



Australia's statement to the 1st session of the Assembly of
Parties of the International Anti-Corruption Academy,
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Philip Moss
Integrity Commissioner
Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity

Madam Vice-President, distinguished delegates,

I begin by expressing Australia's appreciation to the Republic of Austria for hosting the 1st Assembly of Parties of the International Anti-Corruption Academy.

It is entirely fitting that this first Assembly is taking place in Austria. Not only is Laxenburg the seat of the Academy, Austria also deserves recognition for its role in bringing to fruition the bold vision that underpins the Academy. It is fitting too that this Assembly is convening at the UN office in Vienna. This decision reflects the important contribution of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime and the European Anti-Fraud Office in helping to establish the Academy.

Australia congratulates the International Transition Team on reaching this milestone in the Academy's development, under the leadership of its Chair, Mr Martin Kreutner.

Commitment to the objectives of IACA

Madam Vice-President,

There is a pressing need to understand the dynamics of corruption, and to evaluate the methods to prevent and counter it.

The ever-changing nature of corruption means that there is no one solution to cure the problem.

My agency, the *Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity*, uses the phrase “Match Measures to Risks” to convey the concept that there is, or should be, a scientific approach to fighting corruption. However, it is surprising how little is known about the practical methods of corruption prevention. On the positive side, there is great potential for developing tools and teaching methods to build integrity.

Accordingly, Australia sees an important role for the Academy in offering professional training, research and awareness-raising about corruption and how to counter it. As a country that is developing its own integrity frameworks, Australia looks forward to nurturing and encouraging the important programs that the Academy will undertake, and to contributing our own experience to inform them.

Australia's international footprint

Madam Vice-President,

Australia is a foundation party to the *UN Convention against Corruption* and other important international instruments and mechanisms.

Within the Asia-Pacific community, the APEC Anti-Corruption and Transparency Working Group is another means by which Australia is working to build coalitions against corruption.

Australia is also a major donor in support of anti-corruption mechanisms. For instance, Australia supports and contributes to the World Bank/UNODC *Stolen Asset Recovery Initiative*, the *Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative*, and the UNCAC *Implementation Review Mechanism*. We also work in close partnership with Transparency International.

Australia is also proud to be involved in the direct transfer of anti-corruption knowledge to our regional partners, through our technical assistance programs. For instance, my own agency has close ties with Indonesia's Corruption Eradication Commission, and with similar agencies in the Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, and Timor-Leste. As the Australian Integrity Commissioner, I value those peer-to-peer relationships.

Other Australian Government agencies - often with the generous assistance of Australia's overseas aid program - also have ties with these countries, and with others, in our region.

Australia also plays a leadership role in anti-corruption practice and policy. For instance, in 2014, Australia will assume the G20 Presidency from the Russian Federation. We look forward to working closely with the Russian and Canadian co-chairs of the G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group during 2013 to continue our important work in progressing the Anti-Corruption Action Plan.

All of these efforts underline Australia's commitment to the Millennium Development Goals.

National Anti-Corruption Plan

Madam Vice-President,

Corruption can fuel instability, erode confidence in the rule of law and hamper long-term economic development. That is why no Government can afford to be complacent in fighting corruption.

Presently, the Australian Government is developing its first National Anti-Corruption Plan.

The Plan will serve several important objectives, including:

- providing a clear statement of our whole-of-government approach to combating corruption;
- defining emerging corruption risks that may threaten Australia's national interests; and
- articulating a framework to respond to those challenges.

The National Anti-Corruption Plan will also provide a basis to guide Australia in setting priorities for international anti-corruption engagement.

Working in Partnership

Madam Vice-President,

The Australian Government is committed to working in local, regional and global partnerships with public, private and civil society stakeholders to form and strengthen anti-corruption compacts. We see the Academy as playing a vital role in this endeavour.

Since Australia is a long way from Laxenburg, we are encouraged by the links that the Academy has formed in the Asia-Pacific region. There is great potential for the Academy to provide important educative and research output in partnership with states in the Asia-Pacific through locally-delivered programs. We urge the Academy to explore further the development of such local initiatives. We will continue to be supportive of the Academy's outreach to the Asia-Pacific region.

Conclusion

In concluding, I acknowledge the contribution of two Australians, whose work has particularly assisted the Academy in its early stages of development.

The first is Professor Leslie Holmes from The University of Melbourne, who has been a popular guest lecturer at the Academy's summer school.

The second is the Honourable Justice Barry O'Keefe AM QC, who is a strong advocate of the Academy's work, as much as he is an opponent of all forms of corruption.

Through sharing our experiences, and in other ways, Australia looks forward to continuing its close association with the Academy during the years to come.

Thank you.