

UNITED NATIONS



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THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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**MESSAGE ON INTERNATIONAL ANTI-CORRUPTION DAY
9 December 2011**

Corruption afflicts all countries, undermining social progress and breeding inequality and injustice.

When desperately needed development funds are stolen by corrupt individuals and institutions, poor and vulnerable people are robbed of the education, health care and other essential services.

Although the poor may be marginalized by corruption, they will not be silenced. In events across the Arab world and beyond this year, ordinary people have joined their voices in denouncing corruption and demanding that governments combat this crime against democracy. Their protests have triggered changes on the international scene that could barely have been imagined just months previously.

All of us have a responsibility to take action against the cancer of corruption.

The United Nations is helping countries combat corruption as part of our broader, system-wide campaign to help bolster democracy and good governance.

The United Nations Convention Against Corruption is a powerful tool in the fight. I urge all governments that have not yet ratified it to do so without delay. I also call on governments to include anti-corruption measures in all national programmes that support sustainable development.

The private sector, too, stands to gain enormously from effective action. Corruption distorts markets, increases costs for companies and ultimately punishes consumers. Companies can create a more transparent global economy through anti-corruption initiatives, including the work of the United Nations Global Compact.

On this International Anti-Corruption Day, let us pledge to do our part by cracking down on corruption, shaming those who practice it and engendering a culture that values ethical behaviour.