

SPECIAL EVENT

IFF in developing countries: Stolen Assets and the Role of the Media and Civil Society (CSOs)

9 November 2017, 4 p.m. - 5.30 p.m.

The panel consisted of four presentations by

- Hisham Allam, an award-winning investigative journalist who has contributed to the cross-border investigation “Swiss Leaks”, the Panama Papers leaks, and the recent Paradise Papers leak
- David Ugolor, a leading Nigerian anti-corruption and environmental justice activist and Executive Director of the Africa Network for Environment and Economic Justice (ANEEJ)
- Henriette Kötter, a Senior Policy at the BMZ, the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development in the Division for Sectoral and thematic policies; governance, democracy; rule of law responsible for anti-corruption and illicit financial flows issues
- Agatino Camarda is a co-founder of the Civil Forum for Asset Recovery – CiFAR based in Berlin, Germany, and leads its project implementation, fundraising and networking.

The panelists addressed three main questions :

- What was the impact of major leaks like the Panama Papers and Paradise Papers on developing countries and their anticorruption commitments?
- How can the voices of investigative journalists from developing countries be strengthened?
- How can civil society contribute to asset recovery efforts?

David Ugolor outlined the importance of Panama/Paradise Papers Leak, and Nigerian civil society in creating political will to demand the repatriation of stolen assets. This process which began 2016 with London Summit on Anticorruption was then supported by Nigerian Civil Society and Trade Union.

Hisham Allam described the chances and challenges of cooperation between the investigative journalists. He outlined the advantages of working under an umbrella with other investigative journalists, under strict rules for collaboration that give equality to each journalist.

Henriette Kötter described BMZ's commitment to strengthening civil society in developing countries to contribute to the fight against illicit financial flows. She have the overview about the holistic approach of the German Development Cooperation in fighting illicit financial flows including prevention, investigation and asset recovery. She then referred to the various means of supporting civil society like political dialogue, mainstreaming civil society participation and improving the environment for civil society actors.

Agatino Camarda presented his organisation's work with young investigative journalists in financial investigation and asset recovery in the Mediterranean. He outlined, that more civil society actors could work on asset recovery, once it is not seen so much as a highly technical subject. He also presented the connection between the asaset recovery and the work of civil society.