



European Parliamentarians Against Corruption Call for Accelerated Ratification of UN Anti-Corruption Convention

Brussels, 12th of July, 2005 - GOPAC-Europe, the European chapter of the Global Organisation of Parliamentarians Against Corruption, is calling on European governments to ratify the United Nations Convention Against Corruption, or UNCAC.

The UN Convention Against Corruption was signed by 123 governments in Mexico in 2003, and it enshrines the principles and tools for governments to fight corruption, including measures for corruption prevention, criminalisation, and asset recovery. The UNCAC is the only truly global and comprehensive framework for combating corruption.

So far only 26 of these signatory countries have ratified the document, and 30 are needed for the convention to come into force. Up to now, Hungary is the only EU Member State to have ratified the UNCAC.

"GOPAC-Europe welcomes the recent rise of the issue of poverty reduction on the political agenda, but the improvement of conditions for the world's poor is not just a financial issue -- it is a good governance issue. Aid and debt reduction will not benefit the world's poorest unless corruption decreases in these developing countries where the benefits of such measures have been unevenly distributed until now," said MEP Edith Mastenbroek, GOPAC-Europe core member.

Ms. Mastenbroek continued, "That is why European governments must set a good example for the rest of the world by ratifying the UN Convention Against Corruption and bringing it into force. We hope that Great Britain, currently in the EU presidency, will really start the ratification ball rolling in Europe, as the government has indicated it intends to ratify the UNCAC by the end of 2005."

GOPAC-Europe will be dealing in depth with the promotion and implementation of the UN Convention Against Corruption at a formal conference in the fall of 2005.

The Global Organization of Parliamentarians against Corruption (GOPAC) was created in Ottawa, Canada in 2002 by over 170 parliamentarians from around the world. GOPAC has national and regional chapters in Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, Newly Independent States, North and South America.

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For more information on GOPAC and GOPAC-Europe, go to http://www.parlcent.ca/gopac/index_e.php