

The West's "Weaponization" Of Corruption Indexes: Thailand Categorized as a Corrupt Failed State

By [Joseph Thomas](#)

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For the Southeast Asian state of Thailand, overcoming corruption could be one of several essential steps required to fully tap the human and natural resources this already influential ASEAN state has benefited from for centuries. However, to tackle corruption, the nation must first define what it is, and what it hopes to achieve by confronting and overcoming it.

Currently, the focus unfortunately appears to be on addressing Thailand's score upon the so-called Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) put out by alleged nongovernmental organisation (NGO), Transparency International.

 Transparency International Leverages CPI as a Geopolitical Weapon

Despite describing itself as an NGO, Transparency International's funding is dominated by the governments of the United States and the European Union.

More specifically, [as listed on Transparency International's own website](#), its funding comes specifically from the US State Department, the European Commission, the US State Department's National Endowment for Democracy (NED) and controversial Open Society, chaired by convicted financial criminal George Soros.

Such funding presents an alarming conflict of interest, considering that these are the same interests who, in Thailand and across the rest of ASEAN, have worked actively to overthrow governments and undermine local institutions, seeking to overwrite them with organisations and institutions promoted by and serving foreign interests via NED and Open Society specifically.

Thus, Thailand's score on the CPI is more a result of politically-motivated interference in Thailand's internal affairs than it is an honest appraisal of the nation's corruption. Thailand's low score and pressure placed upon it by the West to improve this score results not from genuine concern regarding corruption, but instead from the fact that the current government successfully ousted a regime sponsored by and working for Western special interests.

Attempting to "improve" Thailand's score on a politically-motivated and thus illegitimate index is, to say the least, an exercise in futility.

Despite this glaring reality, there are some in the government who believe improving the nation's standings on this index should still be a priority. They do so not because a better score will actually address corruption in Thailand in any meaningful manner, thus giving

Thais greater confidence and trust in government institutions, but to instead impress foreign investors who a nation like Thailand should not be depending on to begin with.

It is an approach doomed to fail because it is an approach that fundamentally misdiagnoses the problem and thus prescribes the wrong solution.

Alternative Paths

In reality, corruption in Thailand cannot be defined or addressed by Transparency International's politically-motivated, thus meaningless metrics. Instead, corruption in Thailand, if understood as unprofessionalism and impropriety among government institutions, hindering both the efficient administration of the nation as well as the government's interaction with the people and local businesses, must be confronted by local interests *for* local interests.

The Anti-Corruption Organization of Thailand (ACT) ([website in Thai only](#)), comprised of business leaders, local media and activists, seeks to confront corruption in Thailand not to improve the nation's standings on a meaningless foreign-devised scale, but to improve the efficiency of government institutions to better facilitate their administration of the country, to make doing business easier and fairer as well as to improve faith and confidence across Thai society in the government institutions they depend on for the smooth functioning of society.

As ACT incrementally achieves these goals, it helps improve and strengthen Thailand, even if such efforts are not reflected on meaningless indexes like the CPI.

Their activities include exposing corruption using their ties to the media, holding events to raise public awareness regarding both their rights and how they are being violated by corruption and by working with the government to pass legislation to rein in corruption on various levels of society.

In the end, ACT is attempting to solve corruption for Thailand, with their "index score" determined by the improved efficiency of government institutions and the public's trust in them.

ACT has so far proven itself impartial, calling out the previous government of Yingluck Shinawatra for its blatant and systemic corruption, as well as condemning impropriety and nepotism amid the current government. Unlike Transparency International and its CPI which only seeks to leverage "corruption perceptions" as a political weapon, ACT is fighting corruption for the sake of fighting corruption, because its membership is comprised of those directly affected by it, regardless of who heads the national government.

The current government should work (and is working) closely with groups like ACT to expose and rein in corruption toward very specific goals such as improving the efficiency of government institutions in the administration of their responsibilities and improving public trust in these institutions. Rather than citing the meaningless CPI devised by the politically-motivated Transparency International, Thailand should develop its own metrics for measuring both the level of corruption and gauge success in confronting it.

Thailand, and other developing nations, must also devise a means of communicating their progress in confronting corruption to the world in order to sidestep the "weaponisation" of indexes like Transparency International's CPI.

By confronting corruption, nations strengthen themselves not only within by improving the efficiency with which resources are utilised toward the progress of their respective nations, they also strengthen themselves against foreign interests that would seek to exploit “corruption perceptions” and use it to seek leverage over them. In this sense, fighting corruption is not only good for business, it is essential for national security.

Joseph Thomas is chief editor of Thailand-based geopolitical journal, [The New Atlas](#) and contributor to the online magazine “[New Eastern Outlook](#)”.

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