

# Statement by President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. on the National Security Study Memorandum on the Fight Against Corruption

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Strengthening the resilience of rights-respecting democracies is one of the defining challenges of our era. Corruption eats away at the foundations of democratic societies. It makes government less effective, wastes public resources, and exacerbates inequalities in access to services, making it harder for families to provide for their loved ones. Corruption attacks the foundations of democratic institutions, drives and intensifies extremism, and makes it easier for authoritarian regimes to corrode democratic governance.

Corruption is a risk to our national security, and we must recognize it as such.

Today, I am issuing a National Security Study Memorandum on the Fight Against Corruption to establish combatting corruption as a core U.S. national security interest. With this Memorandum, I am directing departments and agencies to make recommendations that will significantly bolster the ability of the U.S. government to combat corruption.

The United States will lead by example and in partnership with allies, civil society, and the private sector to fight the scourge of corruption. But this is a mission for the entire world. And, we must all stand in support of courageous citizens around the globe who are demanding honest, transparent governance.

Fighting corruption is not just good governance. It is self-defense. It is patriotism, and it's essential to the preservation of our democracy and our future.