

OPENING PLENARY--SUMMARIES OF SPEECHES

Hon. Kiraitu Murungi

This is a critical time for Kenya's political and economic development as corruption is the greatest structural bottleneck in the country's development. The transition government has learnt valuable lessons since January 2003. The main lessons are:

1. Corruption is not only a serious moral and economic problem but is also a complex legal and political problem.
2. Reforms must encompass legal and cultural change.
3. Because criminal prosecutions processes are slow, this results in declining public support.
4. Corruption is rife in the procurement processes due to excessive rigidity and complexity of the procedures.
5. Required civil service reforms are undermined by patronage and in-built corruption
6. Political campaigns are a major arena for competitive bribery and this makes it imperative to consider a new framework for political party financing.
7. Managing exceedingly high public expectations makes the comprehensive fight of corruption a hard, long and difficult journey that has no allowance for quick fixes.

Hon. Hon. Mwai Kibaki

The fight against grand corruption and related vices cannot be won is a single battle. Kenya's main challenge is that the institutions are not adequately equipped to fight corruption due to decades of political influence and manipulation. This government has identified the need to reform them. In the government's view, the fight against corruption is an explicit attempt to positively change people's lives through the release of resources for development purposes.

John Githongo

The fight against corruption in Kenya can be conceptualized through 7(?) main pillars.

- i) Corruption operates through largely professional networks.
- ii) Measuring the success of anti-corruption initiatives is very difficult as success is fragile and gains can be changes by one adverse incident. .
- iii) Restitution is important.

- iv) While prosecution is the most obvious instrument in the eyes of the public, it is an insufficient instrument in regard to grand corruption.
- v) Every political dispensation has a number of individuals who resist efforts at reform.
- vi) There are nebulous individuals who have learnt to speak the language of reform but are opposed to real reform.

Gladwell Otieno

Peter Eigen

For countries in transition such as Kenya and others represented at the conference, the challenge of transformation from a highly corrupt society to one that is corruption free are immense. However, the gains made from making this difficult transition are equally immense and fulfilling. This is because corruption indubitably results in perverted economic decision making.

Considering both the demand and supply sides of corruption, there is a shared responsibility for countries in transition and trans-national corporations in the North to take responsibility for the state and extent of corruption. The international flank is now largely protected against corruption and this allows for greater vigilance and effectiveness all around.

In addition to Kenya, countries such as Brazil, Mexico and Georgia have realized the opportunities for change and the challenges that go with them. This is a significant factor because for a long time, it was almost accepted without question that a realistic appraisal of the market place led to the view that corruption was an indispensable phenomenon in conducting business in Latin America, Asia and Africa. This view is not considered enlightened any more.

Kenya is one country where the greatest opportunities for success do exist because of elements of work undertaken by TI-Kenya and its partners. The main question however is whether the country has maintained its trajectory for reducing corruption. While the vision and techniques may be available, the will to put them in a consolidated and sustainable context is the challenge.