

Khaled Saqqaf presents in Washington DC at the TRACE Annual Member Forum

TRACE (A leading anti-bribery training and compliance organization) where Khaled Saqqaf, special counsel, Head of the Corporate & Commercial department in both the Jordan & Iraq offices, presented during their Annual Member Forum in Washington D.C.

The title, 'Anti-Corruption Challenges in Iraq & Afghanistan', dealt with the major challenges Iraq faces in combating corruption. In part 1, Khaled presented an overview of the main Iraqi laws and regulations relating to anti-corruption and the steps taken in 2008 to combat corruption (particularly Iraq's accession to the UNCAC), as well as reviewing Iraq's main anti-corruption bodies, and particularly how effective they are in performing their functions.

In part 2, the focus Khaled presented on was the tendering process which dealt with; Public Contracts, Contracting Departments within the Governments, Financial Requirements, Methods of Contracting, Notice of Tenders and finally the Tender Periods which leads into Final Approval. The conclusions of the presentation noted that;

OECD conducted a public procurement review on Iraq, Improving Transparency within Government Procurement Procedures in Iraq: OECD Benchmark Report, and found that Iraq's 2004 procurement law and supporting regulations provided extensive provisions adequately dealing with the whole of the procurement process.

However, the following problems were identified:

- Little co-ordination of procurement practices across government organizations, and relatively non-existent co-ordination with Iraq's other anti-corruption agencies
- Lack of transparency in practice.
- Problems relating to sub-contracting (no-accountability).

The Final Recommendations were;

- Encourage and reward the reporting of corruption cases.
- Organize awareness campaigns about the causes of corruption, its negative impacts, and international best practices to combat it.
- Establish an independent committee with federal budget, which should have the competence to scrutinize public procurement contracts, and to initiate proceedings against offenders.

Khaled continued by explaining further relevant legislation, steps taken in 2008 to combat corruption, the establishment of anti-corruption agencies in Iraq, and the Iraqi approach of creating several authorities in charge of combating corruption in Iraq; each with its own individual competences.

For a full copy of both presentations, please contact Khaled Saqqaf at: k.saqqaf@tamimi.com