

International Anti-Corruption Conference 2018 in Copenhagen

Anti-corruption statement

Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland

Corruption distorts economic growth and threatens democracy, the rule of law, and human rights. It is a concern for individuals, societies, the private sector, and international organisations. Finnish development policy is guided by the 2016 Government Report to Parliament on Finland's Development Policy that will steer the promotion of sustainable development in 2016–2030.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has no tolerance for corruption. Sector-specific policies and guidelines include principles and specific instructions for anti-corruption. Ministry has issued an administrative norm on Preventing misuse of development cooperation funds, reporting and investigating suspicions of misuse and communicating on them in 2015 and established an anonymous whistleblower service in 2014.

OECD has recognized the range of steps and measures that Ministry of Foreign Affairs has taken to mitigate the risk of corruption as a public administration entity, including when providing Official Development Assistance and commended for its outreach work with developing countries. However, we can and should do more to raise awareness and strengthen the capacity to mitigate corruption both home and abroad. Finland's development cooperation is often responding to needs amidst ongoing conflicts, channelled to fragile states and post-conflict countries. Prolonged state of conflict or crisis may breed ground for terrorism and organized crime, which may benefit from institutional weaknesses. Prompt action, adequate anti-corruption policies and practices, by partner countries and the international community is required to mitigate corruption risks. New forms of risks, including bribery of foreign public officials in international business transactions, might be embedded in newest forms of development cooperation. Even at home, we must be more aware of more advanced forms of globalized crime, which might even compromise our own internal online administrative procedures if we don't stay vigilant enough.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs will continue to contribute to the implementation of SDG 16, Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, through its development assistance including cooperation with the civil society. We must also do more to support developing countries' efforts to fight corruption and to curb illicit financial flows, including tax evasion and avoidance. This is something the SDGs compel us to do. In order to help its developing country partners in this task Finland has established a Tax and Development Action Program (TDAP). The objective of the program is to promote international cooperation to adopt revised international tax

rules and to curb illicit financial flows. These rules should also take into account the developing countries' perspectives.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs is committed to continuing good progress to prevent corruption and to implement any pending recommendations of peer reviews of the OECD and other international organizations. For example, as part of the risk management policy model of the Finnish Government the Ministry for Foreign Affairs will establish a comprehensive risk management policy in line with the recommendations of the OECD Development Assistance Committee Peer Review in 2017 also taking stock on the Committee recommendations on corruption risk management. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs shall increase number of staff who have received mandatory training on prevention of corruption risk, and continue to support awareness rising and capacity building of stakeholders including NGOs and the private sector.

Effective and responsible development cooperation calls for an open distribution of information by both donors and recipients of aid. The Foreign Ministry is a member of International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) and will continue to make further progress with regards to aid transparency. Openness and transparency reduces the risk of corruption and the misuse of funds.