PRESS RELEASE

TI welcomes Bangladesh's decision to sign UN Convention

Berlin/Dhaka 15 February 2007: Transparency International (TI) welcomes and commends the decision by the government of Bangladesh to accede to the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC). The decision is most appropriate and prudent for Bangladesh's national interest.

TI has been following with keen interest and expectation the importance attached at the highest level of the new caretaker government to combating corruption with a comprehensive approach as reflected in the statement to the nation by Dr. Fakhruddin Ahmed, the Chief Adviser leading the interim government on 22 January.

"The main thrust being on making the forthcoming national elections free from the influence of corruption and illicit money, we are inspired by some of the initiatives taken by Dr. Ahmed's government, which include measures for an independent judiciary and reconstitution of the Election and Anti-Corruption commissions, aiming at making these vital institutions truly independent and effective," said Huguette Labelle, Chair of TI.

"As much as we have been concerned over the years by Bangladesh's poor score in TI's Corruption Perceptions Index, we are deeply encouraged now by the significant recent steps sending strong signals nationally and internationally about the highest level of commitment for real change," said Labelle.

"The initiatives reflect the demands and aspirations of every citizen of Bangladesh. If properly implemented with supportive legal and institutional reforms the basis will be created for effective and sustainable control of corruption and establishment of transparent and accountable governance in the country", said Dr. Iftekhar Zaman, Executive Director of TI-Bangladesh.

TI's secretariat and TIB are ready, within their capacity, to provide any assistance that may be needed to expedite the process of Bangladesh's accession to the UN Convention, as well as implementation of other reform initiatives commenced by the government.