



The question of global political corruption

Contrary to the UN founding principles, political corruption is rife across the globe. Whether it be extremist dictatorships or secretive deals within governments, this corruption is still very prevalent in politics today. Corruption on such a large scale is often seen within governments built upon suppression, extremism and the need to maintain large scale power. For example, the Tunisian dictatorship under Ben Ali saw the politician embezzle over \$2.5 billion across his 23 years in office which came to a close as recently as 2011. Furthermore, the integrity of Russia's Putin-led government has been called into question as recently as March 2018 over the Salisbury spy-poisoning. And, with the same questionable actions being taken by Putin to maintain his power over his own country, the United Nations has repeatedly condemned the Russian government's actions and its seemingly non-existent veracity.

Ever since its conception, the United Nations has attempted to reduce the corruption within governments seen around the world. The Corruption Perceptions Index has chartered a huge increase in the transparency of global politics since its formation in 1995. The annual report demonstrates which countries are most transparent to their population and indeed the world, whilst also showing how the situation has changed over the years. However, there are exceptions to the general shift in transparency.

In tackling these corrupt regimes across the world, the United Nations have faced considerable difficulties. The different methods used have often been successful but have sometimes only exacerbated the situation or replaced one shady regime for another. The united world effort during the Arab spring is a clear example of this, and the poor methods used of replacing different administrations are a direct cause of the region's instability even today. Economic sanctions have been pursued throughout history but have often shown to be unsuccessful as they can be seen to have a catastrophic effect on the general population of the country in question, rather than its often wealthy rulers.

The impact of the media in acting as a fuel for this political corruption must also be taken into account. We can see leaders around the world pulled from side to side and motivated by the backing of the media when dictating policy. And, as can be seen so often is the impact of big business on deciding this policy. Monetary rewards for certain policies are rife in politics today and can be classically perceived by alleged corruption of the Prime Ministership of Tony Blair (1997-2007) or the release of the Panama Papers in 2016. Despite international efforts and a swift change in the frequency of political corruption, it has never truly gone away.

Points to Consider:

- What is your country's attitude towards political corruption?
- How does your country perceive to be best in tackling political corruption?
- Where does your country rank on the Corruption Perceptions Index and how truly transparent is it?



- Which sanctions should be put in place by the UN in tackling this global problem?
- How can the UN slowly edge out this theme in LEDC's and create a transparent and sustainable global political model for the future?

Useful Links:

- <https://www.transparency.org.uk>
- <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/governance/brief/anti-corruption>
- <https://www.intechopen.com/books/trade-and-global-market/corruption-causes-and-consequences>
- <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/02/least-corrupt-countries-transparency-international-2018/>

Key treaties:

- United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) – negotiated in 2003, came into effect in 2005.
- Civil Law Convention on Corruption – negotiated in 1999, came into effect in 2003, mainly focuses on Europe.
- OECD Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions – negotiated in 1997, came into effect in 1999.

Main nations involved:

- East African countries – Somalia, South Sudan, Yemen etc.
- North Korea.
- Many middle-eastern countries – Syria, Iraq etc.
- Venezuela.