



Americas Urged To Implement Anti-Corruption Convention

Transparency International

February 15, 1999



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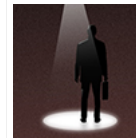
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Posted 15 February 1999 by [Transparency International Secretariat](#)

The countries of the Americas need to make greater efforts to avoid falling behind in international anti-corruption efforts, Transparency International (TI) has warned. While the OECD is moving ahead with ratifying its convention which will criminalise international business corruption in record time, the international anti-corruption NGO criticised the fact that only 11 out of 34 states in the Americas have yet ratified the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption of the OAS, signed in March 1996.

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Yesterday, the OECD Convention criminalising the bribery of foreign public officials entered into force. Between 12 countries representing over 60 percent of world trade, for instance, the USA, Canada, South Korea Japan, the UK and Germany have all ratified the treaty, sufficient to bring it into force, and most of the remaining 34 signatories are in the process of ratification. The convention was first agreed in 1997 by the world's 29 richest countries and five non-OECD nations. "This new framework presents a historic opportunity for the Americas as well," said Miguel Schloss, Executive Director for Latin America of TI. "But the momentum in international action against corruption will be lost if the states in the Western hemisphere do not act now."



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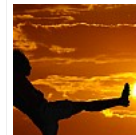
Transparency International has published a scorecard which lists the steps taken by the OAS members since the OAS Convention was signed in 1996. "Since the Convention is ambitious and complex an effective monitoring mechanism urgently needs to be established," Schloss said. "While almost all countries in the region have publicly committed themselves, too few of them have taken concrete and effective steps against corruption."



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According to information collected by TI, only ten countries in the Americas have or are processing legislation on access to information, while only two countries criminalise trans-national bribery and less than half have a mandatory requirement for high-ranking public officials to disclose their assets.



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In view of the limited progress so far, TI calls on the following minimum steps:

- OAS member governments: ratification and implementation of the OAS Convention until the year 2000
- OAS: establishment of monitoring arrangements for ratification and implementation of Convention
- OAS: development of regular reporting mechanism on the status of ratification and implementation.

TI has expressed its willingness to provide input and support for the OAS monitoring arrangements through its network of National Chapters in the region. TI Latin American Countries have agreed, as one of their regional priorities, to encourage ratification and implementation of the Convention which includes monitoring arrangements focusing specifically on issues such as access to information, public procurement and the financing of election campaigns.

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Details on Ratification Status

Anti-Corruption Progress Report
 Informe de Avances Anti-Corrupción

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