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SA fares poorly in the global Corruption Perception Index, yet again.

Today's release of Transparency International's (TI) 2014 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), the most widely used indicator of corruption worldwide, highlights again the gradual erosion of trust in South Africa's public sector. Corruption Watch notes with great concern that the country has again scored below 50. According to TI, a score below 50 indicates a significant corruption problem, which places South Africa in precarious territory.

This year the index surveyed experts on public sector corruption in 175 countries and territories. South Africa scored 44 out of 100 and ranked 67 out of all the surveyed countries. In 2012 and 2013, South Africa scored 43 and 42 respectively, with rankings of 69 out of 174, and 72 out of 177. The global index measures the perceived levels of public sector corruption on a scale of 0-100, where 0 means that a country is perceived as highly corrupt and 100 means that a country is perceived as very clean.

Corruption Watch Executive Director, David Lewis commented:

"Some will take small comfort from the fact that our score and our position on the index has not deteriorated further. This would be a serious error. Not far below us on the index are countries where corruption is endemic, where little can be done to turn around corruption. Some of our key institutions already exhibit many of the characteristics of endemic corruption.

"Think of our criminal justice institutions," Lewis added. "And think of the impunity enjoyed by leading public sector and private sector individuals, with the continuing Nkandla fiasco the clearest example of impunity enjoyed by the politically powerful. Indeed, given the growing controversy surrounding Nkandla and given the contempt displayed by the political and public sector leadership for a resolute anti-corruption fighter like the Public Protector, had the survey been conducted today, we may well have landed up with a significantly lower score."

In the sub-Saharan Africa region, the index ranks South Africa at position nine. Botswana remains the top scorer in Africa at 63 – this is a country which has held steady in the rankings, and against which many African countries are often compared. Meanwhile, Somalia finds itself at the bottom of the list, recording a score of eight out of 100.

Ranking of top 10 African countries

| Country Rank | Regional Rank | Country / Territory | CPI 2014 Score |
|--------------|---------------|---------------------|----------------|
| 31 | 1 | Botswana | 63 |
| 42 | 2 | Cape Verde | 57 |
| 43 | 3 | Seychelles | 55 |
| 47 | 4 | Mauritius | 54 |
| 55 | 5 | Lesotho | 49 |
| 55 | 5 | Namibia | 49 |
| 55 | 5 | Rwanda | 49 |
| 61 | 8 | Ghana | 48 |
| 67 | 9 | South Africa | 44 |
| 69 | 10 | Senegal | 43 |
| 69 | 10 | Swaziland | 43 |

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