

## **14. Heads of Delegation Round Table**

### **Vice President Al Gore, Moderator**

The Round Table session moderated by the Vice President and including all heads of government delegations to the Global Forum, was held in the Benjamin Franklin Room on the 8th floor of the Department of State. The session was available to other members of delegations by closed circuit video transmission to the Loy Henderson international conference room.

Vice President Gore offered condolences of the entire group to South African Minister of Public Service Zola Skweiya, a participant at this conference and the one in January on re-inventing government. Minister Skweiya's two-year old son was hit by an automobile and died the previous day. The Minister had departed to return to South Africa. The session opened with a moment of silence.

The Vice President said that during the conference, he had heard many new ideas and interesting concepts, and he hoped others would similarly take useful ideas away. He had heard suggestions from several participants about ways in which the activities begun at this conference might be continued, and hoped to explore those ideas during this discussion. He noted that summaries of the specialty sessions held the previous afternoon were distributed to all heads of delegation, and he expressed appreciation to those who had chaired and participated in those sessions. (Copies of these summaries may be found in the Appendix.) He invited heads of delegation present at this session to offer their observations as to lessons they would carry home from this conference, beginning with officials who had been unable to speak due to lack of time during the first session of the conference.

### **David Simons** **Attorney General** **Barbados**

Mr. Simons felt that nations in the Caribbean needed greater sensitization to issues of corruption. It was insufficient to have laws on the books, or to rotate officials. Speaking as co-chairman of the Joint United States-Caribbean Subcommittee on Justice and Security Issues that developed the Plan of Action signed by President Clinton and the Caribbean heads of government in 1997, he had called for a conference such as this. To point the way forward from that Plan of Action, he offered the suggestion that the issue of corruption be approached by the countries of the Americas in a manner similar to that employed for money laundering through the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force. That would

include processes of self assessment, mutual evaluation, and regular typology exercises, which would provide opportunity for regular exchange of technical assistance. All countries should make an early determination regarding accession to the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption. Third, those of the English-speaking Caribbean should study, with a view to

12.2 Cooperating in carrying out programs of systematic follow-up to monitor and promote the full implementation of appropriate measures to combat corruption, through mutual assessment by governments of their legal and practical measures to combat corruption, as established by pertinent international agreements.

implementation, the draft Integrity Code in Public Office developed as a result of work of Commonwealth law ministers by the Commonwealth Secretariat. This provides an essential framework, building on United Nations and other codes, that is of particular relevance to the nations of the Eastern Caribbean. The overriding attribute of a public official must be integrity, and this must be founded on a highly developed individual ethical value system, without which it would be impossible to eliminate corruption.

Mario Tagarinski  
Minister of Public Administration  
Bulgaria

The text of a paper entitled "Republic of Bulgaria: The Quality of Governance -- The Challenge of the New Millennium" presented by Minister Tagarinski may be found in the Appendix.

Corruption entails particular problems for the transition processes of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, problems from which Bulgaria had not been spared. The Bulgarian government was taking action in three main directions. First is limiting opportunities for corruption through structural reforms and the establishment of adequate modern institutional arrangements of government. This included reform of the justice sector and establishment of a modern judicial system. The medium term goal is to establish control over corruption, and change the public attitude toward it.

Second, the government was undertaking diagnostic surveys of the incidence of corruption as perceived by the private business sector, and seeking to monitor and improve relationships between entrepreneurs and the public sector. International cooperation and the sharing of international experience in fighting corruption through competent organizations and fora was crucially important.

Both democratic governance and economic stability and growth depend on the establishment and maintenance of policies and institutions that will to the

maximum possible extent confine opportunities for corruption in society and reduce its adverse effects.

Vasha Lordkipanidze  
State Minister  
Georgia

The text of Minister Lordkipanidze's remarks as prepared for delivery may be found in the Appendix.

The beginnings of nation-building in Georgia have brought turmoil and bloodshed, and the nation is beset also by ethnic conflicts. President Shevardnadze has declared combating corruption to be among the high priorities of the Georgian government.

One conclusion drawn from this conference is that corruption is a systemic disease which cannot be suppressed by repressive measures alone. For this reason, Georgia was implementing restructuring and reform in its governmental institutions, and was seeking actively to involve the non-governmental sector, the media and civil society in efforts against corruption. The parliament and executive branch had cooperated to enact new laws against corruption, and reform of the judiciary was in process.

Great importance is attached to regional cooperation, since within the former Soviet Union there is a need for much cooperation along borders. Georgia wished to propose establishing a high-level forum to discuss corruption issues on a regional basis, and suggested the establishment of an international center for study of this issue. Georgia would be prepared to serve as host for such a conference and for such an international center.

Bonaya Adhi Godana  
Minister of Foreign Affairs  
Kenya

The Minister recalled his intervention at the plenary session immediately preceding this roundtable, in which he had described actions by the Government of Kenya to prevent and fight corruption. The discussions at the conference had demonstrated the universal consensus as to the need to seize the current opportunity to fight corruption. The conference had proceeded as an academic discussion of a vital subject, but before they returned, he felt that it would be important to add moral force to the activities of the conference by participants agreeing to a declaration. This need not necessitate agreement on binding

commitments, but it should be possible to agree on two or three paragraphs to reflect the conclusions and commitments that participants had reached.

The Vice President noted the Foreign Minister's recognition that fighting corruption was no longer seen as a political issue, but rather had come to be recognized universally as a common imperative. He said the staff would make an effort to rapidly prepare a statement of the nature suggested by the Foreign Minister for consideration by participants before the end of the next session.

Jorge Madrazo  
Attorney General  
Mexico

Mexico emerged from this conference persuaded that global problems must be addressed by multilateral actions, and the approach of unilateralism had been for Mexico completely discredited. Corruption is something morally reprehensible and should be prosecuted, but when it occurs within the judiciary, this is doubly reprehensible. It was unacceptable for law enforcement authorities to violate the law for their own benefit. This turned the force of the law against its own originators, society at large. The one thing that must not be allowed was impunity for corruption; any act of corruption must be punished. States must work to change the environment in which acts of corruption take place. That means a change in the general conditions of society, including promotion of democracy and human rights, and the development of a climate in which free expression may flourish. It was also necessary to change the conditions in which law enforcement personnel operated, to afford them the opportunity to decorously and honestly earn a living, or it would never be possible to eliminate corruption.

Aziz El Houssine  
Minister of Public Service and Administrative Reform  
Morocco

The text of Minister El Houssine's prepared presentation may be found in the Appendix.

The Government of Morocco has acted against corruption, but its current government is determined to improve upon the efforts of the past. To be practical, the government is currently implementing a project which has both a preventive and a deterrent aspect. Regarding prevention, the government is establishing a major program based on good management. The concept is to provide ethics orientation for all civil servants, so that government will no longer

act in an authoritarian manner, but will be at the service of the citizen. The intention is to make all citizens aware of this problem, through involving civil society in media discussions on the issue. The government is also seeking to identify requirements which can be satisfied directly through the civil service. With regard to deterrence, the government is considering a range of new legislation. One measure, which is to be submitted within the week, calls for punishment of any civil servant responsible for unjustified procedural delays. He recalled that on December 13-15, 1998, in Rabat, a conference involving 34 ministers of civil service in Africa had been held on the same subject of the prevention and control of corruption. This demonstrated the seriousness of the nations of Africa to act in this regard.

Vladimir Strashkov  
First Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs  
Russian Federation

Combating corruption and organized crime has become a very important priority for the Russian Federation, in particular because of the close association of corruption, organized crime and terrorism. It is important to thoroughly study the origins of corruption, and proceed against it based on realities. It is necessary to acknowledge that corruption has progressed with unanticipated speed in penetrating the Russian economy and society. Discussions at this meeting had demonstrated that there were many approaches in other countries similar to those employed in Russia, and it was helpful to know the experience of other countries. He hoped that bilateral cooperation between Russia and the United States in efforts against crime and corruption would continue to progress, including early conclusion of treaties on extradition and mutual legal assistance. Russia shared the concern at money laundering, in particular the laundering of illegally gained proceeds, and favored expediting the recovery of such assets.

8.1 Laws providing substantial criminal penalties for the laundering of the proceeds of public corruption violations.
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Stanislaus Sangweni  
Public Service Commission  
South Africa

As a young country in transition, South Africa was experiencing the problems of corruption as a nation, and had learned much from discussions at this conference. Mr. Sangweni particularly appreciated the session on Religious Values, believing that success against corruption required the creation of space to enter into a meaningful partnership with the people in this fight, and

engagement of ethical and religious values was very important in this respect. South Africa's process of transition had encountered several specific problems which contributed to engendering corruption, including the need to incorporate the public services of the former autonomous "bantustan" administrations, and to include public servants whose loyalty to the government was a matter of some doubt. These people had occupied positions of trust, and exercised control over enormous government resources, creating an environment conducive to corruption.

The government had launched a campaign against corruption, including all areas discussed at this meeting, education and enforcement as well as preventive programs. The special investigative unit named after Judge Heath, who heads it, was a step of particular value, and South Africa appreciated the positive attention to this measure at this meeting. Cooperation among government agencies responsible to act against corruption was highly important, and South Africa had created an inter-ministerial committee and initiated it at a major conference of the public sector, to promote such coordination.

This conference dealt in particular with the justice and security systems, areas in which South Africa had experienced special problems. Actions being taken to respond to these problems included improvement and expedition of the criminal justice system. The government recognized a need to strengthen and expand whistleblower and witness protection programs. Discussion at this meeting had validated a great deal of South Africa's program, and it looked forward to continuing to participate at future meetings to advance international cooperation in this process.

South Africa would be unable to attend the African regional meeting that was to follow the Global Forum, but wished to assure the Vice President and other participants that the declaration of principles that had been agreed to by the participating African nations was fully accepted by South Africa. South Africa looked forward to implementing its declaration of intent into a subregional convention against corruption, and ultimately into a convention for the entire continent.

Sandor Pinter  
Minister of Interior  
Hungary

The Vice President had asked what this conference had given to participants. Before Hungary came, it knew about the major elements of corruption, and its history. At this conference, Hungary had encountered those who knew the most, and the most recent things, about corruption in the world today, and what was being done against it. Participants knew the latest and

most effective legal and technical tools to employ against corruption. It would be helpful if this knowledge could be compiled and published to be available worldwide. Hungary had gained some successes against organized crime, establishing special strike forces that had been prepared and trained with assistance from the United States. However, this conference, even followed by a publication, is not enough. Fighting corruption is an ongoing process every day toward the day when the people would reject the idea of corruption.

**Vice President Gore** said that it was intended shortly to publish the proceedings of the conference, beginning with the principles that participants had discussed and which experience had shown to be effective in fighting or preventing corruption. The Vice President then had distributed a draft that had been quickly prepared in response to the suggestion of the Foreign Minister of Kenya. He invited those present to consider and comment on it, in order to decide before the end of the session whether there was sufficient consensus for the conference participants to adopt it.

Gabriel Castro Suarez  
Comptroller General  
Panama

The importance of this conference lay in the principle that the first step in curing a disease was to recognize that one had the disease. The important fact of this conference was its recognition that corruption was a problem that affected all countries. In Panama, albeit with scant resources, the Office of the Comptroller General had initiated an anticorruption program some years ago. This was based, as any anticorruption program must be, on three principles. The first was morality, which must be inculcated from earliest childhood in every individual. The second was the will to prosecute and punish all crimes. The third and most important was to maintain a climate of free expression, for in these circumstances, every citizen of the country could become as well an individual prosecutor in the fight against corruption.

Dato W. Steenhuis  
Procurator General  
Netherlands

So far, almost none of the countries ranked in the top ten of the Transparency International corruption perception index had yet taken the floor in plenary sessions. He did not know why this was. It might be that they were too self-satisfied to speak up. It might well be the opposite. Therefore, he was

somewhat reluctant to take the floor, but nevertheless also wanted very much to do so.

The Netherlands wished to use the momentum which the conference had created so far to the maximum extent possible. The Guiding Principles in the Source Book of the conference included at least sixty important measures for the fight against corruption. The Netherlands, although it ranks near the top of the Transparency International index, had so far implemented only about 55% of these measures, and is preparing to implement only another 15%. The Netherlands delegation therefore proposed that all countries take stock of their implementation of measures in these Guiding principles. Four positions were possible.

A country could take the view that it had implemented these measures. It could take the position that it had not and would not. It could take the view that it was preparing to implement them. And finally, it could take the view that the Netherlands representative said was his: that it did not know whether or not it had implemented these measures, and would not know without a more extensive inventory and analysis to what extent it might do so. Accordingly, the Netherlands suggested that each country carry out such an inventory of its national response to these principles, and send that inventory to the organizing committee of this conference, or to the United Nations. Second, let there be a follow-up to this conference, in a year to a year and a half. Third, let countries prepare a new inventory of their response to these Guiding Principles as of that time. Fourth, ask Transparency International to repeat their corruption perception index in years to come, and to consider expanding this useful instrument to the public sector. Finally, discuss the results of this new survey at the next conference.

12.3 Participating actively in future international conferences on promoting integrity and combating corruption among justice and security officials.

The Netherlands declaration said it could also agree with the draft declaration that had been distributed.

**Vice President Gore**, speaking for the United States, said the United States would be proud to join with the Netherlands as a co-sponsor of the second Global Forum to be held in the Netherlands, and to urge all participants to complete the assessments suggested by the Netherlands in time for the second Global Forum. The United States would join with the Netherlands to issue Invitations to all who had participated in this conference. During the time before the Second Global Forum, the process of communication could be continued, employing the Web site that had been established on the Internet.

In the draft declaration, the Vice President suggested addition to the distributed text of reference to the second Global Forum to be held in the Netherlands.



Dr. Carlos Federico Ruckhauf  
Vice President  
Argentina

The Vice President of Argentina expressed appreciation to Vice President Gore and the United States for having organized a conference that would send him home with a wide range of new experiences. He expressed appreciation to the United States Office of Government Ethics and its Director, and to the United States Information Agency, for the assistance they had provided in the establishment of the Argentine national public ethics agency, and the definition of its code of public ethics. International cooperation was an essential tool in working toward a world in which there was no opportunity for corruption, and he appreciated this opportunity of participating.

Brian E.R. Kinney  
Criminal Policy Directorate  
Home Office  
United Kingdom

Corruption is often hidden and difficult to prove, as many speakers had observed. Many people would not be aware of having been victimized by it. There was therefore a need for systems that could cover, and uncover, unethical behavior of all forms, to the criminal offenses of corruption. Public servants of every nature faced temptation, and where there was unsupervised discretion, the opportunities for corruption increased. Combating corruption created the need for as much transparency as was consistent with efficiency. This meeting had addressed two main goals, promoting integrity among public officials, and deterring corruption. There is a need for a range of responses to these issues, and no single solutions. The United Kingdom is examining this issue under two main headings. One is effective institutional arrangements, including codes of ethics and conduct, independent investigative bodies, systems to encourage reporting of acts of corruption, and importantly, visible effective leadership. Also, there was a need for a comprehensive legal framework to prosecute and punish acts of public and private sector corruption. It is important also to protect those that would disclose acts of corruption. The United Kingdom is reviewing its domestic legislation, taking into account seven principles of public life restated by

11.1 Appointment of independent commissions or other bodies to study and report on the effectiveness of efforts to combat corruption in particular agencies involved in justice and security matters.

a committee on standards in public life that has been serving for five years. These are: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and visible leadership. There

are many good examples of success in combating corruption. A recent one from the London Metropolitan Police bears the title "Integrity is Non-Negotiable". The United Kingdom looked forward to documenting additional examples of success in the conference report.

N. Vittal  
Central Vigilance Commissioner  
India

A statement of the experience of the Indian government in combating corruption may be found in the Appendix.

India had found it particularly beneficial to hear of the successful experiences of Hong Kong, South Africa and Palermo in fighting corruption. As the Vice President had observed at the outset, steps for fighting corruption and steps for re-inventing government often coincided. The same coincidence could be found with respect to measures that served to promote global trade, to fight terrorism, and to fight narco-terrorism. He suggested that future activities might consider how synergies might be developed in measures against these other global issues. With respect to the draft declaration, his delegation agreed in principle, but since in India, as in the United States, the judiciary were an independent institution, he could only accept the declaration with respect to the rest of the government and refer it to his authorities with respect to the judiciary.

Yed Esaie Angoran  
Inspector General  
Cote d'Ivoire

Cote d'Ivoire received its invitation to this conference while its President had been presiding over a first national congress on governance. This had addressed governance issues broadly, and resulted in a series of specific recommendations that the government would implement. Sharing international experience and cooperation, it would be possible to gain success against corruption. Cote d'Ivoire welcomed the Netherlands invitation to a meeting in a year, as this forum against corruption needed to be institutionalized, and with cooperation, the new century could be one of success against corruption.

Senator Luis Alfonso Davila  
President of the Congress  
Venezuela

Dr. Moskos had commented to the meeting that governments, like stairways, need to be cleaned from the top down. When one could not start at

the very top, it was necessary to consider how to begin the cleaning further down, without breaking the stairway. Venezuela had begun such a process, in a peaceful, democratic revolutionary transformation. Ninety percent of the people of Venezuela supported the President's effort to uproot corruption that had impoverished the Venezuelan people. This revolution was founded on principles taught by the Liberator, Simon Bolivar, which had in later years been forgotten. By means of a constitutional convention, Venezuela sought a political, social, territorial, economic and international balance, and provide new organization for its society. Internationally, Venezuela sought understanding and cooperation with the process which it was carrying out.

**Vice President Gore** announced that due to lateness of the hour, no further regular speakers would be recognized. He read additions to the language of the draft declaration to refer to the Netherlands offer to host a second Global Forum in a year, and to the proposal by Korea that this should be followed by consideration of annual global forums at the ministerial level on fighting corruption. The Vice President then asked that if there were no objection, he could take it that as the Chairman of the Global Forum, participants were agreeable to his releasing the Declaration to the media on their behalf. No objection being heard, he thanked participants and called on the final speaker.

Ibrahim Boubakar Keita  
Prime Minister  
Mali

The Prime Minister said that everyone present agreed that this Forum had come at an opportune time, and provided an unusual opportunity. Speaking for himself, and on behalf of all participants, he had found it most fruitful. A great effort is being invested, with international assistance, in providing more efficient systems in Mali for preventing corruption and promoting transparency and accountability. No country wanted to acknowledge transgressions against its moral and ethical foundations. Mali had surmounted this inhibition, and was seeking to openly address and resolve the problems it faced that were caused by corruption. There is no better way to break the vicious circle of poverty and establish the virtuous circle of development. Mali was one of the poorest countries in the world, but as one of its emerging democracies, and would welcome a future meeting of this forum.

**Vice President Gore** thanked all participants and adjourned the roundtable session.

