

4th ICAC SYMPOSIUM

International Partnerships: Transforming Words into Action

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INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

1. International acknowledgement of the evils and dangers of public corruption may be traced to a landmark speech given in 1996 by the President of the World Bank James Wolfensohn. Since that speech, many international agreements have been entered into concerning the need to deal co-operatively with corruption. These began with the Organization of American States' 1996 Inter-American Convention against Corruption, followed in 1997 by the OECD Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Officials in International Business Transactions and culminated in the United Nations Convention Against Corruption in 2003.

2. These Conventions provide for international cooperation between signatory parties and their anti-corruption agencies. Corruption issues are now frequent policy topics for international organisations, government agencies, non-governmental organisations and anti-corruption agencies. International meetings and conferences are regular features of the landscape and there seem to be few nations without an anti-corruption agency. Thousands of words on this subject appear in agreements, treaties, aid contracts, conference papers, communiqués, media releases and proceedings of meetings like this one. Often these are very noble words