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# DISMISSALS FOLLOWING CONTROVERSIAL CIVICS TEST FURTHER WEAKEN INDONESIA'S ANTI-CORRUPTION AGENCY KPK

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The decision to dismiss prominent anti-corruption investigators and commissioners will cast a shadow over the independence of Indonesia's Corruption Eradication Commission (Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi), also known as KPK, Transparency International said today. Recent weakening of Indonesia's main anti-graft body undermines the country's anti-corruption progress and runs counter to its international commitments.

On Tuesday, more than a thousand of KPK employees took a civil servant's oath, allowing them to continue serving as the agency's staff. Excluded from the ceremony were 75 individuals who failed the civic knowledge test last month. Reportedly, 24 of those who had failed the test will undergo further civic education, while 51 have been sacked.

"Among those who failed the test were several senior staff and prominent KPK investigators. Despite public outcry, the KPK's current leadership have suspended or fired these individuals, which raises serious questions about the future of the agency and the very purpose of the exam," said Danang Widoyoko, Secretary General of Transparency International Indonesia.

Concerns over the [appropriateness of some of the questions](#) have mired the test in controversy and resulted in public calls to disregard the results. Responding to criticism, President Joko Widodo also [cautioned against firing](#) the staff who did not pass the exam.

The requirement for KPK staff to undergo an examination to become civil servants follows the 2019 legislative amendments to reform the agency. Other changes have included the introduction of a supervisory board, curtailing KPK's investigation and prosecutorial powers as well as a requirement for every KPK investigator to carry out their duties under police coordination and supervision.

At the time, Transparency International [called on the lawmakers to reject the law](#). Transparency International Indonesia's [assessment of KPK's performance](#) points to the weakening of the agency following the reform. Last month, the Constitutional Court of Indonesia refused to conduct a judicial review of the 2019 law, fuelling more concerns.

These reforms run counter to the [Indonesian government's commitment](#) to ensure the independence and effectiveness of the anti-corruption agency, as required by the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) and the Jakarta Principles for Anti-Corruption Agencies.

Additionally, during the UN General Assembly Special Session against Corruption, UNGASS, happening this week, Indonesia's government is signing on to a [political declaration](#) that commits countries to enable anti-corruption bodies to carry out their oversight functions effectively and freely, without undue influence.

Delia Ferreira Rubio, Chair of Transparency International said: "Independent anti-corruption agencies are a vital pillar of a well-functioning anti-corruption framework. By weakening the KPK, Indonesia's government risks undoing previous anti-corruption progress and losing among the public and international community. We stand in solidarity with the Indonesian people who need a strong and capable KPK to hold powerful to account."

Transparency International urges President Joko Widodo to use his executive powers for initiating the reversal of these damaging reforms to ensure KPK's capacity to perform its important role, in adherence with Indonesia's international commitments.

## Notes to editors

Since its establishment in 2003, KPK gained national and [international prominence](#) for its track record in prosecuting high-level corruption and has often been [credited for Indonesia's improvement](#) on the Corruption Perceptions Index.

Transparency International's [Global Corruption Barometer 2020 – Asia](#) showed that KPK is one of the best-known anti-corruption agencies in the region. The results also show that the majority of Indonesians also [approved of KPK's work](#).

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