



JOINT OECD-AfDB INITIATIVE TO SUPPORT BUSINESS INTEGRITY AND ANTI-BRIBERY EFFORTS IN AFRICA

What is the OECD-AfDB Joint Initiative to Support Business Integrity and Anti-Bribery Efforts in Africa?

At the end of 2008, the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) signed a declaration introducing a Joint Initiative to Support Business Integrity and Anti-Bribery Efforts in Africa. This Initiative aims to assist African countries in their fight against bribery of public officials in business transactions and to improve corporate integrity and accountability, while sustaining growth through an environment conducive to attracting foreign investment. The overall objectives of the Joint Initiative are to increase the capacity for effective anti-bribery enforcement, reinforce global anti-bribery efforts, enhance public sector integrity and contribute to the opening of a new era of transparent and accountable business in Africa.

Why is the OECD-AfDB Joint Initiative Important? Despite existing reforms that have yielded some positive results for African economies, African countries still face significant obstacles to economic development. Corruption and lack of transparency and accountability in business transactions remain high on the list of investment risks in Africa. Specific measures to promote private sector transparency, accountability and ethics, prevent conflicts between private profit and public interest, deter active bribery of public officials, and ensure the effective prosecution of bribe takers and givers are ways to help overcome these obstacles that have hampered Africa's economic development and progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

How will the OECD-AfDB Joint Initiative Address These Issues? The Joint Initiative seeks to highlight and enhance the complementarities between the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption, the UN Convention Against Corruption and the OECD Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions. Within a framework of strong African ownership and leadership, the OECD and AfDB will work together to design and help put in place effective policies to combat the bribery of public officials that draw from all of these instruments. Through the involvement of African business and industry, and policy-makers, the Joint Initiative will also focus on providing technical support to Africa's private sector with a view to improving standards of corporate integrity and accountability.

What are the Next Steps? Though still in its early stages, the Joint Initiative is moving forward quickly. A Regional Expert Group Meeting is scheduled to take place in the first part of 2010. A Stock-taking Report of Business Integrity and Anti-Bribery Legislation, Policies and Practices in Twenty African Countries (see overleaf for details), has been recently completed and will form the basis of developing a Course of Action to be endorsed at the Regional Meeting. An Anti-Bribery and Business Integrity Task Force for Africa will also be established to be composed of senior African government officials, business and industry experts, and members of civil society, who will serve as the national focal points for implementing the Course of Action.

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