

Trump comes out in favour of corruption

Published: January 13, 2026, 2:22 pm

The corruption rollout that is now the characteristic of Trump's presidency continues today. As [the FT has reported](#):

Donald Trump has ordered the Department of Justice to halt the enforcement of a US anti-corruption law that bars Americans from bribing foreign government officials to win business.

They added:

"It's going to mean a lot more business for America," the president said in the Oval Office after signing an executive order on Monday directing Pam Bondi, the US attorney-general, to pause enforcement of the 1977 Foreign Corrupt Practices Act.

From 2003 onwards I spent a great deal of time for well over a decade fighting the abuse that takes place in tax havens around the world.

Some of that abuse was promoted by multinational corporations that used these places to reduce their tax bills by the use of artificial transactions that shifted their profits into those places. I created [country-by-country reporting](#) to tackle that issue. It is now a legal requirement in more than 70 countries worldwide.

Some of that abuse was by wealthy individuals. [Automatic information exchange was the answer](#), and we won that in 2015 after long campaigns against many tax havens on this issue.

And then there was the third element to this issue, which was most especially linked to corruption, which the secrecy provided by tax havens facilitated. Much of this corruption came from the payment of bribes to government officials for the award of contracts. More came from the diversion of the benefit of these contracts to private individuals, again hidden by tax haven abuse. Precisely because of the pernicious use of tax havens in this way, I renamed these practices as secrecy jurisdictions, [offering a definition of](#) what that meant and why secrecy was the real issue of concern. Measures to crack that secrecy have been taken - although they have not gone far enough, and

the abuse facilitated by tax havens and the accountants, lawyers and banks that operate within them (who I describe as 'the secrecy providers') continues to this day.

Now Trump wants to explicitly facilitate and encourage that corruption that has been so pernicious and such a threat to good government and governance worldwide, whilst fleecing many developing countries, in particular, of billions of dollars of funds that are their rightful property.

This is the encouragement of corruption happening in plain sight. I am sickened and appalled. One day I hope that those who are facilitating this might be prosecuted further doing so. In the meantime, tax haven operators must be rubbing their hands with glee. The age of cash in the suitcase being presented to the tax haven bank looks as though it is coming back.

I hadn't imagined Trump would sink this far. Where will he go next?