



**OECD Anti-Corruption Division works with South Africa
in the Global Fight against Foreign Bribery**

**Acceptance Speech by Patrick Moulette, Head of the OECD Anti-
Corruption Division, for the Highly Commended Award in the Smart
Regulation Category**

7 November 2007

Dear Colleagues,

On behalf of the OECD Anti-Corruption Division, I would like to sincerely thank Dr. Tukur and the panel of esteemed judges for this great honour.

This award comes at a very important juncture in the OECD's work on fighting the bribery of foreign public officials in international business transactions, as this month we are celebrating the tenth anniversary since the adoption of the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention. This is also an important year for another reason—South Africa joined the Convention and the OECD Working Group on Bribery in June, becoming the 37th Party to the Convention.

Choosing the OECD Anti-Corruption Division for this award is an important signal that the African business community is willing to take measures to tackle foreign bribery—a crucial step for ensuring an attractive and stable African investment climate. This is not such a small thing considering that ten years ago the bribery of foreign public officials was accepted as the normal way of doing business in many countries in the world, and tax deductions were generally available for the cost of bribe payments.

The OECD Convention is the only international instrument that focuses exclusively on the supply-side of bribing foreign public officials. It aims to stop the flow of bribes from companies in the world's wealthiest countries to foreign public officials to obtain advantages in international business transactions. As we all know, these advantages can be enormously profitable for companies doing business in Africa. They can take many forms, including preferential treatment in public procurement contracting for major public works projects such as the building of roads, bridges and hydro-electric power plants. They can also take the form of mining and defence contracts and the rights to oil and gas concessions.

This kind of corruption has a particularly devastating effect on the investment climate in developing countries and plays havoc with their democratic institutions.

The OECD Anti-Bribery Convention represents the consensus of thirty-seven countries that they must accept responsibility for the part that their companies play in these corrupt transactions.

Now that South Africa has joined the Convention, we can look forward to a new perspective in the OECD Working Group on Bribery. This is also good news for Africa, because membership in the Working Group helps South Africa in its regional initiatives for fighting bribery and corruption, and will therefore benefit Africa as a whole.

Needless to say, this award also belongs to the South African authorities, who have demonstrated a strong commitment to their obligations under the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention. It is a privilege to work with these dedicated men and women from, for example, the Department of Public Service Administration and the National Prosecution Authority. They inspire all of us involved in the fight against foreign bribery, and remind us that our goal of a level playing field for companies in Africa and around the world is attainable.