



TI-USA Lauds Obama Commitment to Transparency and Rule of Law

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Transparency International-USA (TI-USA) welcomes the strong and critically important signal sent by President Barack Obama's declaration on his first day in office that "transparency and the rule of law will be the touchstones of this presidency".

The new President's commitments to impose stronger restrictions on the "revolving door" between government service and lobbying the government, and to increasing public access to information are laudable. They will help ensure greater accountability and restore public trust.

President Obama has consistently recognized the critical importance of financial transparency and committed to increasing it in the economic recovery package. Lack of transparency contributed to the current financial crisis in the United States and around the world, and the upcoming G-20 Leaders' Summit in London on April 2nd, offers a timely opportunity for the new administration to champion its commitment to financial transparency on a global stage.

Leading by example at home will strengthen the credibility and influence of the US abroad. The US was a trailblazer in 1977 when it passed the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, banning bribery of foreign public officials. Its enforcement track record is a model for all major exporting countries that has yet to be replicated. Continuing corporate bribery scandals demonstrate that consistent enforcement of the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention by all parties is not adequate, and its prohibitions have not been fully internalized by the private sector.

US leadership will also continue to be critical to promoting accountability and reducing corruption as an obstacle to economic development and poverty alleviation. US foreign and development policy can facilitate greater government accountability, fostering stronger and more stable democracies and breaking the vicious cycle of corruption and poverty. The UN Convention Against Corruption provides an important blueprint for achieving these objectives, and US support for an effective review mechanism will help ensure governments actually fulfill their commitments to truly serve their people.

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