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Corruption Perception Index: BiH stagnates, paralyzed by corruption

According to Transparency International Corruption Perception Index, BiH is placed at 89th position, out of 180 countries, with a score of 38 on a scale of 0 to 100, indicating thus long-term stagnation and collapse of democratic system

Sarajevo, 29th January 2019 – Transparency International in Bosnia and Herzegovina (TI BiH) presented results of Corruption Perception Index (CPI) for 2018, on the basis of which Transparency International ranks the countries worldwide every year, taking into account the perceived corruption level in public sector.

This year, Bosnia and Herzegovina again scored 38 on a scale of 0 to 100, where 0 is the highest level of perceived corruption and 100 the lowest level of corruption, and it is placed at 89th position, out of 180 countries included in the study. BiH shares the position on the CPI list with Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Swaziland.

Comparing result for the previous seven years, whereby the scores varied from 42 for 2012 and 2013, up to 38 for 2017 and 2018, it is visible that BiH made no progress, and even deteriorated. Negative trend, except for Macedonia, which scored 37 compared to previous 35, is characteristic for the other countries in the Western Balkans, such as Serbia, Montenegro, Albania, Kosovo and Croatia which deteriorated in 2018. The best position of all regional countries is still held by Croatia, and the biggest decline was recorded by Serbia (from 41 to 39).

An analysis of the CPI results and comparison with other studies show direct connection between the corruption level and level of democracy. Developed democracies have an average index of around 75, poor democratic systems of around 49, while hybrid regimes that show elements of autocratic systems have index near 35. According to the studies such as Economist Intelligence Unit, included in the CPI, BiH is listed as a country with the hybrid regime which has regular electoral irregularities, political pressures, lack of judicial independence, high level of corruption, pressure on the media and almost non-existing rule of law. All these characteristics and weak democratic foundations enable development of corruption, particularly in systems in which non-democratic and populist leaders use their weaknesses for their own benefits.

This has been emphasized by Srdjan Blagovcanin, Chairman of the Board of Directors of TI BiH, pointing out that BiH is completely captured by private interests of the authorities: „Institutions paralyzed by corruption fail to achieve the purpose they exist for, leaving citizens in a situation that they cannot achieve elementary human rights. Devastating consequences of corruption are manifested in a collapse of democratic standards and lack of economic development. The citizens keep expressing their dissatisfaction more frequently but the authorities react by expressing repression, as in the case of Pravda za Davida (Justice for David)“.

Therefore, as urgent measures necessary to save the system from complete deterioration and lawlessness, TI BiH indicated lustration in the judiciary and law enforcement agencies, systemic analysis of public sector functioning, public enterprises in particular, in order to eliminate key obstacles in functioning, and strengthening of laws aimed at prevention of political corruption (Election Law, Law on Financing of Political Parties, Law on Public Procurement, Laws on Conflict of Interest, etc.).

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