

## “Experts recommend holistic approach to tackling corruption in Africa ”

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Addis Ababa – 16 October 2008 – ECA- The international conference on “ **Institutions, Culture and Corruption in Africa**” jointly organised by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA), ended on Wednesday with consensus that a comprehensive package of interventions, by a cross section of stakeholders, is needed in order to systematically tackle the problem in Africa.



[Photo Gallery](#)

“The fight against corruption can not simply be limited to the state”, said Okey Onyejekwe, Director of ECA's Governance and Public Administration Division (GPAD) at the closing press conference. “There must also be political commitment”, he added, “Until it becomes a battle that engages all stakeholders, stand-alone interventions such as the establishment of national corruption commissions etcetera won't make a difference”.

The draft summary conference report, presented to participants at the end of the meeting stated their agreement that “corruption is a global phenomenon with no African peculiarities” and that “there is a strong international dimension to corruption in Africa ”.

In that regard, Mr. Onyejekwe also informed the Addis Ababa press corps that the main outcome of the conference was “the debunking of the myth that corruption is culturally endemic in Africa ”.

During the three day conference papers were presented on a variety of themes including: conceptual and theoretical perspectives on corruption, the international dimension of corruption in Africa and, the linkages between poverty, social inequality, service delivery and corruption.

The main issues raised during the meeting included the need to: develop more precise and acceptable measuring tools; renew the social contract and promote citizenship rights; improve access to public information; punish the giver and taker of bribes, as well as the custodian of stolen funds, equally; and reinforce the capacity of national anti-corruption institutions.

Key recommendations in the “ **Institutions, Culture and Corruption in Africa** ” summary report include the following:

1. African governments must pay more attention and show political commitment to supporting anti-corruption institutions.
2. There is need to customize anti corruption strategies and claim local ownership in anti corruption strategies.
3. Africa's international partners must show greater commitment and sincerity in the support for the anti corruption agenda in Africa.
4. There is no cultural dimension to corruption in Africa . Indeed, some cultural and traditional values can be used in addressing the problem of corruption in Africa . These values should be harnessed within the context of incorporating African traditional institutions into modern governance structures.

ECA and CODESRIA plan to publish the proceedings of the conference in the near future. This publication will present a compendium of perspectives on the nature of corruption on the continent today as well as the numerous innovative solutions to deal with the problem that were highlighted during the conference.

The second edition of the African Governance Report (AGRII) which will shortly be published by ECA will also feature a chapter on popular perceptions of corruption in the countries surveyed in the report.

For further information on the conference go to: <http://www.uneca.org/gpad/codesria.htm>

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