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LESSONS FROM 15 YEARS OF ANTI-CORRUPTION REFORMS: INSIGHTS FROM A PRACTITIONER

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PLENUM 1: DAS ANTI-KORRUPTIONS-BÜNDNIS UND DIE RENAISSANCE DER BÜRGERLICHEN ÖFFENTLICHKEIT – EIN MODERNER KREUZZUG ZUR MORALISIERUNG VON POLITIK UND GESELLSCHAFT?

Combating corruption has over the last 10-15 years gone through different phases. As a by-product of the latest wave of globalization, addressing corruption started as an effort driven mostly by the international business community and their governments from the "North". Corruption was presented as an economic problem that undermined fair competition and distorted markets. It has taken years to realize that tackling corruption requires a multi-disciplinary approach. Since corruption is a complex socio-economic phenomenon, a useful diagnosis of the corruption-problem requires the analytical tools of various disciplines including that of political science, sociology, economics, law, anthropology, ethics, religious studies and even historians. Depending on which discipline we use, we can talk about the "costs" of corruption, corruption as a "crime", as an "unethical behaviour", as violation of "norms" and as a "culture". We can analyse corruption using the "principal and agent" theory, we can describe corruption as a deviation from certain norms; we can refer to the often hidden but colossal costs of corruption - depending on our chosen angle.

For an anti-corruption advocacy NGO like Transparency International (TI), the task to "translate" complex analysis into practical actions worldwide remains a tough challenge. The author believes that it's been TI's successful balancing between intellectual honesty and practical action that made TI the "global leader" in anti-corruption advocacy.