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New initiative tests access to information in 21 countries

Berlin/Madrid, 3 May 2010 - The public right to request information held by public authorities will be tested through a global initiative to obtain information on 21 countries' implementation of anti-corruption efforts.

The [Tell us what you've done!](#) initiative, launched to mark World Press Freedom Day, by [Access Info Europe](#) and [Transparency International](#) (TI), is an attempt to verify whether governments are complying with the [United Nations Convention against Corruption](#) and other anti-corruption conventions. As part of this initiative, TI chapters, members of the UNCAC Coalition and members of the [Freedom of Information Advocates Network](#), will jointly file information requests in 21 countries. The goal is to obtain comparative data on the levels of compliance with the treaties.

"With this action we are testing government willingness to be transparent about their anti-corruption implementation," said Gillian Dell of Transparency International. *"The number of cases where power is abused for private gain uncovered daily by enterprising journalists, shows that access to public information is vital."*

Established by UN in 1993, [World Press Freedom Day](#) is this year dedicated to the Right to Know – the right of all citizens to have access to information held by public entities.

"We have a right to know what governments know and what they are doing. The right to know is essential for journalists and civil society to function as watchdogs, to identify corruption, and to hold public officials accountable," said Helen Darbishire, Executive Director of Access Info Europe.

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Notes for Editors

- The [United Nations Convention against Corruption \(UNCAC\)](#) is the most comprehensive global legal framework for combating corruption. It is a binding agreement [ratified by 144 states](#) on standards and requirements for preventing, detecting, investigating and sanctioning corruption.
- The initiative, launched on 3 May 2010, with the joint submission of requests for information in 21 countries will culminate in November/ December 2011 with presentation of the results at the 4th UNCAC Conference of States Parties in Morocco.
- The countries that will participate in the survey include: Armenia, Argentina, Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Chile, Egypt, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Guatemala, Hungary, Israel, Liberia, Netherlands, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, UK.