

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



Capacity Development and
Governance Division
Asian Development Bank



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

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12th Steering Group Meeting
Singapore, 24-25 November 2008

Minutes of the 12th Steering Group Meeting held on 24-25 November 2008 in Singapore

Participants

Member countries and jurisdictions: Australia; Bangladesh; Bhutan; Cambodia; People's Republic of China; Cook Islands; Fiji Islands; Hong Kong, China; Indonesia; Japan; Republic of Korea; Kyrgyz Republic; Macao, China; Malaysia; Mongolia; Nepal; Pakistan; Republic of Palau; Papua New Guinea; Philippines; Samoa; Singapore; Sri Lanka; Thailand; Vietnam.

Advisory Group: American Bar Association–Rule of Law Initiative (ABA); OECD Donor Assistance Committee (DAC) Governance Network (GOVNET) Anti-Corruption Task Team (ACTT); Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID); German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)/German Technical Cooperation (gtz); Transparency International (TI); United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); World Bank.

Observer countries: Afghanistan; Brunei Darussalam; Timor Leste.

Observer organizations: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

Secretariat: Asian Development Bank (ADB); Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

Summary of the discussions

1. Opening

The Singaporean host of the meeting welcomed participants of the Steering Group meeting. The Secretariat of the ADB/OECD Initiative for Asia-Pacific opened the Steering Group meeting. The agenda was adopted.

2. Reports on members' recent anti-corruption reforms, and reports by observer countries

Delegations from the Initiative's members delivered oral reports on selected anti-corruption reforms and their progress in implementing the Action Plan since the Group's 11th meeting in May 2008.

Observer countries also reported on their recent anti-corruption reform efforts and outcomes.

3. Reports by the Advisory Group and by observer organizations

Members of the Advisory Group provided information on their activities in support of Asia-Pacific countries' anti-corruption efforts.

4. Activity report by the Secretariat

The Secretariat reported on the progress in the implementation of the Initiative's Strategy and Work Plan 2007-2008 since the 11th Steering Group meeting. The Secretariat informed the Steering Group that, in addition to preparing the 12th Steering Group meeting and the 6th Regional Conference, the following work was carried out:

Capacity building

As a follow up to the Initiative's regional technical seminars held in 2007 the Secretariat published the proceedings of the 6th regional technical seminar on Asset Recovery and Mutual Legal Assistance.

Strengthening partnerships and disseminating information about the Initiative

- The Secretariat attended the APG Annual Meeting 2008 in Bali, Indonesia; an anti-money laundering expert from the Secretariat attended the APG 2008 Typologies Workshop in Sri Lanka in October 2008 and informed participants on the Initiative's work to strengthen frameworks and practice in mutual legal assistance, extradition and recovery of proceeds of corruption in Asia and the Pacific.
- The Secretariat prepared and disseminated a newsletter in October 2008.

Funding of the work of the Initiative

The Secretariat informed the Group that Sweden had made a financial contribution to support the work of the Initiative in 2009-2011.

The Secretariat thanked the Advisory Group for their support to the Initiative.

5. Strategy and Work Program 2009-2011

The Steering Group discussed priorities for its work in 2009-2011. The Group agreed to

- carry out a thematic review on *Criminalization of Bribery Offences under the UNCAC* that would be launched in early 2009; and possibly hold a seminar to further discuss the conclusions of the review, if necessary;
- dedicate the Regional Technical Seminar scheduled to be held in Macao, China on 25-27 March 2009 to the prevention of corruption;
- envisage carrying out a Thematic Review on prevention of corruption; the scope of this review would be defined following the 2009 Regional Technical Seminar on this topic; and
- hold a special session on *Preparing a Self-assessment Checklist of the implementation of UNCAC*. This session will be designed to assist interested countries in preparing and providing information under the self-assessment mechanism. This session would be held in the margin of the 13th Steering Group meeting in March 2009.

The Steering Group further requested the Secretariat to plan and carry out a Regional Technical Seminar, to be held in the ADB Headquarters in Manila, on the political economy of corruption between the 13th and the 14th Steering Group meetings.

The Steering Group endorsed the Secretariat's suggestion to subject the Initiative to an independent evaluation in the course of 2009.

The Steering Group reaffirmed its interest in carrying out country reviews and agreed that it should be further discussed. The Steering Group noted the draft methodology for voluntary country reviews and requested the Secretariat to refine the methodology. Some members of the Group mentioned

- that the proposals for follow-up action should be mutually agreed, and should not be binding; and
- that the evaluation should be consistent with UNCAC standards but not overlap with a future review mechanism under UNCAC; and
- that examined countries should agree on their examiners and choose the scope of the evaluation.

The Steering Group requested the Secretariat to amend the draft Strategy and Work Program 2009-2011 in light of these decisions and agreed that this document would be adopted in written procedure.

6. Upcoming events and meetings of the Steering Group

The Steering Group confirmed that the next events of the Initiative will be hosted by Macao, China and will be scheduled as follows:

- the 13th Steering Group meeting will take place on 23-24 March 2009. It will last 1.5 days.
- the Steering Group meeting will be immediately followed by a special session on the self-assessment checklist under UNCAC in the afternoon of 24 March 2009. Participation in this session is optional and recommended to delegations from countries that have not yet submitted the self-assessment checklist.
- the 8th Regional Technical Seminar will follow these meetings and will take place on 25-27 March 2009. The Seminar will address good practice in selected fields of corruption prevention.

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