Building Integrity and Reducing Corruption in Defence

A Compendium of Best Practices

CONTENTS

Chapter 14

The Importance of Integrity Building

One does not fight corruption by fighting corruption – merely prosecuting an individual, or declaring another anticorruption campaign, redrafting another anticorruption decree, or establishing yet another anticorruption commission.[1]

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Building integrity and fighting corruption are two sides of the same coin and both need to be addressed in any national or sectoral plan. Corruption, or the abuse of entrusted office for private gain, must be rendered as high risk and low reward. It is the aim of integrity building to achieve this in a way that does not obstruct the efficiency of governments or the private sector.[2]

Barriers to corruption can be erected through increasing accountability and transparency. Accountability means that holders of public office are responsible to the public for their decisions and actions. Holders of public office must submit themselves to the level of scrutiny appropriate to their office. One means to hold public officials accountable is through transparency and availability of information. Transparency and accountability allow fewer opportunities for the abuse of public systems. One of the frequent issues in the defence and security realm is that such transparency is often lacking.

This chapter examines the importance of integrity building in defence by demonstrating what integrity means in the defence and security arenas, and shows why building integrity must be a priority for armed forces. It also gives examples of tools that can be used to achieve this goal and present how some countries are successfully using these tools to strengthen integrity in their defence and security ministries and their armed forces.

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1 "Anti Corruption is Signed into Treaty," *WBI Themes* (7 January 2004), http://info.worldbank.org/etools/docs/library/95071/merida/index.html.

2 Jeremy Pope, *Confronting Corruption: The Elements of a National Integrity System*, TI Source Book 2000 (Berlin: Transparency International, 2000), www.transparency.org/publications/sourcebook.

What is Meant by "Integrity"?

Integrity is a term often used in combination with national security: securing the integrity of the national territory is a purpose explicitly stated in many national constitutions for their national armed forces. In Latin America, for instance, 11 out of 16 countries state the purpose of guaranteeing integrity in one form or another in their constitutions.[3]

Integrity is a value that is often attributed to soldiers. The US Army, for example, teaches integrity as one of the *Seven Core Army Values* taught to soldiers in the Army's Basic Combat Training: "As your integrity grows, so does the trust others place in you."[4]

Integrity is indeed a crucial value for armed forces around the world, both in its technical and its moral meaning.

Establishing and maintaining integrity in public institutions encompasses a variety of elements, which together foster an ethical environment. These elements are:

- Norms of individual and collective behaviour;
- Clearly established and respected codes of conduct;
- Leadership by example;
- Legislation and regulations;
- Effective training and regular reinforcement of that training;
- Assurance and enforcement.

Box 14.1. Definition of Integrity

In a *technical sense*, integrity is applied to objects to judge the quality of a system. Integrity in this sense means that a system is fully functional and intact. A system has integrity if it works as intended and fits seamlessly into the larger system of which it is a part. A defence system, for example, retains its integrity as long as it is not breached.

In a *moral sense*, integrity refers to the consistency of actions, values, principles and outcomes. Integrity in an individual therefore means that the person has values in which they believe and to which they stand up for. Applied to a work context, an individual has integrity if they are doing their work honestly, competently and completely. Integrity is usually measured through surveys and audits.

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3 The countries are: Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay. See: Red de Seguridad y Defensa de América Latina (Latin America Security and Defence Network, or RESDAL): *Comparative Atlas of Defence in Latin America*, 2008 Edition (Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2008).

4 US Army, "Soldier Life," www.goarmy.com/life/living_the_army_values.jsp.

Integrity in the Military

When looking at a ranking of the most trusted sectors of society, it may not seem surprising that the military gets high marks. In the 2006/2007 global corruption survey by Transparency International,[5] the military ranked as the third most trusted group in society—when expressed as a global average—only behind religious bodies and non-governmental organisations. The military was more trusted than the media, the private sector, parliament and political parties (see Figure 14.1 and Figure 14.2).

This survey suggests people in most countries trust their armed forces. Understanding this is a powerful way in which a country can go about addressing the issue of integrity building. Surveys like this can be used to help a defence ministry diagnose the level of confidence in the national defence establishment, and to build momentum for reform.[6]

In order to live up to the level of trust placed in them, militaries must constantly strive to build and maintain integrity. Failure to do so is costly and a waste of scarce resources, manifested in several ways. It is widely acknowledged that corruption raises transactions costs and uncertainty in an economy.[7] Applied to armed forces this means that money lost through corruption would have been invested either in better military equipment, or could have been used in other non-defence expenditures in more productive outlays. Money diverted from defence spending has an adverse impact on the operational effectiveness of the military forces, and reduces public trust in and acceptance of the armed forces, both nationally and internationally. Civilian and military pride in their service to the country is seriously affected when corruption becomes apparent, stripping the military of one of its most valuable assets – public trust.[8]

Nevertheless, despite the favourable average perception of the military, there is substantial variation between countries. Figure 14.2 presents a graph of the results from the 2006 and 2007 Global Corruption Barometer as they relate to the military.[9]

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5 Transparency International, *Global Corruption Barometer* (2007), www.transparency.org/policyresearch/surveys _indices/gcb/2007.

6 Dominic Scott and Mark Pyman, "Public Perceptions of Corruption in the Military in Europe and the Rest of the World," *European Security* 17:4 (December 2008), 495–515.

7 See, for example, Paolo Mauro, "Corruption and Growth," *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 110:3 (1995), 681–712; and Paolo Mauro, "Corruption and Composition of Government Expenditure," *Journal of Public Economics* 69:2 (1998), 263–79.

8 Mark Pyman, Dominic Scott, Alan Waldron and Inese Voika, "Building Integrity and Reducing Corruption Risk in Defense Establishments," *Connections: The Quarterly Journal* 7:2 (Summer 2008), 21–44.

9 Transparency International, *Global Corruption Barometer* (2007).

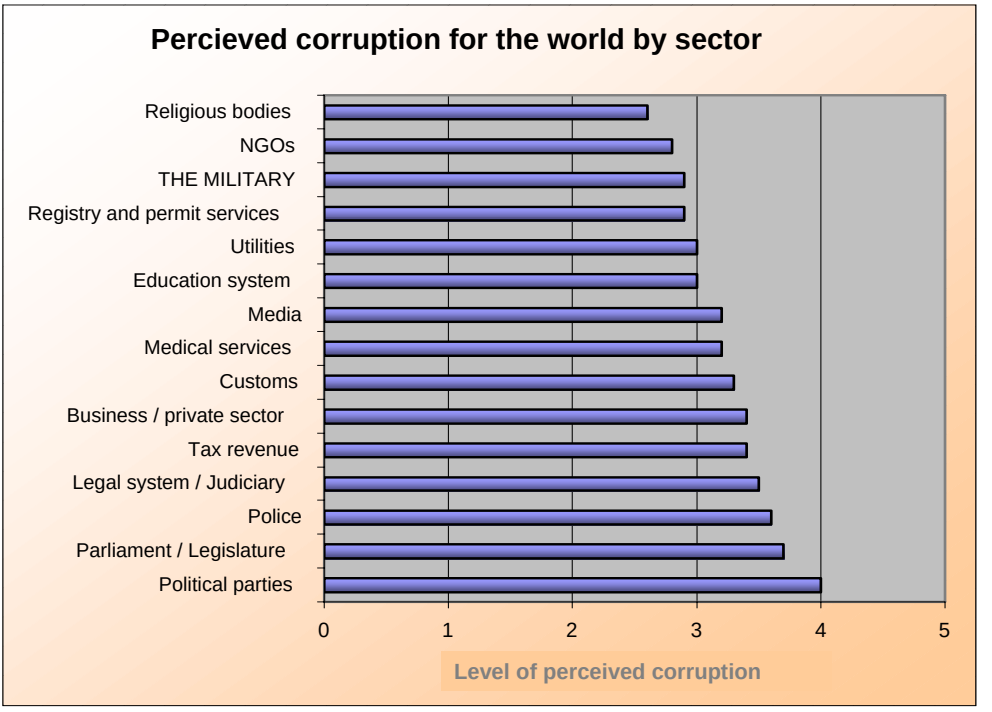

Figure 14.1. Trust in the Military vis-à-vis Other Sectors of Society.

Tools for Building Integrity

Nations must ensure that the opportunities for corrupt practices are minimised. They can do this in several ways.

One of the first steps is to analyse the kind of corruption issues that exist in the national context; these issues will vary substantially from one nation to another. For example, corruption around conscription is a major issue in Russia and many other East European states but would not be relevant to many other nations. After this assessment, appropriate remedial measures and systems and procedures to address those corruption issues can be put in place. To be successful and sustainable, it is essential for such procedures to be promoted and forcefully led by the political and military leadership. If the drivers of the reforms are not regarded as having enthusiasm or integrity themselves, this will seriously damage the commitment of defence officials and the armed forces.

While the basic concepts and foundations of an integrity system are easily understood, it is equally important that the measures being proposed to strengthen it be grounded in reality and practicality. The international defence programme at Transpar-

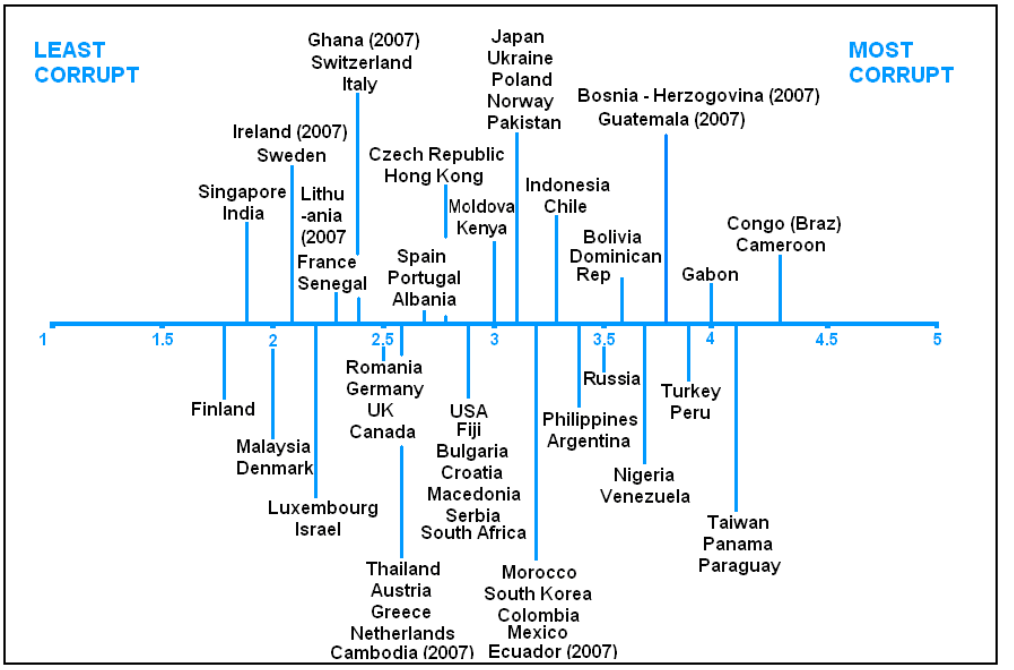

Figure 14.2. Comparisons of Levels of Trust in the Military.

ency International (UK) has been working on twelve practical mechanisms for strengthening integrity in defence establishments. These twelve mechanisms are listed in Box 14.2.

Practical tools support nations in determining their corruption risk and in training their personnel to enable them to tackle existing problems. These tools have been developed as crucial first steps in addressing corruption challenges in nations and in building integrity in defence institutions. They provide states with the necessary tools to assess their own risk, the necessary know-how to address the issue and guidance on how to tackle the issue.

Many of these tools available to defence ministries, as well as good practice in their implementation, are described in this compendium.

Conclusion

Strengthening good governance in defence establishments by building integrity as well as addressing corruption risks directly is a powerful and motivating approach. In the past, there has been a tendency to see fighting corruption as a matter of law, regulations and effective prosecution. While these are necessary measures to curb corruption, they are neither sufficient nor encouraging for government officials, armed forces, or the public. Working on building integrity is more rewarding and motivating. It is also

Box 14.2. Practical Reform Approaches

1. Raising the transparency of the defence policy and defence budgeting
2. Making a sound diagnosis of the corruption and integrity issues
3. Developing a defence integrity and corruption risk action plan
4. Making the subject discussable
5. Engaging civil society
6. Engaging defence contractors
7. Setting clear standards of business conduct for officials and officers
8. Using surveys and metrics to monitor performance
9. Establishing dedicated integrity training modules
10. Using independent monitors on public procurements
11. Raising the transparency of offsets
12. Procurement directorate reforms

Source: Detail can be found in Mark Pyman, *Building Integrity and Reducing Corruption Risk in Defence Establishments. Ten Practical Reforms* (London: Transparency International – UK, 2009), www.defenceagainstcorruption.org/index.php/publications.

more sustainable. Building integrity is also advantageous for the implementing defence ministry: it leads to an increased level of trust in the armed forces, minimises the potential for violations in procurement and other areas of defence management, and saves money through fighting inefficiencies. Ultimately, the largest benefits for senior officers are the positive effects that this has on the quality of military effectiveness and in raising public trust in the armed forces.

Recommendations

The following approach is recommended to all nations that consider initiatives to build integrity in defence establishments:

- Make your own diagnosis of corruption risks in defence and security;
- Develop support for tackling this issue across a wide range of stakeholders;
- Consider which package of measures to use – both integrity building and anti-corruption controls;
- Assemble these in a coherent and widely discussed plan; and
- Implement the plan in a low profile way and sustain it over several years.

The following chapters examine the place and the role of a variety of players in building integrity and reducing corruption risks in defence establishments. As can be expected, one of the chapters looks at the defence ministry as the main player within the executive branch of government. Other chapters examine the role of the individual person, regulatory frameworks, parliaments and audit offices, the ombudsman institution, the defence industry, the civil society and the media, and international organizations. Each chapter presents principles of countering corruption through building integrity, increasing transparency and improving accountability, and provides examples of good practice in various settings.