

Lebanon has dropped 5 points since 2012, and gets a score of 25/100, with a rank 149/180

Press Release issued by the Lebanese Transparency Association - No Corruption, National Chapter of Transparency International, on the launch of the Corruption Perceptions Index 2020

The Lebanese Transparency Association - No Corruption, National Chapter of Transparency International, announced that Lebanon has obtained a score of 25/100, retreating 5 points since 2012, on Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index.

According to the Index, Lebanon ranked 149 internationally out of 180 countries measured, compared to the ranking of 138 out of 180 for the year 2019, this decline reflects the result of the performance of the Lebanese government at the level of combating corruption despite the relentless efforts made by civil society organizations, spearheaded by the Lebanese Transparency Association - No corruption with the aim of enhancing transparency in public administrations and promoting integrity, through the initiatives and projects it launched, especially during the last two years; at the forefront of these projects are those aimed at enhancing transparency in managing the COVID-19 pandemic, transparency in the reconstruction process of Beirut and the mechanism for distributing donations and aid following the Beirut Port explosion on August 4, in addition to the pressure exerted by the Association for the adoption of Anti-Corruption Laws and decrees, most notably the Access to Information Law.

On the regional level, Lebanon ranked 14 out of 21 Arab countries in the Middle East and North Africa, the Overall Regional Average was 34/100.

The Association clarified that the Corruption Perceptions Index is an indicator that measures the extent of society's perception of corruption in the public sector based on 13 different indicators accredited by Transparency International, and the index gives a score ranging from zero to 100 points. The higher the State approaches zero, the higher its level of corruption and vice versa. Lebanon's classification was based on 7 out of 13 indicators for evaluation, the duration covered for measuring the indicator is from October 2019 to October 2020.

Despite the Parliament's adoption of a package of anti-corruption laws, and the Council of Ministers for a number of decrees and measures, in addition to the adoption of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy, this did not positively impact Lebanon's score and rank on the CPI.

This decline comes in light of the difficulties imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the lack of preparation for addressing its second phase, especially in terms of preparing the Public Health Sector and the delay in importing the vaccine.

In addition, the economic collapse has a massive negative impact on the social level, with the shrinking of the middle classes and the inflation of the lower class.

As for the Government and Administrations, the delay in respecting the constitutional and legal deadlines for preparing and approving the Public Budget and moving towards the conduct of State affairs in maintaining the prior year's level of spending based on the previous 12 months, as well as not forming a new government and settling for a caretaker government with limited authorities, all of this negatively affects the path of development of Public Administrations, nay impedes the process of combating and reducing corruption.

It is urgently needed today to form a government, to cease the collapse and embark on the path of economic, monetary, and financial reform.

It is also imperative to implement financial and forensic audits in all Public Administrations to determine the responsibilities and impose the necessary legal penalties against those who committed any corruption related offense.

As for the investigation into the port explosion, the Association has always stressed the importance of adopting the highest standards of transparency in the implementation of the investigation in proportion to the size of this crime that shook the world and not only Lebanon, and the importance of the submission of all officials to it.

This also leads us to demand to expedite in compensating on those affected by the port explosion, as well as to accelerate the reconstruction of what was destroyed; with the adoption of the highest transparency standards as well in terms of funding sources; in which manner is the funding being spent; and the selection of beneficiaries.

All the above makes Lebanon one of the countries that Transparency International has placed on the list of "Country to Watch". This requires the redoubling of efforts to combat corruption, and ensuring respect of the rule of law, specifically the Anti-corruption Legal Framework.

In conclusion, as the Association reiterated in its work the importance of transparency, it affirms today that there is no reform, no rescuing the economy, and no progress without adopting the highest standards of transparency in the work of the Lebanese Government.

The Association also announced the scores at the international level as follows: Denmark and New Zealand ranked first with a score of 88/100, while Finland, Singapore, Sweden and Switzerland ranked third with a score of 100/85. As for Arab countries, the United Arab Emirates ranked first with a score of 71/100, and Qatar ranked second with a score of 63/100, while South Sudan and Somalia ranked last in the world with a score of 12/100, followed by Syria scoring 14/100, Yemen and Venezuela 15/100. The international average has reached 43/100.