movement and its Secretariat are doing remarkable work. Many of you may not have the time to scan our website, but the news releases keep coming and they provide just the tip of the mountain of the productive activity that is going on.

Take a look at the recent blunt [Doors Wide Open](#) report that slams the money laundering enablers who help kleptocrats purchase some of the most valuable real estate in the world. Then there is the latest [investigation](#) from São Paulo by our Brazil team on the use of secret companies in off-shore jurisdictions to buy prime real estate in South America's biggest city. And see what 22,000 people in Asia-Pacific told us about corruption in the latest regional [Barometer](#) report. I encourage you to read the news, the reports and watch the videos on our TI website.

I have been trying to complement this work as your Board chairman with visits to our National Chapters, and I would just like to share a few reflections and insights. It does not take long to understand and appreciate the work done by our chapter leaders and their staff and how enormous are the challenges they confront. Take for example Trevor Munroe in Jamaica, Iftekhar Zaman in Bangladesh, Carlos Hernández in Honduras, and many others who I have seen the past months. My meetings with them, just like their counterparts on visits to Ethiopia and Kenya, underscore a few key issues for us right now, which I believe we must seek to address with still greater effect:

1. Many of our chapters are in countries where the space for civil society activism is shrinking and this is a major threat.
2. Many - really most - of our chapters continue to face severe challenges finding resources, and
3. We must do a better job at mobilising and sharing our expertise to provide real added value for our work around the world.

Your Board of Directors is aware of these issues and will continue to make it a priority to address them.

Another matter that is abundantly clear in my travels is the concern that we are not being sufficiently effective when it comes to the repatriation of stolen assets. I totally agree. I think we need to work still harder on this and ensure that this is a core issue within the framework of our No Impunity agenda.

That agenda is making progress. Let me give you a few examples. As many of you know, we have refined the legal definition of Grand Corruption and recently I had the opportunity to discuss this with key officials in The Hague at the International Criminal Court and in Strasbourg at the Council of Europe. Our concerns are on their radar. At the ICC, for example, we were encouraged that it will consider Grand Corruption as a significant aggravating factor as it pursues investigations into crimes against humanity.

In Panama recently I had the opportunity to meet with officials at the highest levels of government. There was a cordial exchange of views about the prosecution of Ricardo Martinelli, now in the United States, who was President of Panama until July 2014 and allegedly enriched himself on a massive scale when in office. We continue to work to secure his extradition from the U.S. and then to ensure he is prosecuted.

Not too distant from Panama is Honduras, one of the most violent nations in the world where the justice system is in ruins and where the challenges our chapter faces are enormous. There is, however, progress and our chapter is making a tremendous contribution. The challenge here underscores the crucial importance of our work.

Finally, let me just mention the Ukraine and talks I had with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Democracy, freedom and justice are all at risk in the Ukraine. Our chapter is absolutely in the middle of the storm, pushing at every opportunity not only to get anti-corruption pledges from national leaders but also to see those pledges lead

to action. I believe their work has contributed to a heightened sensitivity at the IMF that it cannot continue to lend to corrupt governments and ignore corruption. In late April, finance ministers convene in Washington for the IMF's spring meeting and the Ukraine situation will be widely discussed. We expect that the Fund's leaders will now press for tougher anti-corruption actions and that the Fund's Board of Directors will approve a governance review paper in May that will enable the IMF to increase its focus on corruption when negotiating loans to nations.

Every trip I make to a National Chapter ends on a positive note: the challenges are enormous, but the capacity of all of you in the movement to meet them is no less great.

Best wishes,  
Jose

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