

**Launch Of The Election Integrity Pledge**  
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**By Paul Low - Transparency International Malaysia**

Transparency International Malaysia (TI-M) today launches the Election Integrity Pledge for the coming 13th General Election. This is part of the overall effort undertaken by TI-M to safeguard the integrity of political office and democratic political processes by countering the abuse of entrusted political power and stemming the undue influence of money and private interests in politics.

Corruption in political systems fundamentally undermines all other anti-corruption efforts.

Too many politicians have been swept to power on promises of zero tolerance for corruption only to see these promises replaced by grand corruption. Furthermore, political corruption undermines the democratic process.

TI-M seeks to prevent corruption in political systems and work to monitor, strengthen as well as set standards for political transparency and integrity. This involves:

- strengthening sound regulations on political financing and civil society's role in its monitoring, via increased access to information;
- building coalitions and coordinated action on safeguarding political processes, including elections;
- creating better knowledge and integration of anti-corruption measures into the efforts of nation building; and
- developing shared values around political transparency and democratic accountability.

In addition, public trust in democracy is eroded when elected leaders fail to comply with the laws they themselves have designed and passed, and when they show a lack of respect for oversight institutions they have established.

According to Malaysia's 2011 Corruption Barometer results, the police and political parties are widely perceived by the public to be the most corrupt institutions, followed by the parliament/legislature, business/private sector and civil service.

TI-M strongly advocates that political parties and their elected politicians must demonstrate strong commitment to ethical standards in public life.

The Election Integrity Pledge is a voluntary, non-binding social contract where candidates who will be standing for the 13th General Election pledge to promote integrity, good governance, transparency and accountability in government at both state and federal levels and to uphold the rule of law.

The Pledge states that:

1. The candidate shall observe the principles of truth, integrity, ethical conduct and accountability, including not accepting or giving bribes or being involved in any way in corrupt practices
2. The candidate shall uphold and give priority to the interests of the Rakyat as a whole
3. The candidate shall practice good governance and transparency

4. The candidate shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations of Malaysia

Compliance to the Pledge will not be monitored by TI-M but rather by the Rakyat. Citizens must be active and vigilant if they are to help stop corruption and improve political integrity.

Either as individuals, or as a part of civil society groups, they can assume an effective role in making their elected representatives accountable in their public office by monitoring their conduct as elected lawmakers and providing feedback to them. This can even be done through the use of social media such as Facebook and Twitter.

TI-M urges all candidates for the 13th General Election to make fighting corruption and promoting integrity key issues during, and after, the next election by signing this pledge.

TI- M also calls on the Rakyat to subsequently monitor their elected representatives' adherence to these standards as the war against corruption is the responsibility of all.

Information on the pledge and its signatories can be accessed at: <http://timalaysia-electionpledge.org.my>

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