

ADB/OECD Anti-Corruption Initiative for Asia and the Pacific

Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau, Singapore



Capacity Development and
Governance Division
Asian Development Bank



Anti-Corruption Division
Organisation for Economic
Co-operation and Development



Corrupt Practices Investigation
Bureau (CPB), Singapore

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6th Regional Anti-Corruption Conference for Asia-Pacific
Singapore, 26-28 November 2008

Public and Private Sector Cooperation to Combat Corruption in the Asia - Pacific

SINGAPORE (26 November 2008) – Corruption in business transactions decreases competition, deters investment, and increases the cost of goods and services in the Asia-Pacific region.

Attendees at the 6th Regional Anti-Corruption Conference for Asia-Pacific – which kicked off this morning in Singapore – will discuss strategies and mechanisms for addressing the “supply side” of corruption from the perspectives of the public sector, private sector and civil society.

The regional conference is sponsored by the Asian Development Bank (ADB)/Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Anti-Corruption Initiative for Asia and the Pacific; it is hosted by the Government of Singapore.

Senior anti-corruption officials and other government representatives from the Asia-Pacific region; leaders of NGOs and other organizations involved in the fight against corruption in the region and worldwide; key stakeholders from the private sector, civil society and the media; and experts from the OECD Working Group on Bribery and the ADB membership are participating..

This Conference takes a broad view and will explore mechanisms for reducing corruption that involve cooperation amongst stakeholders – public, private and civil society. In particular, it will focus on the “supply side” of corruption which often takes the form of bribes paid by the private sector.

“Corruption is not just a government issue. To successfully fight the scourge of corruption efforts are required to change attitudes, strengthen institutions, adjust regulation, reset incentives and more generally to reconsider how a government interacts with its citizens in ways that minimize the opportunity for corruption.” said ADB Vice President C. Lawrence Greenwood at the opening session of the Conference.

Associate Professor Ho Peng Kee, Senior Minister of State for Law & Home Affairs of Singapore, also called for a combined public-private sector approach. “Anti-corruption has to be a whole-of-government effort involving the improvement of administrative processes within the public sector as well as improvement of corporate governance standards within the private sector,” he said,

OECD Deputy Secretary General Mario Amano said: “As many economies in the Asia-Pacific Region are quickly expanding and becoming major forces in international business, they have a strong interest in addressing corruption that threatens fair competition and undermines the level playing field for business.”

The three-day meeting opens with a plenary session to set out the risks of business corruption in the region, and its impact on the business and investment climates. Speakers will also discuss the shared responsibility of government, the private sector, and civil society to fight corruption in business transactions.

Three sets of concurrent workshops follow. Participants will learn how international standards – such as the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention and the United Nations Convention against Corruption – can guide national legal and regulatory frameworks for fighting corruption. A session on conflict of interest will examine regulatory approaches to manage conflict of interest and how conflict of interest can manifest.

Workshops focusing on corporate compliance programs and integrity systems, and the value of international and regional anti-corruption initiatives, are next on the agenda. Finally, sessions will address corruption within the private sector itself, and corruption issues that impact the sustainable development agenda in Asia-Pacific.

“I am pleased to note that this Conference includes workshops on corporate governance, private sector corruption and conflict of interest. These will provide insights on the work to be undertaken in the private sector. In this regard, this Conference provides a useful platform for dialogue with other stakeholders such as businesses, civil society and international organizations.” Senior Minister of State Associate Professor Ho said.

The Initiative supports members’ anti-corruption reform efforts by: fostering policy dialogue and measuring progress; conducting analysis in support of the policy dialogue; and building capacity to enable members to fully implement their reform programmes.

For further information, contact:

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Notes to editors -

The ADB/OECD Anti-Corruption Initiative for Asia and the Pacific hosts regional conferences regularly; the last meeting took place in Beijing, People’s Republic of China, in 2005. The conferences build networks among concerned stakeholders; foster innovative anti-corruption strategies tailored to Asian and Pacific countries’ needs; and allow for evaluation of achievements, challenges and future priorities.

The Initiative was created in 1999 to help governments in the Asia-Pacific region meet international anti-corruption standards. Its Anti-Corruption Action Plan for Asia and the Pacific sets out the goals and standards for fighting economic, political and social corruption in the region. To date, 28 countries and economies from Asia and the Pacific have endorsed the Plan and agreed on implementation mechanisms to achieve its standards. The plan encourages effective and transparent public services, strong anti-bribery actions, and integrity in business operations. It supports the objectives of the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention and the United Nations Convention against Corruption.

The following economies are members of the ADB/OECD Anti-Corruption Initiative for Asia and the Pacific: Australia; Bangladesh; Bhutan; Cambodia; People’s Republic of China; Cook Islands; Fiji Islands; Hong Kong, China; India; Indonesia; Japan; Kazakhstan; Korea; Kyrgyz Republic; Macao, China; Malaysia; Mongolia; Nepal; Pakistan; Palau; Papua New Guinea; Philippines; Samoa; Singapore; Sri Lanka; Thailand; Vanuatu; and Vietnam.