



Dr. Naser J. Al Sane, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC), today noted the significant steps, including the *Parliamentary Standards Bill*, that parliamentarians in the United Kingdom are taking to establish transparent standards of conduct regarding parliamentary salaries and allowances:

“This is a step in the right direction for combating the global public cynicism towards our institutions in general, and the ethics and conduct of parliamentarians in particular. It is also a good example of initiatives that GOPAC has been advocating for quite some time.”

He also noted that the GOPAC Global Task Force on Parliamentary Ethics and Conduct, under the leadership of Mr. Ghassan Moukheiber, Member of Parliament in Lebanon, is preparing a *Handbook on Parliamentary Ethics and Conduct*. The *Handbook* provides parliamentarians and public officials with concrete tools to develop and strengthen ethics regimes by means of legislation or code of conduct based on the principles of transparency, accountability and integrity. Developing these tools and standards is crucial to foster the public’s trust in and improve their perception of parliament, its members, and public officials at large. The objective is also consistent with GOPAC’s policy statement on parliamentary ethics and conduct:

“Parliamentarians should actively and visibly carry out their democratic roles (representation, legislation and oversight) in the public interest and do so in a manner that meets societal expectations of ethical behaviour – essential to establishing public trust.”

The *Handbook*, prepared with the support of the Westminster Foundation for Democracy, is to be launched officially at a Forum of Parliamentarians during the Conference of States Parties III on the United Nations Convention Against Corruption in Doha, Qatar in November 2009.

In light of the recent events in the United Kingdom and the steps taken to address the issues, Dr. Al Sane expressed optimism that more parliaments will review their own practices and will find new ways to enhance the public’s level of trust and confidence in their elected representatives.

For further information on the mandate and activities of GOPAC, its regional and national chapters and its Global Task Forces, please visit our web site:

<http://www.gopacnetwork.org/>

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Dr. Naser J. Al Sane is also available to speak with the media. Please send your requests via email at the address noted above.