

MONGOLIA HIGHLIGHT

A Partner in Promoting Justice, Accountability and Prosperity in Mongolia

THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION STARTS AT THE TOP

On June 4th President Enkhbayar opened the National Forum to Combat Corruption at the Government House, and proclaimed the government's will to lead this effort. The event was attended by senior-ranking government officials and served evidence of governmental will to fight corruption and restore pride and integrity in the public and private sectors.

"Fighting corruption begins at the top," according to Mr. Tony Kwok, Honorary Advisor to the Anti-Corruption Agency, and an Asia Foundation advisor.

The Forum had its genesis in early February when Mr. Tony Kwok, a 27-year veteran of Hong Kong's Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) met with presidential legal advisor Mr. Zumberalkham. At this meeting, Mr. Kwok recounted his experience from the ICAC and from numerous countries where he has consulted on anti-corruption. "Government will and commitment" are among the key ingredients to fighting corruption, said Kwok, and "this must start at the top." The Forum came to fruition with valuable support from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), a close partner with The Foundation and the World Bank in providing technical and financial assistance to the Anti-Corruption Agency (ACA).



President Enkhbayar delivering the opening address.

President Enkhbayar, Minister of Justice and Home Affairs Odbayar, Vice speaker Lundeejantsen, Anti-Corruption Agency Head Dangaasuuren, MP Munkh-Orgil and other leaders presented a comprehensive testament of the government's broad commitment to fight corruption through strong enforcement, asset & income disclosure, and prevention that is predicated upon well-honed public awareness and education.

Mr. Tony Kwok was in Ulaanbaatar for the third time on the occasion of the forum. During the morning session, he discussed Hong Kong's experience, which is denominated in a "zero tolerance" policy. He identified necessary conditions for success, which begin with government will. "Will" he said, "can be easily measured according to the degree of independence, the legal authority, and the resources with which the Anti-Corruption Agency is endowed."

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The Mongolian Anti-Corruption Support Project is a three-year, \$500,000 project that engages civil society in efforts to combat corruption, and which serves government in its effort to build a credible deterrent to corruption.

The Mongolia Anti-corruption Agency was established under the Anti-Corruption Law which was passed in July 2006. The Agency is mandated to identify and investigate public sector corruption. The Agency reports annually to the State Great Khural on its operations.

12 Point Anti-Corruption and Integrity plan

Mr. Kwok also outlined a 12-point plan for each Ministry that would lead to greater transparency and integrity if followed:

1. Set up Ministerial Anti-corruption Steering Groups
2. Review procedures and systems to make them more transparent and accountable
3. Formulate tailor-made codes of ethics and include regulations on the acceptance of gifts, and entertainment
4. Introduce a declaration system for conflicts of interest
5. Establish open and fair recruitment promotion systems, and include integrity checking
6. Introduce staff training on ethics and corruption prevention
7. Lead by example
8. Promulgate zero tolerance policy
9. Set up an internal staff monitoring unit and an internal audit unit
10. Enhance and promulgate public and internal confidential complaint channels with a complaint hotline
11. Referral cases promptly to the ACA, and cooperate fully with the ACA on investigations
12. Establish a partnership with ACA, media, civil societies and international donor agencies to launch an ethics campaign



Mr. Tony Kwok discussing Hong Kong's experience and outlining 12 point plan for success at the Forum.

Many speakers recognized the progress that Mongolia has made over the past year. UNDP Resident Representative, Pratibha Mehta, noted that Mongolia ratified the UN Convention Against Corruption in 2005, and less than a year later adopted the Anti-Corruption Law, which formed the Anti-Corruption Agency. "These accomplishments," she said "advance Millennium Development Goal #9 on Good Governance and Human Rights," but added that "work has just begun."

Mr. Dangaasuren indicated that he is recruiting and training staff that uphold the highest ethical standards. He pledged ongoing partnership with international organizations, such as the UNDP and the World Bank, and with The Asia Foundation, whose role he, President Enkhbayar, and other speakers complimented.

The Asia Foundation has provided technical assistance to the Anti-Corruption Agency on public awareness and education with support from the U.S. government through USAID. This assistance has helped the Anti-Corruption Agency to conceive and implement a communications strategy and plan that promotes transparency and openness, and which will inform and engage citizens across Mongolia.



Offsite staff training delivered by Mr. Tony Kwok (seated left) for the Investigations Department headed by Mr. Amarbat (seated center).