

PRESS RELEASE



TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL

the coalition against corruption

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Corruption out of control – government should quit

Bosnia and Herzegovina slides down the corruption scale again, sharing 88-96 position at the global Corruption Perception Index of Transparency International among 159 countries ranked.

Sarajevo / London / Berlin, 18 October 2005 --- For the third time since its creation in 1995, the global Corruption Perception Index (CPI), released by Transparency International annually, incorporated Bosnia and Herzegovina. This year the list includes a record 159 countries, ranked from the least corrupt to those where corruption reigns in all spheres of society. "Rampant corruption in BiH worsening year after year, instead of an improvement, is humiliating" stated Boris Divjak, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Transparency International (TI) Bosnia and Herzegovina at the occasion of the CPI 2005 launch. Press conference of TI BiH was held in Sarajevo in parallel with almost 80 other worldwide. "Slow pace or even lack of certain reforms led to a weakened position of BiH at the list of countries. After the drop from 70-75th position to 82-84th last year, BiH was in 2005 grouped among those countries where corruption is on the rise, reforms are not being implemented and mafia rules the state."

CPI merely confirms the TI BiH findings, which for a while have been pointing to unsustainability of institutions, high level of corruption, linkages between organised crime and the ruling elites and a lack of exit strategy of the dominant international community. "BiH shares 88-96th position, which follows the last year's 82nd place and represents an objectively depressing score pointing at a continuous lack of vision and strategy in confronting corruption. The fact that all countries that recently joined the European Union, or those that aspire to joining the EU, are well ahead of BiH is a clear indication that a lot remains to be done" said Divjak. "The ascent of Serbia and Montenegro as well as Macedonia, which both lagged far more behind BiH in the last year alone, is a relative cause of frustration. The total score is 2.9 of the possible 10 that ranked us among the undeveloped and most corrupt half of the globe, alienating us further from the EU. Those responsible for such results or the lack thereof must ask themselves whether or not they have the moral right to continue leading the country." Very few public institutions are trustworthy and the failure of reforms, according to all TI BiH public polls can be ascribed primarily to political parties, executive, legislative and judiciary. However the international community should also share responsibility, chiefly as it claims to represent the ultimate BiH goals with an enormous authority.

This year's CPI demonstrates a high degree of corruption in both the rich and the poor countries, but it is worrying that over two thirds of the 159 analysed countries scored below 5 on the scale of 10, which speaks of a need to adopt sustainable anti-corruption strategies. Citizens of the undeveloped world now undergo double suffering: besides poverty, costs of corruption destroy any development prospects. Seventy countries, among which now BiH as well, scored below 3 and that is the group of countries where corruption is out of control.

Of the neighbouring countries, Slovenia was ranked 31st this year, which is identical to their last year's rating. Croatia recorded a drop from 67th to the present 70th position, with a drop in index by just one decimal point. Serbia and share the 97th position with five other countries, which speaks of a worrying situation of the Eastern neighbours, but also that they record continuous improvements and a statistics index rise, now only one decimal point below BiH. The points collected by S&MN stand at 2.8 and are not as impressive an improvement as they managed last year. Four EU candidate countries, including those negotiating membership and all the member states are now 30-40 places ahead of BiH. BiH on the other hand shares its position with Armenia and Moldova from the broader region and several medium-developed African and Asian economies.