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Political Financing, Weak Legislative Accountability Hampering Anti-Corruption Efforts Globally 2006 Global Integrity Report Investigates and Assesses Anti-Corruption Mechanisms in 43 Countries, including the United States

January 10, 2007, Washington D.C. -- Despite widespread public support for higher ethical standards in government, the laws and practices designed to combat corruption and prevent abuses of power in countries around the world continue to be inconsistent and too often are ineffectual. This according to a major investigative report released today by Global Integrity, an international nonprofit organization that tracks governance and corruption trends around the world.

The 43-country study covers some of America's foremost trading partners and diplomatic allies, major emerging markets, and some of the poorest countries in the world. The report is the product of several months of on-the-ground reporting and data gathering by a team of 200 in-country journalists and researchers.

Among the key findings are that weaknesses associated with political financing – the nexus between money and power – are the number one anti-corruption challenge facing both developing and wealthy nations. In addition, Global Integrity's research reveals that poor legislative accountability is consistently a problem across nations and runs the risk of hindering prospects for enacting long-term anti-corruption reforms.

"The mixing of money and politics continues to be a recipe for corruption in countries both rich and poor," said Managing Director, Nathaniel Heller. "And yet, some nations have shown that, even with limited resources, political will and strong leadership can prove effective in addressing governance challenges."

Among the country-specific findings, Global Integrity reports that:

- **Vietnam**, one of Asia's hottest emerging markets, has the second weakest overall anti-corruption framework in the Global Integrity Index. Governance and corruption challenges in Vietnam are deep rooted and systemic, raising red flags for potential investors.

- **Russia** has made little progress in establishing and enforcing effective anti-corruption mechanisms compared to several other Soviet Union successor states. Global Integrity’s data highlights structural barriers to effective anti-corruption enforcement in the country, such as poor implementation of conflicts of interest regulations for senior civil servants.
- New European Union (EU) members **Romania** and **Bulgaria** displayed a moderate gap in overall anti-corruption mechanisms, with Romania exceeding the performance of Bulgaria. The data, however, does confirm that the “carrots and sticks” EU accession process has been effective in promoting institutional reform in both countries.
- Global Integrity’s 2006 country selection included 15 African countries, five of which – **Liberia, Sierra Leone, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan** and **Uganda** – have either recently emerged from or continue to struggle with internal conflicts. The results confirm that there are no quick fixes for promoting responsive government in the aftermath of civil strife, though strong political will can help promote an environment of accountability.

The Global Integrity report includes research and reporting from the following countries: Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Benin, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Georgia, Ghana, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Israel, Kenya, Kyrgyz Republic, Lebanon, Liberia, Mexico, Montenegro, Mozambique, Nepal, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Romania, Russia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Uganda, the United States, Vietnam, the West Bank, Yemen, and Zimbabwe.

“The Global Integrity methodology is a major breakthrough in assessing the anti-corruption safeguards, laws, and institutions designed to curb abuses of power in countries around the globe,” added International Director Marianne Camerer. “It serves as an important tool for grassroots advocates, reform-minded governments, multilateral aid agencies, local journalists, aid officials, and foreign investors alike.”

To access the 2006 Global Integrity Report, please visit the website at <http://www.globalintegrity.org>.

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Global Integrity is a Washington, D.C.-based international nonprofit organization dedicated to the comprehensive and timely research and reporting of governance and corruption trends around the world.