

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 6:01 CET/00:01 EST TUESDAY, 25 JANUARY 2022**

## **2021 CORRUPTION PERCEPTIONS INDEX REVEALS A DECADE OF STAGNATING CORRUPTION LEVELS AMID HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES & DEMOCRATIC DECLINE IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA**

*Progress is stalled while over 90 per cent of countries score below 50*

*Berlin, 25 January 2022* – The 2021 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) released today by Transparency International shows that corruption levels remain at a standstill worldwide. In Sub-Saharan Africa, 80 per cent of countries have made little to no progress in the last 10 years.

The gains of a handful of countries in the region are overshadowed by backsliding and stagnation in others. Serious corruption problems are exacerbated by ongoing violent conflicts and terrorist attacks in countries from **South Sudan** (11) to **Mali** (29). Unconstitutional changes of power such as in **Guinea** (25) highlight political corruption, and the severe impact this year of the COVID-19 pandemic has given governments an excuse to limit information and rights in **Cameroon** (27) and **Uganda** (27).

*Samuel Kaninda, Africa Regional Advisor of Transparency International said:*

*“A decade of stagnating corruption levels has been devastating for Sub-Saharan Africa. Natural resources are plundered and millions of people lack access to public services while violent conflicts rage on and terrorist threats rise. Meanwhile, grand corruption allows elites to act with impunity, siphoning money away from the continent and leaving the public with little in the way of rights or resources.”*

### **SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA HIGHLIGHTS**

The CPI ranks 180 countries and territories by their perceived levels of public sector corruption on a scale of zero (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean).

The Sub-Saharan Africa average is 33, the lowest in the world, and 44 countries rank below 50.

- **Seychelles** (70) tops the region, with **Cabo Verde** (58) and **Botswana** (55) the distant runners-up.
- **Equatorial Guinea** (17), **Somalia** (13) and **South Sudan** (11) score lowest in the region.
- **Botswana** (55), **Lesotho** (38), **Eswatini** (32), **Niger** (31), **Nigeria** (24), **Comoros** (20) and **South Sudan** (11) are all at historic lows this year.

In the last decade, 43 countries in the region have either declined or made no significant progress.

- Since 2012, **Botswana** (55), **Liberia** (29), **Mali** (29) and **South Sudan** (11) have significantly declined on the CPI.
- Only six countries in the region have significantly improved their scores over that period: **Seychelles** (70), **Senegal** (43), **Ethiopia** (39), **Tanzania** (39), **Côte d'Ivoire** (36) and **Angola** (29).

## **CORRUPTION, HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY**

Complacency in fighting corruption exacerbates human rights abuses and undermines democracy, fuelling authoritarianism and then even higher levels of corruption. This vicious cycle has continued across Sub-Saharan Africa over the last decade.

- **Mali** has faced political, institutional and security crises, including three military coups during the past 10 years. Its CPI score has dropped to 29 as ongoing armed conflict undermines key state functions, leading to a vicious cycle of corruption and human rights abuses.
- **Equatorial Guinea** has stagnated at 17 at the bottom of the Index, as the country remains a kleptocracy. President Teodoro Obiang's son, who serves as the oil minister, was recently accused of siphoning off millions in state funds and bribes abroad. In a bright spot for accountability, the president's other son Vice President Teodorin Obiang was definitively convicted for corruption in France, upholding the confiscation of his EUR 150 million in assets there.
- **Nigeria** hit a historic low of 24, just as the Pandora Papers exposed further secretive dealings among powerholders who buy property abroad in the UK. Elites have a sense of impunity as the anti-corruption agenda has stalled and little action has been taken in response to previous revelations from the Panama Papers and FinCEN Files investigations.

Transparency International calls on governments to act on their anti-corruption and human rights commitments and for people across the globe to join together in demanding change.

*Daniel Eriksson, Chief Executive Officer of Transparency International said:*

*"In authoritarian contexts where control over government, business and the media rests with a few, social movements remain the last check on power. It is the power held by teachers, shopkeepers, students and ordinary people from all walks of life that will ultimately deliver accountability."*

## **About the Corruption Perceptions Index**

Since its inception in 1995, the Corruption Perceptions Index has become the leading global indicator of public sector corruption. The Index scores 180 countries and territories around the world based on perceptions of public sector corruption, using data from 13 external sources, including the World Bank, World Economic Forum, private risk and consulting companies, think tanks and others. The scores reflect the views of experts and business people.

The process for calculating the CPI is regularly reviewed to make sure it is as robust and coherent as possible, most recently by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre in 2017. All the CPI scores since 2012 are comparable from one year to the next. For more information, see this article: [The ABCs of the CPI: How the Corruption Perceptions Index is calculated](#).

### **Notes to editors**

- The Sub-Saharan Africa regional analysis provided in the additional press products includes further detail.
- See also the 2021 CPI report, which contains recommendations from Transparency International.

### **Interview requests**

In case of country-specific queries, please contact [Transparency International's national chapters](#).

In case of queries around regional and global findings, please contact the Transparency International Secretariat: [press@transparency.org](mailto:press@transparency.org).