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## The Tenth Anniversary of the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention – Its Impact and Its Achievements.

**Angel Gurría, Secretary General of the OECD; Our hosts, the people and government of Italy; Representatives of the Signing Countries; Ladies and Gentlemen:**

As Albert Einstein once said, *“The world is a dangerous place, not because of those who do evil, but because of those who look on and do nothing.”*

We are gathered here today to call to remembrance a group of people that 10 years ago represented different nations and decided to do something in order to make the world a safer place. That small contribution has materialized in different ways in over 30 countries and now we are all active participants of this endeavor.

It would be naive to think that our role in the implementation of the Anti-Bribery Convention consists, merely, on enforcing the recommendations made by the Committee. Since we are remembering what took place 10 years ago, I would like to consider two of the reasons for the creation of this Convention: the lack of integrity of human beings and their carelessness for Common Good.

I invite you to keep in mind that this is what we are trying to eradicate. Until we have created an environment where human integrity can develop properly, and people believe that Common Good involves their own good as well, we must keep on fighting little by little, recommendation by recommendation, this is the way we chose, there is no better way. Mexico is part of this struggle, and is conscious there are still many steps to take, actions to implement, and legislation to approve.



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We have come a long way since 1997. The signing of the Convention represented a significant step on combating corruption. Nevertheless, it is hard to measure the real commitment each country has towards the Convention. Several international reports on bribery correspond to local subsidiaries of international corporations; therefore the impact on the international enterprise is reduced, once the report is stated.

On the other hand, the acquisition and buying systems for federal, regional and local governments for most of the signing countries are not ready yet to fulfill the requirements of the Convention. Mexico, in a Federal basis, has an efficient and effective system for public buying, called *compranet*; this system is an accountable and competitive format that has been shown as an example to other countries. We are still working in the implementation of similar systems for our local and regional governments.

A crucial matter for the success of this Convention is the way it is monitored. Since its creation, monitoring has been a substantial part of the Convention's work. This part of the Convention is not only applied by government representatives of the Signing Countries, in the case of México, a number of social organizations have been engaged in this process. *Integrity Pacts, Social Control, and Social Witnesses* are, programs that prove the importance of their contribution.

Moreover, social organizations have elaborated and distributed progress reports evaluating México's execution of the Convention. Social organizations are a fundamental part in the influence on public opinion, they collaborate with information campaigns, and civilian accompany for the implementation of what the Convention recommends.



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The joint work made by social organizations, international organizations and our government should create a more aware society, a society that is awake and wants to participate in the pursue of fairness instead of simply standing by. I cannot say that my country's society is there yet, but I can proudly tell you that our institutions are evolving as a reflection of the changes that our society is experimenting.

A constitutional reform has been promoted by President Felipe Calderon and approved by the Mexican Congress in order to consider the right to information as a Constitutional Right, an individual guarantee recognized to all Mexicans. This reform also establishes that all the information that is produced by the government and public institutions in Mexican territory is, by definition, public, and its access can only be temporarily denied under exceptional reasons. The legal reform is a product of the joint work and effort made by our society, our non profit organizations, our local and federal government, and our legislative power. This is a significant action taken to fight the spaces with opacity, in which corruption is more likely to occur.

The private sector has undertaken a few anti-bribery actions, because they understand that this actions are good for business. Nevertheless, this has been an insufficient attempt. It is imperative that the OECD sends a blunt, clear, and strong message on this matter in for it to finally commit, particularly regarding governments that protect their companies against anti-bribery actions from other countries.

Only a real commitment and a coordinated work between society, governments, local companies and international enterprises with presence in local territory, will allow corruption promoted by corporations involved in international commercial transactions to be detected and exterminated.



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Mexico's enforcement of the Convention still has areas of opportunity. Last year there were no significant advances. Protection for complainants of bribery acts, financial audit requirements, and private sector commitments are areas in need of major improvement.

Mexico appreciates the opportunity to be a part of the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention where, with absolute respect to the autonomy of the people, Signing Countries emit, adopt, and monitor recommendations pursuant to diminish and extinguish one of the most despicable diseases that lessens the wroth of nations: corruption. Like 10 years ago, my country happily reassures its commitment to the OECD and its members in the frontal combat versus corruption.

For your attention, thank you very much.

Rafael Morgan Ríos

Undersecretary of Control and Audit of Public Management.

Ministry of Public Management.

Rome, Italy, November 21st, 2007.