

Vision and reality in the fight against corruption

Points to keep in mind – Bertrand de Speville

Vision

Too often stated as “eradication of corruption” – unrealistic – never known a totally corruption-free society. Vision needs a dose of realism – “corruption reduced so that it no longer undermines everything we are trying to build”

A society transformed from one that is apathetic, resigned and cynical about corruption, that regards corruption as an inevitable fact of daily life to one that will not tolerate corruption and whose members are prepared to play their part in the fight against it. That is the true mark of success.

It leads to a society that is fair, just, stable and prosperous – the ultimate vision, achieved only in a few parts of the world

Reality

The global picture reveals more failures than successes. The successes are the exception. Over the last 10 years the overall situation has stagnated, some would say it's got worse. Why do we fail to tackle corruption effectively? Many identifiable reasons, but mainly it is that we keep repeating the same mistakes and we fail to learn from the few successes. We seem to want to keep reinventing the wheel.

What then are the lessons of success that we should understand and apply?

We should first realise what are the seven essentials for success.

- ❖ Political will
- ❖ Our values clearly stated in law
- ❖ A national anticorruption strategy - clear, concise and comprehensive
- ❖ An effective mechanism for implementing it
- ❖ Community support

❖ Resources

❖ Endurance

To those essentials we should add certain policy ingredients:

- Independence and accountability
- Investigating policy
- Openness and confidentiality

And consider some practical questions:

- Dealing with the past
- Domestic operational cooperation – who investigates what?
- International cooperation: no inter-agency operational cooperation unless agencies know and trust each other.
- Inter-agency assistance does not have to depend on reciprocity.

Finally, we must see whether we are making any progress:

- ✚ by measuring the most important – the personal attitude of our community to corruption

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