



## Press Communiqué

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### **HANDBOOK ON PARLIAMENTARY ETHICS AND CONDUCT RELEASED**

*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 behavior – essential to establishing public trust.*

*GOPAC Policy Position*

Dr. Naser J. Al Sane, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the **Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC)**, and Ms. Linda Duffield, Chief Executive Officer of the **Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD)**, today announce the release of the *Handbook on Parliamentary Ethics and Conduct*.

The *Handbook* was developed jointly by GOPAC and WFD as part of a global initiative to promote good governance and prevent corruption. It provides parliamentarians and public officials with practical tools to develop and strengthen ethics regimes by means of legislation, code of conduct or other instruments, and outlines an approach that is based on the principles of transparency, accountability and integrity. GOPAC and WFD believe that developing these tools and standards is important to foster the public's trust and confidence in parliament, its members, and public officials at large

“It is fitting that the *Handbook* is launched at today's Forum of Parliamentarians during the Conference of States Parties III on the *United Nations Convention Against Corruption*. One of the tools advocated by the UNCAC for implementation in a country is the development of a code of conduct. The development of the *Handbook* was under the guidance of parliamentarians for parliamentarians. It will serve as a starting point for elected officials to develop a formal ethics and conduct regime to enhance the public's confidence in parliaments, help combat corruption in general, and to address various issues related to parliamentarians' ethics and conduct in particular.” said Dr. Al Sane.

Parliamentarians are encouraged to adapt and tailor the tools outlined in the *Handbook* leading to an ethics and conduct regime that is suitable in their respective political and cultural contexts and adheres to international ethical standards. GOPAC also encourages its members and other parliamentarians to use the *Handbook* as a catalyst for discussion and as a tool for training, workshops and seminars.

Dr. Al Sane expresses his appreciation to Mr. Ghassan Moukheiber, Member of Parliament in Lebanon and Leader of GOPAC's Global Task Force on Parliamentary Ethics and Conduct, and other members of the Task Force for their dedication and leadership in bringing this project into fruition. He also wishes to thank Mr. Greg Power author of the *Handbook* and the generous financial support and expert advice provided by the Westminster Foundation for Democracy to the project.

A “**Backgrounder**” that provides more information on the *Handbook* is attached.

The **Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC)** is an international network of parliamentarians dedicated to good governance and to improve parliaments as institutions of oversight. It is the only parliamentary organisation/network with the single focus on combating corruption throughout the world. GOPAC members represent over 90 countries in all regions of the world. There are more than 30 national chapters in Africa, the Arab Region, Asia, Latin America, North America, and Europe working to improve governance in their respective countries.

Established in 1992, the **Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD)** is the United Kingdom's democracy-building foundation, aimed at achieving sustainable political change in emerging democracies. Working with and through partner organisations, WFD seeks to strengthen the institutions of democracy, principally political parties (through the work of the UK political parties), parliaments and the range of institutions that make up civil society. WFD believes that, for a democracy to flourish, all of these institutions must be strong.

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 or via email at:

[info@gopacnetwork.org](mailto:info@gopacnetwork.org)

For further information on Westminster Foundation for Democracy, please visit our website [www.wfd.org](http://www.wfd.org) or via email at [dina.melhem@wfd.org](mailto:dina.melhem@wfd.org)

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