

Exactly what should be done about the issue, however, remains highly contentious. There are multiple potential options, after all, with an international court being just one.

Others include expanding the purview of the International Criminal Court or other regional human rights courts. Likewise, the jurisdiction of national judicial systems could be enlarged to be able to deal with allegations of corruption in other countries.

Another possibility could be to coordinate national legislation – and priority – in developed countries, aimed at seizing the assets of or denying visas to corrupt officials. While this would not result in jail time, it would make it harder to spend ill-gotten wealth while simultaneously emphasising international disapproval.

Importantly, some countries have become increasingly aggressive in this regard in recent years, particularly the United States and Switzerland. Watchdog groups say these nascent initiatives are important and already having impact.

“Over the last eight years there’s been growing official action against kleptocracy in the U.S. and elsewhere,” Arvind Ganesan, the head of the business and human rights programme at Human Rights Watch, told IPS.

“Strengthening those efforts now – meaning fully resourcing and expanding them, and pushing other countries to put in place similar policies – will build momentum towards an International Anti-Corruption Court.”

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