



MESSAGE ON INTERNATIONAL ANTI-CORRUPTION DAY

9 DECEMBER 2019

Today we join with countries in the region and beyond in marking International Anti-Corruption Day. This observance commenced in 2003 following the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of the Convention against Corruption.

Transparency International has pinned down the concept of corruption by definition, i.e., “the *abuse of entrusted power for private gain*”. No country or society is immune from corruption, a scourge described as a “complex social, political and economic phenomenon” that attacks the foundation of democratic institutions.

Through efforts led by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) significant efforts have been made to raise awareness and to engage the public in fighting corruption. The UNODC’s campaign theme this year covers 3 areas:

- “1. Corruption: An impediment to the Sustainable Development Goals (describes how corruption negatively affects us all)
- “2. Corruption #YouthForJustice leading the change (describes the importance of empowering and mobilizing youth to fight for a corruption-free world)
- “3. United Against Corruption – Take action – Lead the change – Be the change (stresses that it is not enough to just know about corruption but that we need to take action, hold leaders accountable and become integrity leaders ourselves).”

In the Cayman Islands, we are doing our part in combating corruption, but there is more to be done. In January, 2019, the Auditor General published her report titled “Fighting Corruption in the Cayman Islands” in which she recognized that “progress has been made in developing mechanisms to fight corruption, but these mechanisms are geared towards investigation and enforcement” whilst finding that more is still needed by way of prevention of corruption.

In June of this year, the Cayman Islands hosted the Fifth Annual Commonwealth Caribbean Association of Integrity Commissions and Anti-Corruption Bodies which brought together delegates from 10 countries in the Commonwealth Caribbean. This Conference, made possible through the sponsorship of the Cayman Islands Government, the Commonwealth Technical Fund and the Commonwealth Secretariat highlighted the need for greater independence and strengthening of Integrity Commissions throughout the region.

As a part of its work in outreach and education, the Commission has introduced to public and private schools in the Cayman Islands the Education for Justice Programme launched by the UNODC in its entirety a year ago for primary, secondary and tertiary education levels. We encourage everyone to visit the site: <http://www.unodc.org/e4i/en/resdb/index.html>.

Although we continue to await the commencement of the Standards in Public Life Law, in the interim, the effectiveness, if properly utilized, of the Anti-corruption Law, the Ombudsman Law, Public Authorities Law, Whistleblower Protection Law and the Freedom of Information Law cannot be understated. We note the increase in the number of fraud and corruption allegations and investigations across the public sector some of which have resulted in convictions. We also recognize the policies rolled out by the Hon. Deputy Governor to address corruption in the public sector.

We, therefore encourage each and every one to play your part: take action, hold leaders accountable and become integrity leaders yourselves in creating a better society for all.