

11TH INTERNATIONAL ANTI-CORRUPTION CONFERENCE  
SEOUL, MAY 2003

## **THE SEOUL FINDINGS**

We, some 900 people from 108 countries, drawn from governments, civil society and the private sector, assembled in our individual capacities in Seoul, capital city of the Republic of Korea, from 25 – 28 May 2003, for the 11<sup>th</sup> International Anti-Corruption Conference to address the theme “Different Cultures, Common Values”. Our earlier gatherings have taken place in all five continents. Our proceedings were chaired by the Hon. Justice Barry O’Keefe, Chair of the Council of the International Anti-Corruption Conference.

We were delighted to join in the recognition and applause for the three worthy recipients of Transparency International’s Integrity Awards. We also saluted the winner of the award for Latin American investigative journalists. Their personal efforts and commitment serve as an inspiration to us all.

We were honoured to have our proceedings opened by H.E. President Roh Moo-hyun, President of the Republic of Korea. He described the approaches his government has been adopting in carrying out its promises to his people of a participatory and corruption-free society following the cleanest and fairest election in the country’s history. “The financial crisis in 1997 caused Koreans to realise that transparency and fairness are as important as growth itself,” he reflected.

From the outset we addressed the theme of our conference, “Different Cultures, Common Values”. Our insights were enriched by profound addresses from the Hon. Ms Kang Kum-Sil (Minister of Justice, Korea), Professor Hans Kung (President of the Foundation for a Global Ethic), Sri Sri Ravi Shankar (Chairman of the International Association for Human Values) and the Hon. Kiraitu Murungi MP, (Minister of Justice, Kenya). H.R.H Prince El Hassan bin Talal of Jordan, unable to attend, shared his thoughtful insights with us.

In opening our working sessions, the Hon. Ms Kang declared our goal to be the realisation of a “clean, accountable and fair society”. We dedicate ourselves to that end.

The Hon. Murungi argued cogently that large-scale corruption should be designated a crime against humanity, as for many around the world it falls into the same category as torture, genocide and other crimes against humanity that rob us of our human dignity. In supporting his call, we condemn corruption as immoral, unjust and repugnant to the ideals of humanity enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and we confirm our conviction that all human beings have a basic human right to live in a corruption-free society.

In a wide-ranging analysis, H.R.H. Prince El Hassan observed that the peace of nations partly arises and is sustained through the cumulative efforts of society, including the peaceful and just behaviour of at least an aggregate of individuals. It can first be realised, he said, when we have confidence in the inherent ability of humans “to see good, to do good and to be good.” We declare our own confidence in this belief.

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, in a moving address, pointed out that corruption is at its lowest levels in the village, where people connect with each other, and at its highest

where people lack self-esteem and confidence in their own ability to provide for themselves in an insecure world. He decried a world that was globalised in all respects, except that of wisdom.

Professor Kung's detailed analysis of cross-cultural ethical values and standards covered the Koran, the Hebrew Bible, the Buddhist Canon, and the New Testament as well as the religions and philosophies of Indian and Chinese origins as well as humanist philosophies not rooted in any religion. His conclusions reaffirmed our own intuitive belief that "do not lie" and "do not steal" are common core values and standards, and that the principle of reciprocity – "Do not do to others what you would not wish to be done to you" - lies at the heart of all traditions.

**We state our strong conviction that there is absolutely no substance in the myth that corruption is a matter of culture. Rather, it offends the beliefs and traditions of us all.**

We met against the background of strenuous efforts being made to strengthen controls to counter money-laundering in order to counter the threat of terrorism present in many parts of the world, and in the immediate aftermath of a series of scandals in the private sector in the United States of America and across the globe. The scandals expose the bankruptcy of the new financial theory that the value of a corporation is what the market is willing to pay for it rather than that of its net assets.

As well, our world has been witnessing a failure of markets, a failure of institutions and a failure of moral norms. The tasks we face have become even more urgent and the more challenging, and the need for success even more compelling.

A crisis in ethics lies at the heart of recent **failures in self-regulation**, and underlines the necessity for appropriate government regulation, especially in areas vulnerable to corruption. There is a place for self-regulation, but the processes involved call for independent monitoring and verification.

We renew our commitment to a global international order that protects the weak and the vulnerable; that builds confidence among nations; that provides for sustainable development, particularly for the poor; and that serves as a dependable infrastructure for international commerce.

The view was expressed to us that the promises of the new globalised economic system will not be fulfilled, even if global companies and markets, national governments, national institutions and intermediate organisations work efficiently, for today it is the ethical framework on which they are based which is being increasingly questioned. This must be redressed.

Since we last met, work has begun on the drafting of the **United Nations Convention Against Corruption**, a development we whole-heartedly support and which we look to as providing a framework for future international cooperation. If our efforts are to succeed, significant change has to be effected in countries in all parts of the globe, those of the rich no less than those of the poor.

We look to the new Convention, scheduled for completion and signature at the end of this year, to significantly enhance the levels of international legal assistance so as greatly to reduce the ability of the corrupt to hide themselves and their looted assets

across international boundaries, and for the recovery and repatriation of assets to be addressed so as to ensure effective measures in this area.

We again stress the supreme importance of the prevention of corruption. Prosecutions are frequently the consequence of failures in prevention. It will greatly assist the reduction of levels of corruption if the new Convention contains mandatory prevention measures. Monitoring and international assistance provisions in particular must be adequately funded so that countries in the developing world can also fulfil their obligations. There is clearly scope for the monitoring elements to take advantage of those of existing regional bodies.

Corruption in the private sector is of increasing importance to the public as essential utilities and services are privatised: it is important that private-to-private corruption be included in the final document. Likewise it is essential that the role of civil society in helping to combat corruption be recognised. We believe, too, that effective monitoring with civil society participation will be essential if the final Convention is to achieve its goals.

We recognise, too, the strain that can be placed on the limited resources of poor countries in their pursuit of **cases with an international dimension**. We applaud the courage and determination of the government of Lesotho in its principled pursuit of alleged bribe-givers, as graphically described by the Hon. Fine Maema, Attorney General of Lesotho, and detailed in the excellent case study before us.

We record, too, the tributes paid by the Attorney General to the Swiss authorities in assisting to trace the bribes paid to the Lesotho public servant involved.

However, it is clear that much greater levels of support must be available for countries such as this who are confronted by corruption allegations in major undertakings. We believe that the World Bank should consider developing a facility for the funding of forensic audits (which are by their nature neutral as between the parties involved).

We would also invite the World Bank to consider the possibility of its advancing moneys to victim governments when large sums of looted cash looted by their former officials are likely to be frozen for years in foreign bank accounts.

We also call upon the international community to examine the establishment of a trust fund to provide legal aid in appropriate cases such as those in Lesotho, and to create a network of legal and forensic accounting experts that can be made available to governments on a *pro bono* (i.e. free) basis.

We call as well on the international financial institutions to develop a common policy towards debarment of corrupt contractors and to recognise and enforce the penalties any of them impose. Likewise it is essential that funding agencies recognise and allow the debarment of contractors imposed by developing countries after due process.

We cannot leave the question of international cooperation without recalling the fact that in our closing statement at our last meeting, in Prague two years ago, we recorded a strong call for the immediate return of the disgraced former president, Alberto Fujimori from Japan to Peru, the country which he governed as Peruvian for ten years and to whose people he has yet to account for his stewardship. We heard a renewed call for cooperation, and were saddened to learn that no progress has been made in this regard.

We appreciate that a claim is made on his behalf for **immunity** from extradition by virtue of his claim to a second citizenship. This highlights a concern, expressed repeatedly throughout our proceedings, that immunities are afforded to far too many people and in a needlessly wide and general fashion.

These are widely exploited by corrupt politicians in particular, and foster a contempt for the Rule of Law by rendering thousands of people around the world beyond the reach of investigators and the courts. There are only very restricted areas in which immunity can be justified.

We believe that governments must review the scope of any immunities as a matter of urgency, and then take any action necessary to restrict these to legitimate and justifiable limits.

Our discussions were again wide-ranging. Containing corruption is a continuing process, and it involves institutions across government, the judiciary, the private sector and civil society. All are part of the problem, and all have an active part to play in achieving solutions. Without the active support and involvement of civil society, a government is unlikely to succeed in its reform efforts.

Among the conclusions we reached in our workshops were the following:

### **Politics**

- In our review of **political party financing and electoral corruption** it was apparent that political parties cannot be ignored in finance reform. Parties must themselves engage in internal reform efforts, practice transparency and demonstrate commitment to ethical standards. We recognised, too, that politicians face increasing difficulty in funding campaigns, and that reform efforts are unlikely to be successful until the costs of elections are reduced.
- To avoid **state capture** we need new preventative mechanisms, including stronger oversight and enforcement of broader and more extensive conflict-of-interest laws. Steps should be taken to ensure that there are appropriate time limits imposed before senior public officials can take up employment in the private sector in sensitive areas. Governments must be shielded from falling under corporate control. Appropriate provisions to regulate political party financing should be incorporated into both the UN and the OECD Conventions.
- Corruption operates through **networks** large and small. We recognise the value of “good networks”, as well as the existence of ambiguous and “bad” networks, and that the “bad” must be replaced by the “good”, not simply eradicated. Strong regulatory frameworks can assist in containing and disrupting “bad” networks, as can a functioning judicial system. However, the attitude of society as a whole to networks and to the role of law require examination in any given context to determine the informal rules that appear to guide mass and elite behaviour. Networks unquestionably often influence policy decision-making.

## **International Systems**

- The future contribution the **UN Convention Against Corruption** will make to global anti-corruption efforts will be of critical significance. The recovery and repatriation of assets must be strengthened by this Convention and adequate resources made available to ensure that local judicial and law enforcement officials are trained so that mutual legal assistance is viable. The monitoring mechanism envisaged by the UN Convention could make use of, and draw on, existing models whereby regional bodies—such as GRECO—could be used to conduct monitoring on the UN’s behalf.
- We are concerned at a continuing widespread ignorance of the **OECD Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions** as shown by the recent Transparency International Bribe Payers’ Survey. We urge all governments to engage in effective awareness raising campaigns in their own countries to ensure that the private sector is aware of its responsibilities; to encourage their publics to report instances of violations; to compile public information on prosecutions; and to take steps to include civil society in the monitoring processes. We are concerned, too, to see that relevant governments ensure that the monitoring processes under the Convention are adequately resourced.
- We acknowledge the critical importance of **peer-review mechanisms** to bring about the reforms necessary to comply with international legal instruments and note with satisfaction the consolidation of these mechanisms in the OECD and in the Council of Europe (GRECO). We call for an intensification of their actions to ensure a more complete and effective implementation of standards in the anti-corruption area.
- In reviewing **peer review under the OECD Convention** (against the bribing of foreign public officials), we saw it as critical for civil society and the private sector to be involved at all stages of the peer review processes provided for under the Convention, and for peer review mechanisms to be designed with a clear focus on ensuring that the goals of the Convention are met. NGOs should monitor national implementation of the Convention and call their governments to account. An “international hotline” should be established by the OECD as an aid to enforcement. As a medium to long term objective, consideration should be given to the establishment of an “international prosecutor” for major international corruption cases. There is a window of opportunity open to ensure that governments take the Convention seriously, but it will not last long.
- In considering **regional cooperation in Asia and in Africa**, we call upon all concerned to recognise the role that civil society can and should play in monitoring their countries’ adherence to the Conventions they sign, and we urge donor agencies to ensure that relevant civil society groups are funded sufficiently so as to enable them to discharge this essential task. Funds flowing into African governments through NEPAD should be conditional upon those governments ratifying the African Union Convention Against Corruption. We also encourage the international community to support efforts being made to strengthen arrangements for the repatriation of stolen assets and the proceeds of corruption.

- Arrangements for **international mutual legal assistance** in corruption investigations and prosecutions were reviewed. We examined case studies including tobacco smuggling based in Hong Kong, the case of ex-president Fujimori of Peru and of ex-president Abacha of Nigeria. The complexities of cases involving numerous countries are considerable. Legal assistance can be sought and refused, for reasons that are not always apparent or understandable. Yet mutual legal assistance is increasingly necessary in a globalised world. This can be facilitated through international conventions (and we look to the UN Convention Against Corruption to be concluded later this year to advance matters in this area in particular).
- We addressed the topic of combating the **trafficking in human beings**. Many people – but especially women and children - are put at risk when countries’ preventive measures are inadequate. Among our conclusions was the need for multi-disciplinary groups to be established at national levels so as to ensure coordinated action against corruption and such trafficking.

### **Development Assistance**

- **Cooperation between existing international agencies** addressing corruption must be enhanced, either through the creation of a new institution for this purpose or by making the existing agency established by the UNDP more effective.
- There is still considerable **corruption in development projects**. Information made available to the poor and vulnerable can greatly enhance their ability for them to assert their rights. There is a particular role for non-governmental organisations carrying information to those who need it. It would greatly assist our efforts if development agencies were seen to be applying the same standards of transparency and accountability in their own operations that they require of their development partners. Similarly, the operations of lending agencies would benefit were they to be open to effective external review.
- Our discussion of **corruption in aid** convinced us of the need for human rights and good governance practices to be integrated into the practices of donor agencies, which in turn should be subject to oversight by groups of independent citizens. Conditionality appears to have largely failed and other, more creative approaches must be developed to encourage appropriate reforms.
- We recommend that international financial institutions (IFIs) and donors should end the practice of insisting on **privatisation** as a condition of loans and allow for the consideration of the full range of public and private sector models.
- We recognise that **post-war reconstruction** poses particular challenges in devastated environments that lack the rule of law and requiring the rehabilitation of institutions, communities and infrastructure and in which massive aid interventions flow very quickly but whose effectiveness is not always maximized. The complex issues involved call for further conceptual consideration and empirical investigation with a view to developing deployable anti-corruption systems and tools to contain corruption in post-war reconstruction.

## Industry Sectors

- We believe that **water and energy resources** should be considered public goods, access to which is a fundamental human right. If privatized, the decision-making processes should be fully transparent, and strict conditions must be applied. These include a cap on profiteering, strict performance standards, and so-called ‘take-or-pay’ contracts prohibited. When it appears likely that officials in privatised water or energy utilities may have engaged in corrupt practices, an independent commission should investigate them together with any public agencies – including international financial institutions and export credit agencies – that may have financed the transactions. When international agencies are found to have financed such corrupt transactions, they – not the consumers – must bear appropriate responsibility for outstanding loans and credits.
- Corruption is endemic in the **health and pharmaceuticals** sectors from which no country is exempt. Research is manipulated, undue influence distorts licensing and listing, bribery is strong in promotional activities, counterfeit medicines and relabelled expired drugs are all having a devastating impact on patients and the costs of health services alike. In addition, standards should be developed by and between companies in the pharmaceutical industry, dealing with issues such as, inter alia, political and charitable donations, sales representatives and distributors. Case studies illustrated unambiguous instances of severe health and financial losses. Black markets abound in illegal organ sales and the use of ineffectual medical supplies, leading to ill-health and deaths. Organized crime networks have become involved in the corrupt trade in body parts and privatisation and unregulated competition in the provision of medical supplies have accelerated levels of corruption and fraud. The black market in health products requires much stronger regulation in the developed (consumer) countries, and greater attention paid by all countries to the ratification and implementation of relevant international convention. Governments must ensure that the patient, not the suppliers, is the focus and beneficiary of health care provision; that doctors and other health professionals adopt codes of conduct requiring them to disclose gifts and benefits received from the pharmaceutical industry; and that there is transparency in decisions concerning the acquisition of equipment and pharmaceuticals.
- Corruption in **forestry** calls for a wide range of responses, both legislative and non-legislative and addressing all aspects of the timber production and marketing chain. There has been an over-reliance on civil society to perform a monitoring role in a situation which can be extremely dangerous for them and for which groups are often ill-equipped. There is a need to work on a broad front as there is no single effective approach to containing corruption in the forestry sector.

## Public Sector

- In the absence of a just, honest and independent **judiciary** and so the absence of the Rule of Law, much to which we aspire will lie beyond our reach, and many

potential reforms will be frustrated. The needs of the judiciary must be met. We welcome efforts being made to strengthen the independence and integrity of the judiciary.

- In our review of **depoliticising the civil service** we were concerned at an apparent lack of tangible outcomes of past civil service reform exercises and stress the need to go beyond merely looking at reducing wage bills to focus on essential political, social and economic aspects. There is also a need to focus on the civil service as a whole, rather than on just separate parts of the service.
- Our review of the effectiveness of **anti-corruption agencies versus institutional mainstreaming** led us to conclude that controlling corruption is an issue of governance and of the quality of government policies, and it cannot be solved simply by the creation of an anti-corruption agency. These agencies can constitute an inefficient use of resources where a country has weak capacity or a hostile policy environment. In countries with a better developed governance framework there is a whole web of anti-corruption agencies and accountability strands so that an agency, if created, has to work closely with all of them if it is to be effective. Most importantly, it is essential not to view the creation of an agency as a single “quick fix” but as only one aspect of an approach that has to address the whole spectrum of the problems that breed corruption. Even then, no agency can be successful without building a strong bond with civil society and gaining its cooperation.
- We reviewed the role being played by civil society in monitoring **public procurement** and identified its participation are being critical for the development and enforcement of anti-corruption strategies, transparency, the raising of awareness and the facilitation of change. Change is possible and has been achieved in some countries with considerable savings flowing to the public good from clean public procurement practices.
- It was recognized that **customs** administrations are particularly vulnerable to corruption as their officials have direct, real time, discretionary access to tangible wealth while they are also often underpaid. As a consequence, corruption in Customs damages legitimacy and image, and is a major obstacle to international trade and development. A review of the available tools to counter corruption in Customs shows that the tools are available to enhance integrity and that what is now needed is their effective use in implementation. Case studies show that significant results can be achieved within a short time-frame were proper appeal channels are created, officers are made proud of their jobs, integrated border management (making Customs regulate cross-border movements of people as well as goods) can help; and IT offers solutions, but is not always foolproof. The World Customs Organization has developed useful tools, including a “road map” for assessing corruption in administration and performance indicators. There was some support for the development of an ISO standard for Customs administration.
- Corruption in the **police** is a common problem, and one best addressed by having it addressed by an independent institution rather than an internal police unit (although the latter may need to be chosen for reasons of resources or for social and political considerations). Leadership within the police force is critical, backed by strong political will within the government. Proper laws must enable graft

- fighters to take effective action against corrupt police officers. We welcome the initiative of Interpol in forming its International Group of Experts on Corruption (IEGC) and the global standards and best practices which it is promulgating. However, to fight corruption effectively within the police force the support of the community must be won through a combination of education and publicity.
- We again emphasize the importance of **protecting whistle-blowers** from reprisals and of providing witness protection where necessary. No anti-corruption campaign can succeed if employees, both in the public and the private sector, are fearful of reporting acts of corruption. We are aware that key witnesses have been unwilling to identify current influential politicians by name because of the inability of the judicial system in their countries to provide them with adequate security. Dependable complaints mechanisms form a vital strand in any effective anti-corruption framework.

### **E-government**

- We recognised the potential for **e-government** to impact positively on corruption levels by increasing accessibility, and transparency, but these need to be aligned with wider public sector reform. Many governments are still at an early stage and need to initiate reforms on a small scale, and scale up as and when the utility of these is proven. Computerisation requires significant process re-engineering before it is undertaken to avoid the danger of simply modernising existing processes that already lack transparency and efficiency.
- We saw value in civil society organizations taking a much closer interest in the potential that **e-government** may offer for the reduction of corruption and the introduction of more open systems of administration. The OPEN system adopted in Seoul attracted particular interest. Participants registered a broad concern regarding the potential for corruption in the area of e-government, particularly as in many countries one cannot assume equal access to technology to that the process has the potential to actually widen the gap between rich and poor.

### **Private Sector**

- **Professional and business ethics and education** require the implementation of codes of ethics and ethics training from the top of an organisation down to the most junior staff. We reviewed a number of tools that have been developed for this purpose, including specific case studies and survey software. We believe that the use of examples drawn from real life best demonstrate the dilemmas which can occur, rather than subjecting staff to ethics courses which are overly theoretical.
- In examining the role of **corporate governance** in the fight against corruption we reviewed a series of initiatives, among them the TI Integrity Pacts, the TI Business Principles, the Wolfsberg principles, the Public What You Pay campaign, the Caspian Revenue Watch initiative and the United Kingdom government's Extractive Industries Initiative. It was clear that there is no one specific area on which civil society should focus but that all can contribute to

enhanced accountability across a broad range of approaches. In examining the **role of lawyers in corporate governance** we noted that lawyers are often perceived as conspiring with corrupt actors so that the lawyer's image ranking somewhere between businessmen and politicians is therefore not surprising. We decided that when it comes to the lawyer employed by a business it is not a question of "either - or" - of "hired gun" or of "gate keeper". A business lawyer is to some extent a "hired gun" but he also has a professional duty to warn and restrict his client to legality. The mere adoption of ethics codes does not stop corruption, but helps build institutions and confidence - and of particular importance is the development and enforcement of professional codes of conduct to ensure that lawyers stay within the bounds of the permissible.

- We discussed the lessons to be learned the recent scandals involving the **accountancy profession** in the United States and elsewhere. It was clear that a nature of the relationship between auditor and client would change if the auditor were required to be an investigator and that auditors are not presently qualified or trained to conduct to discharge a forensic role. We recognized that the profession itself has still not come to terms with the implications of the recent scandals. The profession, and individual corporations, face enormous reputational risks. Many felt that auditors need to be changed more frequently to disrupt the "network" that can otherwise develop between auditor and client; some felt that shareholders, not boards of directors, should appoint the auditors. Above all it is essential to restore public confidence in companies' financial statements or investors will stay away and capital markets will continue to languish.
- Needs in the **media** include both a diversity of ownership and addressing problems of corruption within the journalists' profession.

### **Civil Society**

- We recognise the need to raise standards of transparency and accountability within **civil society** itself, in particular the need for effective codes of conduct including principles for the selection and recruitment of their staff as well as high standards of financial accountability. There is also an urgent need for civil society to pool resources and to work collectively and in a broader coalition in order to re-open the debate over international regulatory structures.
- We declare our commitment to continue to **deepen and broaden our coalition** and to work with a wider and more diverse range of citizen groups, consumer groups, environmentalists and trade unions on the basis of links first established at the 11<sup>th</sup> IACC.
- In addressing the central theme of our conference, we call upon **faith-based institutions** to raise the level of their involvement in addressing ethical and corruption issues, and identified a need for them to ensure that their own institutions live up to the practices they rightly advocate for others.
- Finally, we discussed **the way forward for civil society** and exchanged experience as between different civil society organizations who are working on the corruption issue. The need is clear for civil society organizations to build alliances of the widest possible kind, drawing in organizations and people from all

walks of life and of all political persuasion. In particular, we concluded that coalitions between civil society organizations and parliaments as well as with political parties deserve further exploration. The clear need was identified for civil society to monitor the performance of their governments in implementing their international obligations under the anti-corruption conventions to which they are party. In this context, Transparency International should consider broadening its scope and changing its emphasis from being on “transparency” to being on “accountability”, as the aim is to hold people accountable. Above all, to maintain their own credibility and legitimacy, civil society organizations must foster and adhere to the highest internal ethical standards.

### **Measurement**

- The ability to **measure corruption levels** and to track levels of progress provides an essential tool for our work. Methodological approaches need to be further developed with an emphasis on policy development.
- In examining the **measurement of corruption** it was apparent from World Bank Institute data that trends in governance are not getting any better. Cross-country measurement tools have come a long way, but remain imperfect: they must be complemented by sound country work which in turn yields achievable anti-corruption strategies.

Many of our findings can be addressed by governments assembled at the Global Forum on Fighting Corruption Safeguarding Integrity to be held in Seoul shortly after our own proceedings conclude. To these we would add the observation that we would all greatly benefit if the commitments made at Global Forum I and Global Forum II could be reviewed and reported on publicly.

It is now 20 years since the first International Anti-Corruption Conference was held in Washington (1983), but since then the environment in which we live and work has changed dramatically.

New threats have emerged and new challenges posed to us. In a world of accelerated change, the one constant has been our common values. Our Conference has grown from a handful of committed organisations to a coalition that spans the globe. A subject once taboo can now be discussed openly, and by nations rich and poor.

The nexus between corrupt exporters in industrialised countries and political elites elsewhere has been exposed and is being addressed, which 20 years ago was unimaginable.

The regular return of assets looted by officials in developing countries and sheltered in the developed world, once but a dream is now within our grasp. Corruption is now rightly seen not simply as an economic problem, but one with equally strong social and political dimensions.

There is, too, now widespread recognition that the fight against corruption can only be waged successfully if all are involved, both within and outside government.

Chief Justices around the world have developed the Bangalore Statement of Global Principles on Judiciary Integrity, noted by the recent session of the U.N. Human Rights Commission, which will serve as a global benchmark.

At the United Nations itself there is the prospect of governments reaching a consensus on the steps to fight corruption that if achieved will be truly historic.

Youth are now organising with the vision of “A World Without Corruption”, and at our gathering the Youth Network Against Corruption ([www.ynac.org](http://www.ynac.org)) developed an imaginative action plan.

Increasingly, too, governments are recognising their people’s right to information and starting to appreciate both the positive benefits to governance of more open and participatory approaches and the beneficial impact this can have for citizens, and especially the poor.

**We have passed from mere words and into the sphere of concrete and concerted action. As we continue in our efforts, we will do so in the conviction that the values we all share will stand us in good stead throughout the years ahead.**

We express our thanks to the Chairman and members of the International Anti-Corruption Council and to the members of the Korean Organising Committee. We are deeply grateful to the Korean Ministry of Justice, which hosted the conference, and to the Korean Organising Office, in particular to Mr. Sang-ok Park, Mr. Keon-joo Lee, Mr. Jong-sang Lee, Mr. Lyun-sup Shin, and Ms Eun-jeong Kim. We are also greatly indebted to Ms Gillian Dell and her committed team at Transparency International who have worked so diligently, so effectively and to such excellent effect on preparing the conference programme.

In closing, we express our gratitude to the government and people of the Republic of Korea, to the Mayor and citizens of Seoul and to Transparency International-Korea. Many of us experienced numerous acts of kindness and integrity from ordinary citizens as we have moved about their city. This must bode well for their society achieving its corruption-free goal.

We depart, saddened to leave but with a renewed sense of determination and purpose.

Seoul  
28 May 2003