

Ivanov Says He Doesn't Trust Transparency International Rating

March 13, 2012

The  Moscow Times

Presidential administration head Sergei Ivanov said Tuesday that he doesn't trust rankings of countries put out by Western organizations and said that Russia should come up with its own index, RIA-Novosti reported.

Ivanov named the ranking system of anti-corruption watchdog Transparency International, whose annual Corruption Perceptions Index is perhaps the best-known ranking of countries according to the pervasiveness of public sector corruption, as an example of one he does not judge to be reliable.

"I don't really trust the many ratings, most of all Western, where different organizations, such as Transparency International, arbitrarily put [countries] in one or another place," Ivanov said, responding to a journalist's question about president-elect Vladimir Putin's recently stated goal of raising Russia's ranking in terms of investment climate from 120 to 20 in the world.

"We need to create our own rating," he said.

Ivanov also said lack of infrastructure has a more detrimental effect on the country's business climate than corruption.

He said the problem "cannot be solved overnight — it is a long-term task, and it is linked not so much with fighting corruption as with creating normal infrastructure."

"I am sure that in the coming years, if we want to improve the investment climate, we need to invest much more in normal transportation infrastructure," Ivanov said.

Incidentally, government critics say development of Russia's transportation infrastructure has been a particularly corrupt sphere of public spending. Last year, the issue of a \$6 billion road for the Winter Olympics in Sochi came under particular fire from the public.

On Transparency International's 2011 Corruption Perceptions Index, Russia was tied for 143rd place out of 182 countries ranked.

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