Project Title: Civil Society Oversight of Police Services in Latin America

Client/Host Agency: Transparency International UK – Defence and Security Programme (TI-DSP)
http://www.transparency.org
http://www.ti-defence.org.uk

and

Transparency International chapters in Honduras, Colombia, and Peru
http://asjhonduras.com/cms/
http://www.transparenciacolombia.org.co/
http://www.proetica.org.pe/

Background: Transparency International (TI) is the global civil society organization leading the fight to end the devastating impact of corruption on men, women and children around the world. Since its founding in 1993, TI has played a lead role in building momentum for the anti-corruption movement. TI is a global network including more than 100 locally established national chapters and chapters-in-formation. These bodies fight corruption in the national arena in a number of ways. They bring together relevant players from government, civil society, business and the media to promote transparency in elections, in public administration, in procurement and in business. TI’s global network of chapters and contacts also use advocacy campaigns to lobby governments to implement anti-corruption reforms.

Transparency International UK’s Defence and Security Programme (TI-DSP), based in London, has become the authoritative actor on empowering civil society, the private sector, and governments to promote greater transparency and reduce corruption in international arms transfers as well as in defence and security establishments. During its time, the programme has constructively worked and built relationships with defence companies, governments, civil society, NATO and other international organisations, academic institutions, and think-tanks to reduce corruption levels in the defence industry.

Corruption in police is pervasive, continuing and not bounded by rank. Yet the boundary between ‘corrupt’ and ‘non-corrupt’ activities is difficult to define. The causes of police corruption include but are not limited to factors that are intrinsic to policing, the nature of police
organisations, the nature of the culture within the organisation, the opportunities for corruption presented by the political environment, and finally the nature and extent of the effort put in to controlling corruption. One way in which police organisations can counter corruption within their ranks is to have an external oversight or monitoring mechanism. Some countries such as Honduras have utilised civil society organisations to monitor how they go about reforming their police organisation. Yet there is insufficient information on how civil society organisations can positively play this role. This workshop project will aim to fill this gap by examining the Honduras experience and the potential to introduce similar initiatives in Colombia and/or Peru.

Objective:

TI and TI-DSP would like the assistance of a SIPA team to investigate how civil society organisations can effectively provide external monitoring of police agencies, with reference to the experience in Honduras and opportunities to test similar initiatives in Colombia and/or Peru. This will aid in detecting and limiting instances of police corruption. This understanding, as well as any good practices that the project picks up on, will allow TI-DSP to develop an evidence base from which to advocate for positive and meaningful reform.

The main questions that need to be answered are:

1. In which countries have civil society organisations provided meaningful oversight of police?
2. How are such oversight bodies structured and what general terms of reference do they operate within?
3. Can judgements be made on their effectiveness in limiting police abuse – notably corruption?
4. How effective has civil society oversight of police been in Honduras?
5. What potential exists to introduce similar initiatives in Colombia and/or Peru?

Tasks:

The tasks required for this project are expected to include:

- Desk research and informational interviews with senior police officials who have had dealings with external oversight agencies monitoring their actions and behavior.

- Field research in Honduras, Peru and/or Colombia. This would include interviewing people within the local TI chapter who are familiar with the subject, as well as with external people that the national chapter has recommended. This could include selected donors, government officials, civil society representatives, and other experts on police oversight.

- Analysis of desk and field research findings, and development of a related report.

Deliverables:

The expected deliverables include: (1) a detailed workplan; (2) a draft
and final report on which countries utilise CSOs for police oversight; how these are structured; what are their relative strengths and weaknesses; what good practices can be useful for other countries who wish to adopt a similar model; and what are the pitfalls that countries should avoid, with specific reference to Honduras, Colombia and/or Peru; (3) presentation of initial findings to TI-DSP/TI-S through video conferencing or in-person; and (4) presentation of final findings and recommendations at SIPA in early May 2014.

For the team’s final report, it would be good practice to regularly share drafts with TI-DSP to make sure that the project is heading in the appropriate direction.

**Requirements:** Ideal candidates for the project team (consisting of approximately six members) would have the following interest, skills and experience:

- Interest in local governance;
- Interest in how CSOs can improve oversight of police services for greater transparency and accountability;
- Knowledge of and perhaps experience working in one of the countries in the study;
- Fluency in Spanish (for at least half the team);
- Familiarity with qualitative and quantitative research methods, including field research tools;
- Strong analytical and writing skills;
- Ability to work effectively in a team with a minimal supervision; and
- Strong communication skills and ability to converse with senior government officials and donor representatives.

**Logistics:** TI-DSP will arrange for the team to receive relevant background documents, will provide guidance and feedback on draft deliverables, and will provide logistical support (where possible) for the team’s field visits to the Latin American chapters. TI-DSP, in conjunction with the relevant chapters, will attempt to line up a number of interviews for the students prior to their arrival in-country.