

# UN applauds Malaysia's noble initiative in setting up Anti-Corruption Foundation

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PUTRAJAYA, Feb 11 -- The United Nations (UN) applauded the Malaysian government and Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad for the noble initiative in establishing the Perdana International Anti-Corruption Champion Foundation (PIACCF), said UN resident coordinator in Malaysia, Stefan Priesner.



*Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad (left) during the Launching Ceremony of Perdana International Anti-Corruption Champion Fund today. Also present The National Centre for Governance, Integrity and Anti-Corruption (GIACC) director-general Tan Sri Abu Kassim Mohamed.*

Launched by Dr Mahathir tonight, the PIACCF will be responsible for the International Anti-Corruption Champion Fund and complement the aspirations of the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC).

The PIACCF is crucial as it acts as a support system for anti-corruption officers who have been victimised and subjected to persecution in the line of duty.

Priesner emphasised that it was of utmost importance to safeguard the independence of anti-corruption agencies, be it in their investigative or enforcement work.

"The UN has the highest regard for all those who have been unwavering in their principles, even in the face of great challenges and threats," he said at the PIACCF launch here.

Priesner said corruption posed significant threats to countries around the world as it weakened institutions, eroded trust and threatened the economy.

"It deprives many countries of the resources needed to drive development. It undermines fair competition and discourages investment and trade.

"It also disproportionately affects disadvantaged groups, specifically the poor, by preventing social inclusion, promoting inequality and inhibiting prosperity," he said, adding that it adversely affected the ability of countries to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by all UN member states in 2015.

"It has been estimated that corruption costs more than five per cent of global gross domestic product (GDP) (US\$2.6 trillion) annually, with estimates of global money-laundering at around US\$500 billion annually," he said.

Priesner said the UN was happy to note that countries in this region had taken efforts to build their legal and institutional frameworks pertaining to the protection of reporting persons and witnesses.

On behalf of the UN country team, he commended Malaysia on two major achievements, namely its improved ranking in the Democracy Index from 52 in 2018 to 43rd placing in 2019, and its rise by 10 spots to 51st placing out of 180 countries in Transparency International's (TI) annual Corruption Perception Index (CPI) in 2019, compared to 2018.

Meanwhile, International Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities (IAACA) representative Martin Kreutner expressed appreciation to Dr Mahathir for the endless fight against corruption that led Malaysians out of the dark experience associated with the misappropriation of funds of 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB).

Kreutner also said the objective to establish the PIACCF was to assist practitioners of anti-corruption authorities (ACAs), who have succumbed to risks and threats against their lives and careers.

"It is with this hope that this foundation welcomes contributions from state parties, international and regional organisations, corporations and commercial and non-commercial entities and individuals to the fund," he said.

Kreutner also thanked the Malaysian government for its support in being the first contributor to the fund with an amount of RM500,000, and the second contributor comprising Bukhari Foundation with a contribution of RM2.5 million.

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