

Minister Helen McEntee TD
Minister for Justice
Department of Justice

By email

10 June 2020

Dear Minister,

I write on behalf of the Board of Transparency International (TI) Ireland to raise our concerns about the exclusion of any substantive representation from civil society organisations on the Advisory Council ('The Council') on Economic Crime and Corruption.

TI Ireland welcomed the creation of the Council as part of the Government's Implementation Plan for tackling economic crime and corruption, and was encouraged by the allocation of two places out of six non-government members on the Council for civil society representation.

Notwithstanding the fact that TI Ireland is the only civil society organisation (CSO) dedicated to the fight against corruption and economic crime in the jurisdiction, we were surprised and disappointed that there will be no opportunity for any CSO representation in the Council's deliberations or anyone from a CSO with dedicated experience or qualifications in anti-corruption measures on the Council.

Furthermore, while we welcome that gender balance was a criterion for selection to the Council, we believe it ought to have been sought across each of the representative panels: business, academia and civil society. It is disappointing that this is not the case.

As a State Party to the [United Nations Convention against Corruption](#), you will be aware that Ireland is bound Article 13 which requires States:

'to promote the active participation of individuals and groups outside the public sector, such as civil society, non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations, in the prevention of and the fight against corruption and to raise public awareness regarding the existence, causes and gravity of and the threat posed by corruption'.

Indeed, your Department's ['Review of structures and strategies to prevent, investigate and penalise economic crime and corruption'](#) ('The Hamilton Review') noted that:

'[international actors including] Transparency International(T.I), a global civil society organisation (CSO) leading the fight against corruption among CSOs, have through their various monitoring mechanisms, ensured that our systems and procedures are up to international standards. These international monitoring bodies have taken this State to task where they consider it to have fallen short of international standards. Constructive engagements between Ireland and the various international bodies have contributed in the significant gains made in this State in the area of combatting corporate, economic and regulatory crime'.

However, TI, through its national chapter, will not be invited to provide any formal input into this process or engage in the deliberations of the Advisory Council in any capacity.

It is vital that government receives critical analysis and expert civil society participation in the development of its future anti-corruption strategy. We would therefore ask that you provide an opportunity for participation of a representative from a dedicated anti-corruption organisation, such as TI Ireland on the Council in whatever capacity is feasible and appropriate.

Yours sincerely,

Olivia Lally
Chairperson

Cc:

Mr James Hamilton
Chairperson, Advisory Council on Economic Crime and Corruption

Ms Mirella Dummar Frahi
Chief, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Civil Society Section

Ms Hanne Juncher
Executive Secretary, Council of Europe Group of States against Corruption Secretariat

Ms Eileen Lawlor
Secretary, On behalf of the Oireachtas delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

Dr Delia Ferreira Rubio
Chairperson, Transparency International

Ms Helen Darbishire
Chair, UNCAC Civil Society Coalition