

**GLOBAL FORUM III ON FIGHTING CORRUPTION
AND SAFEGUARDING INTEGRITY**
(Seoul, 29-31 May, 2003)

“ONGOING CHALLENGES, SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES”

FINAL DECLARATION

1. For three days, government Ministers, parliamentarians, and officials from 123 countries, representatives of intergovernmental organizations, and experts have come together in Seoul to the Global Forum III on Fighting Corruption and Safeguarding Integrity (GFIII), under the theme of “Ongoing Challenges, Shared Responsibilities”, to continue the discussion on the challenges of corruption, and to find the best ways to effectively prevent and combat corruption, including its root causes, and to safeguard integrity.

2. Participants appreciated that GF III, building upon the accomplishments of the previous Forums¹, gave particular emphasis to the practicality of the various measures against corruption. Participants have taken note of the annexed chairperson’s reports on the four Ministerial Roundtables (Ministerial Vision Statement), and on the five Workshops (Workshop Report), with due regard to the workshop outcomes of the Second Global Forum and developments thereafter. Discussions in the Roundtables and Workshops centered upon “Law Enforcement I: Legal Instruments”, “Law Enforcement II: International Cooperation”, “Transparency and Integrity”, “Democracy, Economic Development, and Culture”, and “IT & Media”.

CURRENT STATUS AND ISSUES

3. Participants express their solidarity and support to the anti-corruption efforts, including safeguarding integrity, undertaken within the framework of the United Nations, and take note with appreciation of the various regional and other efforts undertaken.²

4. In their common pursuit of integrity, economic growth, and sustainable development, participants also reaffirm the call by government leaders at international fora such as the Doha Development Agenda Ministerial, the Monterrey UN Conference

¹ Global Forum on Fighting Corruption was launched by the US government and held in Washington D.C., in 1999. The Second Global Forum was held in 2001, at The Hague, Netherlands, hosted by the Government of The Netherlands.

² These may, among others, include the efforts being made in the context of the G-8, the World Bank, World Customs Organization (WCO), the Global Organisation of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC), the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Asian Development Bank/OECD Anticorruption Initiative for the Asia-Pacific Region, the Asian African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO), the European Union, the Stability Pact Anticorruption Initiative (SPAI), the Council of Baltic Sea States (CBSS), the Organization of American States (OAS), the Central American Integration System (SICA), the African Union, the Global Coalition for Africa (GCA), the League of Arab States, and the Middle East and North African Group.

on Financing for Development, the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development, and the Second Ministerial Conference of the Community of Democracies held in Seoul, for national commitments and actions toward transparency in government processes and budgetary processes, implementation of good governance practices, the promotion of integrity and ethics, and enforcement of anticorruption measures.

5. Having noted with profound concern the current challenges in the fight against corruption, participants pay special attention to, *inter alia*, transnational corruption buttressed by funds of illicit nature, and are seriously concerned about links between corruption and transnational crimes. Participants urge further that sustained action be taken on corruption issues in general.

6. Participants also express concern with corruption in the private sector, which seriously undermines public faith in the accountability and integrity of the sector. Participants hereby concur on the urgent need to promote organizational integrity firmly based on good corporate governance, and take note of actions taken by governments to address these problems.

PLAN OF ACTION

General Principles

7. Convinced that corruption should be condemned and eradicated for the sake of the universally held value of integrity, participants declare that cultural and historical particularity should not be used as a pretext for justifying corruption, or conversely, for labeling certain societies as corrupt. At the same time, anti-corruption measures tailored to the specific circumstances of a particular society should be devised in order effectively to deliver practical solutions.

8. Recognizing that corruption has evolved into a transnational and trans-sectoral phenomenon, participants call for a holistic approach, which not only involves the public sector but also the private sector, civil society, researchers, the media, and the relevant international organisations in the prevention of, and the fight against, corruption.

9. Participants stress the importance of both measures to detect, investigate, and punish corruption, and preventive measures as a tool to take systematic action against corruption; and welcome the broad range of existing national, regional, and international mechanisms that contain stipulations on the above, and new initiatives in this regard.

National Level

10. With a view to effectively preventing and curbing corruption at the national level, participants deem it necessary to, *inter alia*:

- (a) ensure the independence and the integrity of the judiciary;
- (b) ensure the integrity and effectiveness of law enforcement agencies;
- (c) promote and safeguard good governance, accountability, transparency, integrity and ethics in all sectors of society;
- (d) attach particular importance to government action with respect to corruption in the private sector, and strengthen countermeasures against private sector corruption thereby promoting good corporate governance;
- (e) encourage efforts to fight corruption by taking full advantage of new technology, especially information technology, with due regard to fundamental rights;
- (f) support the work of the media and civil society in preventing and detecting corruption.

International Cooperation

11. Recognizing the importance of international cooperation in combating corruption, participants recommend that countries, *inter alia*:

- (a) ratify and effectively implement as soon as possible, the already concluded relevant conventions on anti-corruption measures;
- (b) fully support the efforts undertaken within the United Nations for the negotiation of a comprehensive and effective Convention Against Corruption and its prompt finalization, and welcome the offer made by the Government of Mexico to host the high level political signing conference at the end of this year;
- (c) closely and actively cooperate in taking the necessary measures to combat money laundering and the transfer of funds and assets of illicit origin derived from acts of corruption, and devising effective ways and means concerning the return of such funds and assets to countries of origin;
- (d) share efforts and responsibilities in active multilateral technical assistance to build the capacity to fight corruption, which has a considerable negative impact on development;
- (e) call upon the appropriate international organizations to facilitate the sharing of information about the various domestic measures and best practices;
- (f) call upon the international community to support sustainable development in order to make societies less vulnerable to corruption.

THE WAY FORWARD

12. Reaffirming the significance of the Global Forum as an international arena for constructive deliberations on practical solutions against the scourge of corruption, participants recognize the importance and usefulness of the Global Forum process and the outcomes derived from these governmental gatherings.

The Network

13. Participants agree to establish a list of contact points called the Global Anti-Corruption Network in order to promote immediate cooperation among them within the framework of the Global Forum:

- (a) the future host of the next Global Forum in chairing the Organizing Committee (OC) will work on the establishment of the Network with OC members and others;
- (b) the purpose of the Network would be to facilitate communication and coordination, at the request of the OC, in areas of planning, and the overall organization process of the Global Forum;
- (c) participants may want to review the role, functions, and the existence of the Network at the next GF with the view to maximizing its utility in serving the goals of the Global Forum and avoiding duplication of efforts.

Global Forum IV

14. Participants welcome the initiative of the Government of Brazil to host Global Forum IV in 2005, and welcome the proposal of the African Group to host Global Forum V in Africa. Participants firmly stand in their belief that the Global Forum process needs to be continued for the purpose of spreading and enhancing awareness of good governance and integrity all around the world. Participants express their firm commitment and conviction that the Global Forum series will be continued, thanks to the strenuous international endeavors to root out corruption, one of the pressing challenges of our times.

15. Participants commend the Government of the Republic of Korea for the successful back-to-back holding of the two leading anti-corruption gatherings—Global Forum III and the 11th International Anti-Corruption Conference (IACC)—and take note with interest of the “Seoul Findings” from the 11th IACC.

ANNEX:

1. Ministerial Vision Statement
2. Workshop Report
3. National Contact Points: Global Anti-Corruption Network