



NBI
National Business Initiative

NBI Newsflash, 10 December 2019

The Ethical Leadership We Need Requires the Private Sector to Introspect and Act

The **National Business Initiative (NBI)** hosted a Thought Leadership Series (TLS) last week in Sandton to constructively reflect on the private sector's role in urgently and systemically addressing one of South Africa's biggest and most complex challenges - **corruption**. The purpose of this TLS was to provide insights into how the private sector is driving anti-corruption efforts and enabling ethical leadership; and to explore what more needs to be done to turn the tide.

Our panellists:

- **David Lewis:** Executive Director, Corruption Watch
- **Gideon Pogrand:** Director, GIBS Ethics and Governance Think Tank
- **Mildred Nkopane:** Chief Director, Integrity Management, Gauteng Office of the Premier
- **Makgotso Letsitsi:** Head of Transformation and Citizenship, KPMG
- **Gugu McLaren-Ushewokunze:** Head of Social Transformation, NBI

Our contributors shared their perspectives on the topic, with the following highlights:

- The National Anti-Corruption Strategy process, driven by government, is an important opportunity for all sectors to collectively commit to a comprehensive shared approach to addressing anti-

corruption. Private sector participation is fundamental to achieving scale and success of the strategy.

- The level of urgency and change within the private sector was debated by the panel with some contributors arguing that the private sector has regressed in the last few years and that there has been a drop in business ethics. Other contributors argued that the picture is more nuanced and that overall, there have been important strides made in the right direction. However, it was agreed that the economic and societal changes and pressures are increasing quicker than the private sector is evolving to deal with them.
- For the most part, the private sector has focused on internal systems, processes and organisational culture to address corruption, but it is becoming crucial for business to also have an outward-looking approach to deal with the systemic issues.
- There was a call to have conversations that critically interrogated the structural and systemic drivers of corruption within the South African context of inequality and inequity.

This dialogue marked the first of a series that will continue to deepen the discussion on corruption to support action.

To find out more about the implementation of the Ethical Leadership and Anti-Corruption programme, a Presidential Jobs Summit commitment, please contact Thuthula Ndunge: ThuthulaN@nbi.org.za



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The National Business Initiative (NBI) is an independent and voluntary coalition of South African and multinational businesses launched in 1995 by the then President, Nelson Mandela

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